

PACIFIC CITY JWSA BOARD OF DIRECTORS
SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES

March 11, 2021

Chair McVicker stated that the board was meeting via video conference call due to the pandemic and the Oregon Governors social distancing recommendation.

Directors Present: Carolyn McVicker, Sean Carlton, Cameron Gogas, Tom Donohue, and Anne Price. (via video conference call)

Guests Present: Larry Rouse

Staff Present: Michelle Hughes, Ray Browning, Leonard Whiteman, and Rachelle DeLoe.

Chair McVicker called to order the special meeting at 3:00 PM.

Chair McVicker clarified that the Authority Manager had given his resignation at the prior weeks business meeting and upon mutual agreement his last day was March 8, 2021.

UPDATE FROM STAFF

A. AMR Project

Ms. Hughes reported that the Authority was waiting for about 700 lids to be delivered and installed by the contractor. Ms. Hughes continued that they had called the distributor and were told the lids would arrive on March 22, 2021. Ms. Hughes said the lids that needed replacing were metal traffic rated and would not work with the new radios and the new lids would be plastic.

Ms. Hughes continued that the staff had been informed that the new meter system would work with Springbrook accounting software but was not verified that it would work with the version the Authority was operating, and it would not. Ms. Hughes noted thankfully they had already planned for an upgrade but may have a timing issue regarding the March meter reading time when they would have that part of the software upgrade complete.

Ms. Hughes said during the meter changeout process the contractor had trouble opening the locks on the meters and were then given permission to cut all the locks off the meters. Ms. Hughes continued that the locks could be replaced for about \$11,000 and asked the board for guidance on whether to proceed with replacing the locks. Ms. Hughes said that the Authority Manager at that time did not believe in the lock system and was comfortable leaving the locks off.

Chair McVicker clarified that the lids were the last installation piece of the contract. Ms. Hughes said she believed so and added that they had found a few meters within the district that had not been installed, but it did not seem realistic to call the contractor down for something so small. Director Donohue asked about the purpose of the lock. Ms. Hughes replied that the locks either locked the meter on or off so that customers did not use the meter as a personal shutoff and cause

damage to the meter. Chair McVicker asked how many locks were cut. Ms. Hughes replied roughly up to 1,000.

Director Gogas came onto the meeting at 3:07 pm.

Director Carlton clarified that the Authority staff did not unlock the locks prior to the contractor changing the meter and the contractor had cut the locks themselves. Ms. Hughes responded that the contractor was given keys to the locks but was having difficulty and it was taking up too much of their time to unlock them, so were given permission to cut the locks. Ms. Hughes noted that was what she had been told. Director Carlton asked if the locks were part of a discussion prior to the contract. Ms. Hughes said she was unsure as the staff had not been involved in the contract process. Director Carlton stated that he believed it would be a waste of \$11,000 to replace the locks and was opposed to replacing them. Director Donohue asked if the contractor had permission. Ms. Hughes said because the staff was not involved in discussions with the contractor, she could not say whether they had permission or not. Director Donohue said if the contractor had taken it upon themselves to cut the locks to save time, they should be responsible for replacing them. Chair McVicker said she had a discussion with the Authority Manager during that time, to which he had framed it as the contractor was having difficulty with the locks and was told if the lock did not open, they could cut the lock. Chair McVicker continued that it did not sound like a free for all and did not indicate how many locks it would include. Chair McVicker agreed that they would need to get to the bottom of it prior to the closing of the contract. Director Gogas asked if they needed a lock to turn off the meter with the new system or could they do it remotely. Ms. DeLoe responded that with the current AMR system they had installed they could not and the AMI system that was in the Master Plan would use master radios that gave the Authority the ability to see each meter and its usage, but not to turn them on and off remotely. Chair McVicker believed the locks were a policy, so to choose to not replace them a policy would need to be changed.

Chair McVicker reiterated that the board had to look at two separate issues, whether the contractor received permission and if there was a liability on their side, and the potential replacement of 1,000 locks. Discussion ensued regarding legal advisement and policy. Ms. Hughes asked if any of the board had a copy of the contract, the responded they did not. Chair McVicker said that because the contract was not fulfilled yet, with the delay of the bids, it was not an emergency and could continue to be discussed and sifted through. Director Donohue asked for a copy of the contract for his records. Chair McVicker asked Ms. Hughes to send a copy of the contract to the board and to go through email correspondence between the contractor and Authority Manager. Chair McVicker continued that Ms. Hughes would be testing Springbrook with the new meters and could she track the additional hours it would take to complete the next meter reading.

Director Carlton mentioned a customer had approached him about their meter not being replaced and their neighbors' meter was leaking. Ms. Hughes replied that they were fixing those mistakes as the calls came in from customers. Discussion ensued regarding specific dilemmas customers had experienced during the meter replacement.

B. Horn Creek Internet

Ms. Hughes informed the board that the internet at Horn Creek had diminished over the years, going from 1.5 MB to 0.5 MB. Ms. Hughes continued that with the lack of speed, neither their IT company nor PALL, which maintained the membranes at the treatment facility, were able to log in remotely. Ms. Hughes said she had contacted CenturyLink and they could possibly offer 6 GB and had offered a new modem. Ms. Hughes continued that she had also contacted Wave, another internet company that the Authority utilized at the wastewater treatment plant, to see their options. Ms. Hughes said the Wave could offer them fiber optic 50 GB internet for \$450.00 per month, which seemed high, but the Horn Creek Water Treatment Plant was vital, and she would like permission to further research and/or request a formal quote. Discussion ensued regarding causes of the diminished internet service, other internet avenues, and possible preceding research before making a final decision.

The board asked Ms. Hughes to file a complaint with the PUC about CenturyLinks unwillingness to improve internet service within the district, contact CenturyLink to request a tech to go to Horn Creek, contact Wave for a formal quote, and talk to Global Network Support about the best modem for their system.

APPOINT BUDGET OFFICER

Chair McVicker entertained an appointment for Budget Officer for Fiscal Year 21/22. Director Price nominated Michelle Hughes for Budget Officer for the 21/22 budget cycle. Director Carlton seconded, and the motion carried unanimously.

INFORMATION GATHERING-STAFF INPUT

Chair McVicker said the board was interested in gathering input from staff confidentially. Director Carlton suggested the board conduct an HR assessment that would include staff and board input. Director Carlton continued that they could hire a consultant or create a two-person subcommittee of the board to talk with staff. Director Donohue asked for clarification regarding the one-year guarantee from Prothman, to assist with a new search if the Authority Manager did not work out. Ms. Hughes responded that the prior Authority Manager had been with the district over a year, so the contract was closed. Discussion ensued regarding the board's options for an HR assessment and including staff input in the upcoming Authority Manager search. The board discussed how an HR consultant, such as Ryan Fleming, could help them communicate with staff about struggles over the previous year.

Motion

Director Price moved to contact Ryan Fleming of HR Solutions and request he join a board meeting to discuss gathering information from staff. Director Donohue seconded, and the motion carried unanimously.

Chair McVicker asked how soon the board would like to meet. The board agreed that a special meeting as soon as possible would be appropriate. Director Carlton asked if the board would want to postpone the Master Plan workshop as the HR special meeting was a higher priority.

INTERIM AUTHORITY MANAGER OPTIONS

Chair McVicker said because the Authority Manager search could take several months, they needed an alternative in the meantime and suggested that they appoint a board liaison. Chair McVicker asked for input from the board. Director Donohue gave a few suggestions including giving the leadership opportunity to one of the Authority's long-time employees. Director Carlton agreed that a liaison was important for the near future, but an interim manager was also vitally important. The board discussed options for an interim authority manager including contract companies, OAWU (Oregon Association of Water Utilities), SDAO (Special District Association of Oregon), and consulting services from the former Authority Manager Tony Owen. Chair McVicker offered to contact OAWU, SDAO, Prothman, and Tony Owen, to see if they had availability or a proposal for a 6–12-month timeframe. Members of the board did not feel it was a good idea to involve Mr. Owen in the interim Authority Manager options and discussion as it may be perceived incorrectly by the community. Director Price said Mr. Owen had ample knowledge of the Authority's system and laws that would be beneficial to the Authority and asked for reconsideration. Chair McVicker said she would move forward with the other options, excluding contacting Mr. Owen.

Chair McVicker recommended that Director Price serve as board liaison with staff. The board agreed and Director Price accepted.

Director Carlton wanted to assure staff that if they had concerns about anything, they could bring them to Director Price or another board member. Chair McVicker clarified that if a staff member did not feel comfortable talking to Director Price then they could seek out another board member, but for the day-to-day questions and operations Director Price would be the liaison.

AUTHORITY MANAGER SEARCH

Chair McVicker reported that she had a conversation with Bill McDonald from Prothman to see if they would be interested in searching for an Authority Manager again. Chair McVicker continued that Prothman had agreed to a discount of \$3,000.00 with another year guarantee. Chair McVicker asked if the board was ready to move forward with Prothman. The board agreed that they were ready. Discussion ensued regarding ways to change the interview process to ensure success, what the recruitment process might look like during the state of emergency, and the inclusion of community members.

Motion

Director Price moved to move forward with a discounted contract with Prothman and invite Bill McDonald to join a meeting with the board. Director Carlton seconded, and the motion carried unanimously.

Chair McVicker said she would contact Bill McDonald to see when he was available to meet with the board and would get copies of the previous position posting to the board for review.

Director Carlton wanted to inform the board of the new OSHA Covid risk assessment, infection control plan, and employee training that was required. Ms. DeLoe responded that the Authority

had a plan in place that the prior Authority Manager had put together. The board could not understand her, due to internet issues. Ms. Hughes clarified that the Authority had a plan in place and protocols and would send a copy to the board.

Chair McVicker adjourned the meeting at 5:08 PM.

The PCJWSA Board of Directors approved these minutes on April 6, 2021, by the following votes:

Aye_____ Nay_____ Abstain_____ Absent_____

ATTEST:

Carolyn McVicker, Chair

Michelle Hughes, Authority Manager