

CORBETT WATER DISTRICT



BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS REGULAR MONTHLY BOARD MEETING HYBRID MEETING: IN-PERSON ~ VIRTUAL MEETING VIA ZOOM

Tuesday, January 17th, 2023 6:30 p.m. ~ Corbett Fire Hall 36930 E Hist. Col. Riv. Hwy

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: In-Person: Dan Graff, Sara Grigsby, and Kelly Piper. Jeff Hargens joined later.

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT: District Manager Ana Linden, District Clerk Heather McGivney, DRC David Jacob.

COMMUNITY MEMBERS PRESENT: In-Person: Jonathan Scott, Michael Arion, Gordon Falks, Roland Beebe, Malcolm Freund, Chris Witka, Heidi Timberman, Rick Wunsch, David Shanon, Victoria Purvine, Jack Garrison, Dave Flood, Darren Marten, Jeff Smith, Andrew Parker.

AGENDA

- 1. Call to Order** – Board Secretary Kelly Piper called the meeting to order at 6:30pm
- 2. Roll Call** – Commissioner Fred Sanchez is absent, Jeff Hargens joined late.
- 3. Approval of the Agenda** – Sara Grigsby moved to approve the agenda. Dan Graff seconded. *(motion passed 3 yes votes: D. Graff, S. Grigsby, K. Piper; 0 no votes)*
- 4. Approval of the Minutes** – Dan Graff moved to approve 12-20-22 Regular Meeting minutes, Sara Grigsby seconded. *(motion passed 3 yes votes: D. Graff, S. Grigsby, K. Piper; 0 no votes)* Jeff Hargens joined the meeting at this time. Sara Grigsby moved to approve 01-04-23 Special Meeting Minutes, Dan Graff seconded. *(motion passed 4 yes votes: D. Graff, S. Grigsby, J. Hargens, and K. Piper; 0 no votes)*
- 5. Treasurers Report** – Sara Grigsby presented the December 2022 Treasurers Report. The Engineering line item continues to be higher than budgeted. David Jacob gets a daily fee for being the DRC, and this month, \$1000.00 went toward David's mentoring work with Ana. The \$6,223.00 Lease Fee is for a Bureau of Land Management lease for right of way. This amount has gone up over the last several years. Our Legal expenses are beginning for our well investigation. Ground Water expenses this month are again for GeoLogic Associates for a second opinion on our well investigation. Kelly Piper asked if our Treasurer was concerned that several of our spending categories are at 100% of budget when we are only halfway through our budget year. Sara answers yes and no, and Jeff Hargens chimed in that some categories may be over budget, but our total expenditures for the first 6 months are at around 36% of total budget, so even if individual categories are off, we are still doing quite well overall. Looking at the profit and loss last year vs. this year. Our income looks smaller because last year we had a \$109,000.00 grant that we did not get this year. However, the overall difference between intake this year and last year is less than that \$109,000.00, so we are actually doing better with our regular income than last year. Under Reservoir Repairs, we are significantly above last year. Is that due to repairs at Cabbage Hill? David Jacob answers yes, we've put in an expensive valve. Sara also wants to point out that our Training and Education expenditures are up, which Sara views as a good thing because it means our employees are learning. Jeff Hargens moved to approve the December Treasurers report, Dan Graff seconded. *(motion passed 4 yes votes: D. Graff, S. Grigsby, J. Hargens, and K. Piper; 0 no votes)*

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OLD BUSINESS

1. Building Update – Kelly Piper. We’re doing analysis about what needs to be done with the building repairs. Community members Fritz Midas and Michael Yost met with Kelly to discuss carpentry projects. They then each built and contributed a bench for our employee locker room.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Presentation of Corbett Water District Audit – Rich Winkel, Dougall Conradie LLC

This year Corbett Water District changed to a cash basis of accounting, which is a little different from the regular Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP). In cash basis, revenue is recognized when money is deposited to the bank, and expenses are recognized when the payment is made. This format is a little simpler and easier for the layperson to understand. On the whole, the District’s Net Position is better for Fiscal Year 2021-22 than last year, because last year there were a lot of capital outlay expenditures, which were mostly purchases of fixed assets for the water system. Question from Kelly Piper: is cash basis a normal method of accounting? Answer: it is not the most common method, but it is allowed by the State of Oregon, and is sometimes preferred in smaller municipalities because it is easier to understand. The footnotes talk about how we converted from GAAP to cash basis, where the fixed assets and liabilities are removed to make a Net Position. Net Position refers to the amount of cash on hand in both checking and savings accounts. The auditor’s responsibility is to make sure that there is reasonable assurance that no mistakes have been made. There are no findings to report or recommendations for changes. Everything appears to adhere to Oregon Standards. Kelly Piper moved to approve the audit that was conducted by Dougall Conradie LLC. Dan Graff seconded the motion. *(motion passed 4 yes votes: D. Graff, S. Grigsby, J. Hargens, and K. Piper; 0 no votes)*

2. Ordinance 2023.01.17. First reading of “Ordinance 2023.01.17 of the Corbett Water District The Board May Hereafter Amend Rates, Fees, and Other Charges by Resolution.” Copies of this ordinance are available at this meeting and in the Corbett Water District office. Heather explained the thought processes behind the need for this ordinance. We haven’t been following best practices, because we sometimes pass rate increases by Ordinance and other times by Resolution. Ordinances are preferred because they have the power of law behind them. We are following the advice of the Special District Association of Oregon to pass this Ordinance that will allow future increases to be done by Resolution. Doing it now will allow us to adjust fees when we work on our regular budget cycle. Community member Jack Garrison asks why we’re trying to cut the public out of the process by moving to a Resolution? Heather answered that any time there’s a rate increase there has to be a public hearing, so the public will be able to have a say in the proposal. The requirement to hold a public hearing is in this Ordinance, in accordance with ORS 264. Community Member Malcolm Freund asks for clarification about Resolution vs. Ordinance, but was assured that the process with public hearings and board approval is still the same. A question was asked whether rates or fees could be lowered without public hearing and we don’t know the answer. Heather did research outside of the meeting and found that lowering rates and fees does not require a public hearing, but it does require a Resolution to counteract or repeal the previous rate/fee increase.

3. Budget 2023-24 Timeline and appointment of Fiscal Year 2023-2024 Budget Officer

Jeff Hargens would like to appoint Ana Linden as the Budget Officer. This role is usually performed by the Manager, and Ana also has previous experience. Jeff moved to approve Ana Linden as Budget Officer for 2023-24, and Kelly Piper seconded the motion. Ana accepted the role. We have a budget timeline prepared. The first Budget Committee Meeting will be March 21st. The second meeting, if

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necessary, will be March 29th. The third meeting, if necessary, will be April 18th. The Budget Hearing will be June 20th.

4. Appointment of Community Budget Committee Members There is one new community member on the Budget Committee, named Jonathan Scott. He lives on Reed Road and has been in Corbett since 1994 or 1995. He is a Professional Engineer doing automation and controls, working in water and wastewater. He currently works at Jacobs Engineering. Kelly made a motion to appoint Jonathan Scott to the Budget Committee for the 2023-24 fiscal year. Seconded by Dan Graff. (*motion passed 4 yes votes: D. Graff, S. Grigsby, J. Hargens, and K. Piper; 0 no votes*) We also welcome back the returning community members of the budget committee: Malcolm Freund, Chris Witka, Michael Arion, and Angie Kimpo.

MANAGERS REPORT – There were two main breaks on December 15th, which coincided with the Corbett Fire Department testing fire hydrants. We've requested hydrant maintenance records back to 2017 and will investigate whether there is a correlation between hydrant maintenance and main breaks – though it is a bit hard to investigate because breaks can sometimes leak for days or weeks before they are discovered. The December 23rd winter storm affected our customers a lot. Loren Wilton, our Utility Worker who was on call, had several callouts each day of the holiday weekend. David and Ana coordinated behind the scenes, including increasing water production from 500 gallons per minute to 1000 gallons per minute to prevent customers from running out of water. Ana learned how to manipulate the treatment plant controls remotely and grew more familiar with reading the SCADA interface. Ana will attend the Annual Oregon Association of Water Utilities conference in March. There are many interesting topics to learn about. The scope of work for our HVAC replacement was finished, and we are in the process of soliciting estimates. We are receiving a grant for \$4,993.00 in matching funds from the Special District Association of Oregon for security updates, which will be used for a new security camera system. We thank our volunteers: Cloudy Sears, Kelly Piper, Michael Grober, Fritz Midas, and Michael Yost. Ana spoke with the owner of the lot between Corbett Water and the Post Office and the current owner is not yet ready to sell. Interestingly, that lot is zoned for two buildings. This week we terminated, with cause, Utility Worker I Ray Hoff. Our new Utility Worker I, Alex Nichols, starts soon. Many thanks to our Utility Worker III, Loren Wilton, who helped many customers during the holiday winter storm, even on Christmas Day. Finally, we got a community contact from a woman who owns a tiny spring near Dabney State Park. It is on 0.06 acres, and is at the bottom of a hill, so it would probably not be of use to Corbett Water District.

PUBLIC COMMENTS – *Rick Wunsch* wants to address the water line breaks and having them be attributed to the Corbett Fire District. No one from the Water District has monitored a hydrant test. The firefighters have been trained to know that our water pressure is high, and to open and close the hydrants slowly. They test hydrants twice per year. Per a conversation with manager Ana Linden, Rick would welcome some education from Corbett Water District around water pressure and hydrant maintenance. However, he doesn't believe that many of our main breaks are caused by Corbett Fire. He would like to get to the point where we can begin to put in more hydrants. *Dave Flood* wants to point out that Corbett Fire and Corbett Water have had a long history, and that Fire has performed a lot of maintenance and tasks that benefit the Water District. He recognizes that our water system has small pipes and very high pressure, but he feels that Corbett Fire is being very careful with our hydrants. He feels that the Water District Manager was inappropriate at the NEMCCA meeting by blaming the main breaks on Corbett Fire without investigation. *Sara Grigsby* responded by saying she believes that Ana is

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on a learning curve, and is very passionate about the Water District. She hopes that both Corbett Fire and Corbett Water will value a mutually beneficial relationship above any missteps. *Darren Marten* has been with Corbett Fire for 38 years. He's offended at the implication that Corbett Fire has caused water hammers or main breaks. He feels that there is a great deal of care taken when they open or close a hydrant. *Kelly Piper* responded by saying that she doesn't think offense or harm was intended and that Ana is both new and passionate about the community and wants to raise the perception of the Water District to match the respect that people hold for Corbett Fire. Kelly would like to have a mutual education program between Fire and Water. *David Shannon* wants the Water District to recognize that Ana is their representative, and he believes that she was inappropriate at the NEMCCA meeting. When a pipe breaks, it's a matter of physics and it would be obvious that someone made a mistake. He knows that with Corbett Fire's methods, they haven't caused any breaks. He believes that aging pipes and deferred maintenance are causing the breaks. *Jeff Hargens* responded that he also wants to get to the bottom of what is causing the main breaks, whether it's the hydrant testing or not. *David Shannon* would like Corbett Water to go through a scientific process to determine the cause of the breaks before the District Manager makes accusations at a public meeting and defames the Corbett Fire District. *Sara Grigsby* pointed out that people come to the NEMCCA meetings to discuss issues, and get feedback from other stakeholders in the community. She doesn't think that "accusation" is an appropriate word for the types of conversations that go on at the meeting. General discussion followed about the format of the NEMCCA meeting and how to communicate courteously between departments and how to both maintain the hydrants and protect the water system. Agreement seemed to be reached that both organizations need to get together and share the information that each has to see if we can learn more about the main breaks and potential causes. *Victoria Purvine* would like to see greater communication between the Corbett Fire and Corbett Water boards, so that we can build to the point that we have the contacts and relationships to approach each other about issues. *David Jacob* explained what he experienced on the day that he and Ana received a call about a water leak. On the way to the leak, he saw a fire crew maintaining a hydrant and water spraying out of the hydrant. They found the leak boiling up from the pipe. Due to high water pressure, that particular hydrant would be very hard to open, and very easy to close. When a hydrant is closed too fast, it creates a surge in pressure that may cause the pipes to rupture. General discussion followed about the particular equipment that the Fire District has to reduce the likelihood of creating that surge in pressure. They feel that the safety tools they have would prevent those surges. *David Jacob* finished by saying that water temperature makes a big difference in the vulnerability of the pipes. When the temperature is low, the chances of a pipe breaking are much higher. *Ana Linden* says that she has been learning a lot about working in government, and will take the NEMCCA meeting situation as a learning experience. However, from the beginning of her time at Corbett Water, she's been hearing about frequent water line breaks, but it hasn't been clear what is causing the breakages, so she's been on the lookout for the cause. The information that Ana received that day from the Utility workers, the Engineer David Jacobs, and her own observations led her to the conclusion that the hydrant test had caused the break. She feels that her job is to solve the problem, and to provide information to and communication with the community. She wants to share information with Corbett Fire, however, our records are not consolidated in a way that makes it easy to pinpoint when and where a break occurred in the past. General discussion followed about how the two agencies can cooperate and exchange information. We would also like to coordinate with hydrants, and possibly add new hydrants with input from an engineer. *Gordon Falks* would like to comment on the clay valves that are used by the Water District. He feels that they rupture and cause a lot of breaks. *Malcolm Freund* wants to know the intended pressure for the system? *David Jacob*

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responded that the pressure is dictated by the tank at Larch Mountain. When the elevation goes down, the pressure increases, and when the elevation goes up, it decreases. But the pressure must be sufficient to get water from one end of the system, to the other end at Cabbage Hill. We use pressure reducing valves upstream of Larch Mountain to control the pressure at Larch Mountain. Malcolm feels that there should be a pressure reducing valve program to maintain our PRVs.

SUGGESTIONS FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS – None

BOARD MEMBER ADDITIONAL ITEMS FOR THE GOOD OF THE ORDER – Jeff Hargens wanted to explain about the frequent private executive sessions that the Board has been having the past few months. They have been investigating the well project and have decided to move forward with sending demand letters to two companies in an effort to get our money back.

ADJOURNMENT OF MEETING – Jeff Hargens made a motion to adjourn the meeting at approximately 8:30pm, Dan Graff seconded. (*motion passed 4 yes votes: D. Graff, S. Grigsby, J. Hargens, and K. Piper; 0 no votes*)

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