



MAPLETON WATER DISTRICT
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
APPROVED SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES
6:00 PM NOVEMBER 27, 2023

Board Members Present: Vanessa West, Sharon Kelly, Art Donnelly, Julie Doran-Lee

Others Present: ShirleyMarie Raven, Samuel Hughes, Jordan Walker, Joe Rochon

Opened at 6:09 p.m.

Employee Evaluation Planning

West said that this was an item that was included the Special District Insurance Services site visit report. The district lacks employee evaluation policies and policies to evaluate employee performance. This meeting is to create these policies going forward. West asked how can the board fairly assess an employee when they do not have expectations laid out. Donnelly said that the board does have a job description that is fairly detailed. Hughes said that he did not think that he received that. He was told that he needed to make water. Walker said he would have received a copy when he was hired. Either way, Hughes said, he and Rochon are making water with a high rate of recovery.

West read the text of the job description and said that it seemed vague to her. Kelly said that one thing that should be in the job description should be the prohibition of the use of personal phones. West said that if that were enacted the district would need to buy all the employee's phones. Donnelly said that sort of policy would be part of employee policies rather than part of the job description. Doran-Lee said the issue at hand is having a way to evaluate employees. Walker said that the policy that Kelly was discussing was part of the handbook he and Anderson have been working on. Kelly said that policy needs to be implemented immediately. Doran-Lee said that those documents do not exist right now but are being worked on.

Donnelly asked how the board could be clearer on what its expectations of him are. Walker said that it would make more sense start with the board's expectations then produce it in a format that employees can work with. Donnelly said he agreed so he was not sure why the board needed Hughes and Rochon present at this meeting.

The board discussed the purpose of the Assistant Water System Operator, which was to have a back up for Rochon and to make sure that he has two days off a week to limit overtime.

Walker explained that the purpose of the employee evaluation process is to reduce the likelihood of the district being sued for discharging an employee illegally.

West said that she would like a new timesheet format so that the board can have a sense of the time of day that work was being done. The board discussed issues with timesheets being submitted recently.

West then discussed the two-hour minimum show up time and said that she hoped that the balance of time between operating the skid and the two hours that operations staff could find some things to do for the district. Donnelly sought to clarify if the board was supposed to be creating evaluations or completing employee evaluations. West said that she was just trying to explain what the board should be evaluating employees on. Doran-Lee explained that what the board needs to do is create a document to be used for employee evaluations.



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Walker explained the evaluations he had received in previous positions. These typically break the job description into categories then, within those categories, there are performance metrics to decrease the subjectivity of the evaluation. Then there is an opportunity to follow up to and it is consistent over time. His thinking was that in this meeting the board could create categories for each position then within those categories establish metrics. He suggested that the board go through the job descriptions and group them into several categories, then collectively they could agree upon the categories and metrics. Donnelly said that it may seem more like homework then bring them back to compare what they created. That may be the best use of the board's time. West said that she would like to get started at least to get a general idea. Walker said that the board could decide on categories at this meeting then board members could work on it individually.

Walker began writing down categories at the suggestion of board members. These included:

- Plant Operations and Maintenance
 - Intake Maintenance
- Distribution System
 - Tank Maintenance
 - Landscape Maintenance
- State Regulatory Requirements
- Certification Progress
- General Performance
 - Punctuality
 - Work Ethic
 - Positive Attitude
 - Quality of Work
 - Adaptability
 - Team work
 - Achievements
 - Communication skills
- Project Management

Donnelly said we would need a schedule to evaluate maintenance.

Donnelly asked Hughes if the lead operator sets a schedule or if it's a day to day thing. Hughes said it's a mixture of the two. Kelly asked how much Hughes and Rochon work together. Not much in the last week, Hughes said. West said she suggested to Rochon to give Hughes more independent tasks to reduce Rochon's hours.

Doran-Lee looked up a list of performance measures online. Walker said that many of those measures would be hard to evaluate objectively but they could be included in a "General Performance" category.

Kelly, West and Hughes discussed time keeping materials and processes.



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West said one of the reasons she wanted to have this meeting was because some of the things she is focused on is not necessarily a task or category. She just has list of things that need to be done that she knows about. Walker said that this could be a new category, like "Project Management" for instance.

Donnelly raised the point that the goal of creating the position of Assistant Water System Operator was to reduce the lead operator's hours. He wanted a category to review the status of this goal. Walker said that could be another category like "time management". The board discussed the purpose of the operations team made up of the lead and the assistant system operators. West emphasize that the mission of the district was to provide clean water at a reasonable cost. The last part of the mission was the reason to create the assistant position to reduce the amount of personnel expenditures. Kelly asked if there needs to be someone at the plant everyday. Hughes and West explained that someone needs to be there everyday, but not all day.

Donnelly raised the issue of the tank leak and explained that the board needs a good reason why that it has not yet been fixed. The reason at the time the insurance carrier saw the leak was that the lead operator needed a second person to be there.

Kevin Kimball entered the meeting and notified the board of a leak on Riverview Avenue. He said that someone was trying to get in touch with Rochon and called his wife. West said that Rochon would be at the meeting shortly. Hughes said he would check on the leak.

Walker listed a few other items to be included in the evaluation metrics: training staff, safety and emergency preparedness, board relationship management. West suggested that the general performance section could be reduced. Walker suggested that the board members could decide individually and then come back with suggestions. Walker then listed: leaks, testing and other state requirements.

Donnelly wanted to clarify if Rochon was physically doing the state tests or if the DRC was. Walker explained that the district conducts the tests but they are officially submitted to the state by the DRC. West and Rochon work on the testing schedule because West also delivers the sewer samples.

Kelly asked who would be covered by the evaluation metrics that they have discussed so far. Walker said that it would primarily be Rochon's position but there would be overlap between Rochon and Hughes position. Hughes evaluation would likely be somewhat shorter. Doran-Lee and Donnelly suggested that supervision should be included in the Rochon's evaluation along with the training category. Donnelly also suggested that included in board relations or time management should establishing a schedule and submitting clear timesheets. West said that she was thinking that on Wednesday or Thursday having a required staff meeting. At that meeting West can review the schedule to manage the amount of hours based on the board's priorities. West said that Walker had suggested a general weekly staff meeting. Walker said that while he suggested Monday he did not have a preference. West said mid-week would make more sense. Donnelly asked if Walker would go to the plant for that meeting? Walker said the he would prefer to have the meeting at the office because its too easy to get distracted at the plant. West agreed and said it would be easier for her to monitor hours week to week rather than month to month.



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Walker said that one thing he would suggest to include in the evaluation is use of email for communications. He said it makes time management and communication easier. He suggested that communications be included in the board relationship category. Donnelly further stated that it was something that could be measured so long as the board set a clear expectations for employees.

Walker asked if there were any more categories to be added. West said she did not have any right now but may add some in the future. She said that beginning the process was helpful because she was not quite sure where to begin.

Kelly said she did not think the board should have to wait for employee policies to set expectations for use of personal and district electronics.

Rochon showed up to the meeting and West explained what the board was working on. She also noted that Hughes had left to check out a leak on Riverview. West turned attention to training and responsibilities of the Assistant Water System Operator.

Kelly asked about the slide risk above the plant. Rochon said the slide risk exists, but it does not appear to be getting worse at the moment. Donnelly asked about the status of the geotechnical engineer report. West said that she received a preliminary report which she had some additions for the engineer to address specific items requested by the grant-making entity. She said it looks like the contractor's work is likely to begin in the summer of 2024 around the same time as the plant construction.

Rochon raised the topic of the timeline of the plant completion. He said that the district will be spending an additional \$100,000 on rental fees for a skid that is failing. He asked when this is going to be someone else's fault. Kelly said that it was not their fault. Donnelly said that there have been a series of change orders that have delayed the process, most recently the change order to include the Lakos separator, which he thought was a good change. West review some other earlier change orders including the change to the size and production capacity of the plant and a change in the amount of turbidity it was expected handle. Donnelly said it would be difficult to place blame on a single person for the delays. West said that the board has made completion of this project the highest priority since she has been involved. Rochon said he was just uncomfortable with the amount of money being wasted on the rental skid.

Donnelly asked to turn back to the agenda items. Walker said that we have basically covered the evaluation process for the Lead Water System Operator. The Assistant Water System Operator probably where the board should focus its attention on next. He asked if the Lead Water System Operator would be completing the assistant's evaluation or if the chair as operations manager would or a combination of the two. West said that she though it would be best if she as the manager completes the evaluations for all employees. Walker said that the chair and secretary share some responsibility in employee management, with each focused on either operations or administration. West said that she just wanted to have the same person or team of people complete the evaluations for all employees for the sake of consistency. The lead operator should have input on the assistant operator evaluation, but it should be the same people should do all the valuations.



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The board discussed some the metrics that Donnelly and Walker discussed on the side. Walker said that one area in which all employees are evaluated is customer service. Donnelly asked how that would be measured. Rochon said that follow up calls to customers. Walker said that keeping a call log could help measure that. Kelly said that a training program should be included too. West noted communicates availability and is reliable. West told Rochon said that she would like to meet at the office on Thursdays to discuss hours and projects. Rochon said that that would be helpful in following up with things that he has mentioned to both West and Walker so that everyone is on the same page and progress is being made. West said it would be helpful in her keeping the board informed.

West asked Walker if he could send photos of the written charts to the board for further review. Walker asked if she intended to discuss his evaluation as well as this would be the best time for the board. West said that she thought much of what was covered for the other evaluations would apply to him as well. Walker said it would be a little different because the things that he does in his position is actually measurable.

West and Rochon diverted to discussing the leak on Riverview Avenue. West said she and Doran-Lee would swing by to see if the leak has gotten bigger since that morning. Rochon excused himself from the meeting.

Walker said that a fairly easy measurement would be billing. The time they go out and the accuracy of billing can both be measured. For accuracy, a measure can be the number of adjustments. Another would be accounting documents. The accountant would be the best to assess that measure. West said that she could check in with the accountant to get their assessment of the Office Administrator's performance. Donnelly said that under recordkeeping the monthly report to our insurer should be included. Walker said that might be more of a reporting requirement. West said attendance, punctuality, timeliness, and customer service are some other categories. Donnelly said that this is something that can actually be evaluated because he has a set schedule. West said that her goal is to have an actual schedule for operations.

Kelly again raised the district electronic policy which the board discussed further. Doran-Lee said that she agreed that the district does need a written policy, but for the time being Hyak has been hired to monitor the district's IT system and to adjust settings to prevent potential abuses. Donnelly said that the \$21,000 loss of personal electronic equipment is the result of a hole in policy. The problem has been functionally fixed by hiring Hyak, but the board will need to be very careful in creating and adopting these policies.

Donnelly said that, since the board has changed the subject, he wanted clarification on the status of the phone situation with Rochon. West said there were some problems with the new phone, namely the phone number given to the phone was given to another account. So, for now, if there is an emergency she needs to knock on Rochon's door. Doran-Lee said she needs the information to get this problem solved. West said that Rochon has the phone and Walker has the account information.



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Donnelly said that because Walker is currently doing the meter reading that should also be included in the evaluation. Walker said he was not sure it would be included in the evaluation because it is not in his job description, but he and Donnelly thought it should be included for the time being.

Raven asked if Walker was responsible for collections. Walker said that he was so that should be included. Doran-Lee asked for the issue of overdue accounts be included in the next regular meeting agenda.

West said that she thought that what the board has come up with for the Office Administrator evaluation pretty much covers it. Walker said he would photograph the items and make them available.

Board Reports

Walker said that he kept this section in the agenda in case any of the board members had anything they wanted to add.

West said that she would like to have Walker do some research regarding the pressure tank building. She wanted to know the address so the district can restore power. She also wanted to know why power was disconnected in the past, so he would need to look at the minutes. As far as she and Rochon can remember is that the former board chair objected paying for power to a building the district did not own. West said she was concerned the district is wearing out the booster pumps when a pressure tank could decrease the time the booster pump was on. She wants to know if it was shut off for a reason for instance because of a leak.

Kelly said that she would like to take a moment to say she would like to make sure that no further assets are purchased without the approval of the full board. She listed the trailer as an example. Doran-Lee said that the board did approve the purchase of the trailer. Walker recalls the board having a discussion about the trailer purchase but recall an explicit motion. West said that she recalled the board approving she and Pettibon approving purchases.

West raised the issue of purchasing leak detection equipment. She said that it has taken too long and there have been too many issues. The Three Rivers Casino will not grant the district any more funds this upcoming year because it has not done what it said it was going to do. She is ready to just buy some of the equipment herself.

Kelly wanted to bring the discussion back to the trailer, specifically she wanted to know if the district had it in its possession. West said that Rochon just needs to pick it up. Walker also said that he needs the title and to get it insured. He has a bill of sale but has not received the title. West said she would make those phone calls to get this taken care of.

West said that she will just go buy the leak detection equipment, if that is what it takes, so the board can say that it did it. She said that she needs to know exactly how much of the casino grant money is left and asked Walker if he had that figure. Walker said that he did. Completing the grant is not just purchasing equipment but also using the equipment, West said. She also mentioned that she would like the district to have witching sticks as she had seen them used effectively by the school district.



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Donnelly said that he would like a staff report on the meters. He wanted to know, for instance, who the district bought them from, what sort of warranty they have, who provides service for them and such just because the district will need to deal with them as they age.

West asked for an update on the customer letter regarding leak damage. Doran-Lee said that she called the insurance company and was waiting for a call back.

Kelly suggested that the board make West and Doran-Lee the two board members whose approval is required to authorize purchases since Pettibon is on leave. Donnelly said that would make sense to him.

Motion: Require the approval of Vanessa West and Julie Doran-Lee for purchases over \$250.

Motion made by Kelly, seconded by Donnelly. Motion carried unanimously.

West asked what the board wanted to do regarding the RCAC letter of support. Kelly said that she would call the office the following day to go over the changes she would like to see on the letter. Donnelly said he would let Walker know as well.

Donnelly said that the board needs to be better at letting Anderson with RCAC know what its priorities are. Anderson is a very valuable resource, but the board needs to be better about using her and the RCAC most effectively.

West noted that after the next regular board meeting Anderson would like to have a work session on the board policy document. Donnelly thought that the board had already approved it. Walker said that the board may have approved it but a formal final draft. Also, there were two documents that Anderson presented last time she attended a board meeting, of which one was the board vision and values statement. Donnelly said he thought that was all part of the same package.

Adjourned at 7:54 p.m.

These minutes were approved at the June 10, 2024 meeting.