



MAPLETON WATER DISTRICT
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS EXECUTIVE SESSION
AND SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES
JULY 17, 2023

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Members Present: Art Donnelly, Sharon Kelly, Vanessa West, Nancy Pettibon and Julie Doran-Lee.

Others Present: None.

Call to Order at 5:00 p.m.

Executive Session per ORS 192.660 (2) (a) "To consider the employment of a public officer, employee, staff member or individual agent."

Adjourned at 5:50 pm.

REGULAR MEETING

Members Present: Art Donnelly, Sharon Kelly, Vanessa West, Nancy Pettibon and Julie Doran-Lee.

Others Present: Jordan Walker

Called to order at 6:11 p.m.

Board Ground Rules

West said she spoke with Kim Anderson with the Rural Community Assistance Corporation (RCAC). Anderson said that the ground rules she provided were just suggestions to be adapted and adjusted as the board sees fit. West said that one rule is that after all commissioners and members of the public have had a chance to speak on a subject, she, as the board chair, will ask if there is a motion on the item. Walker noted that this is not in the ground rules and asked if it should be included. West said that Anderson said that this is the chair's responsibility by default and that the chair should not restrict his or her authority to lead the meeting.

West read the first section of the ground rules to the board. The board discussed the clause regarding managing employees and its prohibition by board members unless they are specifically authorized by the whole board. Donnelly noted that many smaller districts without a manger assume the responsibility of managing the district to some degree.

It was suggested by West that the last clause of the first section be changed from listing specific offices to "all offices." This was the consensus of the board as offices might change year to year.

West suggested that "presiding officer" be changed to "chair" as this is the language that has been used in the district past and currently.

Regarding the agenda section, the timing and placement of the meeting agendas were discussed. Doran-Lee said she would need some time to get them posted as she had been delegated this responsibility by the board. It was decided that the goal should be having the agenda posted at least twenty-four hours before the meeting. West said that the chair is responsible for preparing the agenda and would get the agenda to Doran-Lee with enough time to post it at the post office, the Lions Club, on the district's website and Facebook page.



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West continued to read the remaining sections of the board ground rules and the board concluded that no further changes were needed.

Motion: Adopt the Board Ground Rules as amended by the board of commissioners.

Made by Kelly, seconded by Pettibon. Approved unanimously.

Letter to Past Due Customers

Walker drafted a letter to customers with a past due balance for the board to review. Pettibon read the letter to board. The board edited the letter to make it more direct in it's request. They also discussed the terms of the payment arrangements offered in the draft letter. Walker explained that the terms were based on what the district's billing software was capable of. The board decided that the terms should be flexible enough to accommodate customers while at the same time making progress on collecting on past due balances. Walker would be responsible for authorizing the arrangement terms on behalf of the district acting as office administrator.

Motion: Approve the letter to customers with past due balances as amended.

Made by Doran-Lee, seconded by Kelly. Approved unanimously.

Revision of Ordinances Process

West said that in her discussions with Anderson she was told that what the district has been referring to as "Ordinances" are actually rules and regulations for service. No one present could note the technical difference between the two types of documents.

Doran-Lee said she would like to change the district's policy on balances due on accounts when a customer moves out. She had to pay for a tenant's outstanding bill before service could be turned on at a home she owned. Walker said that there are a couple of possibilities for the district in these situations. One is placing a lien on the home as is explained in the application for service. Another is sending these accounts to collections. West said that realtors should be checking with the district before closing on a real estate transaction. This is her practice as a realtor. She said landlords and buyers could pursue tenants for the outstanding balances in small claims court if necessary.

West said that the district will need to raise rates sooner rather than later. The rate study process will take too long to complete in order to keep up with anticipated expenses. Anderson told her that the district could raise the meter fee without a rate study so long as it provides justification for the increase. She said that the board must follow the process correctly as previous rate changes did not conform to the statutory requirements for a change in ordinances. She said that it would be best to change the "meter fee" to a "service fee." This would make it more accurate and, she noted, that several houses are being charged for a 1-inch meter which they did not ask for.

Donnelly suggested that the basis for the service fee could be changed from meter size to purpose of use, either residential or commercial. The board discussed the largest water users, the school and an RV park. Walker said that the district could also adjust the water consumption rate to one based on consumption level and offered the City of Florence's rate scale as an example. It was also noted that



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there is an agreement with the Mapleton Fire Department in which the water district does not charge for their consumption.

Doran-Lee calculated a potential increase the meter/service fee as just under double what the district is currently charging in order to meet future expenses. She noted that this is a significant increase. West said that the budget includes contingency funds which reduces the need to increase the fee that much.

Donnelly Water Service

West brought up the issue of Donnelly's water service. Donnelly said his water pressure has been going in and out for about two weeks, but he has usually been without water pressure. West said that pressure on either side of his meter is at about 60 psi which would suggest that Donnelly's meter is being properly supplied. West suggested that the issue may be on his side of the meter. Donnelly noted that he has not had any problems with his water since he had his pump replaced after the second time a loss of system pressure caused his pump to fail. He did not believe that the issue is on his side of the meter. West said that Rochon has been running the plant regularly under the direction of the DRC (Direct Responsible Charge) and no other customers are without water.

Donnelly excused himself from the remainder of the meeting.

The board consensus was that the district should adhere to the existing policy that the customer is responsible for their side of the meter.

Job Descriptions

Earlier in the meeting Donnelly said that he thought that this meeting would include discussion and approval of the proposed job descriptions for the Lead Water System Operator and Assistant Water System Operator. This was not included in the meeting agenda, but the board decided to review the job descriptions. West said that she was concerned about the certification timeline. Rochon did not have time to pursue certification due to a series of crises. The board consensus was that it should remain in the job description but with the understanding circumstances sometimes make it hard to meet. West also wanted to make sure that the description is amended to allow for the board or lead operator to assign additional duties as needed.

Motion: Approve the job description for Lead Water System Operator amended to include "other duties as assigned."

Made by Doran-Lee, seconded by Kelly. Approved 4-0 (Donnelly absent).

Motion: Approve the job description for Assistant Water System Operator amended to include "other duties as assigned."

Made by Doran-Lee, seconded by Pettibon. Approved 4-0 (Donnelly absent).

Pettibon said she met with Walker to prepare a job description for the office position left open by Kelsie Allen's departure. She presented the job description for the position of Office Administrator. The board reviewed the description and decided that it should include other duties as assigned as well.



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Motion: Approve the job description for Office Administrator amended to include “other duties as assigned.”

Made by Doran-Lee, seconded by Pettibon. Approved 4-0 (Donnelly absent).

West said she asked Anderson if the position of Office Administrator needs to be posted or if the board could hire from within the district. Anderson said that the district did not need to advertise the position. West asked Walker if he would be willing to take the job. Walker indicated that he would.

Motion: Offer the position of Office Administrator to Jordan Walker.

Made by Kelly, seconded by Doran-Lee. Approved 4-0 (Donnelly absent).

Walker accepted the offer.

Meeting adjourned at 7:46 p.m.