

2021 budget public hearing held but approval delayed  
Originally, the board was expected to

approve the 2021 budget and appropriate money to specific funds. But this had to be tabled when Colorado local

government budget laws were not followed. During public comment, this reporter (Robenstein) asked why the public did not have access to the draft 2021 budget prior to the public hearing as is required by law. Hamilton said it was an oversight and it would be posted for anyone to see. Paper copies are now posted on the MSD windows for review.

**Note:** The district shall be subject to the “Local Government Budget Law of Colorado,” CRS § 29-1-106 (2016) that required special districts to post notice of the annual public hearing before the meeting.

Hamilton opened the public hearing on the 2021 budget, and Fritsche insisted that even though the budget was not posted on the website, members of the public could have come to the MSD offices to read it, although the office is closed due to the pandemic.

Fritsche said if the public wishes to comment on the budget at the next meeting, after they’ve had a chance to see it, “they can comment during public comments at the (December) meeting, but the (official public) hearing is complete.”

Pam Boone of JM Weston Homes, which is building the Wagons West development, asked to be added to the email list so she could review the bud-

get. Fritsche said since MSD is not certifying a mill levy this year, it doesn’t need to send the budget to the state until the end of December. She said the legal requirement of holding a public hearing is being fulfilled at this meeting, and the board could adopt the budget at its Dec. 16 meeting.

The board did approve a resolution approving current rates and fees for 2021. MSD does not plan to make any changes until after the results of the rate study by GMS are reviewed in January. A schedule of fees was not included in the resolution, “I understand that document does exist,” said Fritsche.

ORC contract with Donala nearly complete

During the Oct. 21 meeting, the board discussed contracting with Donala Water and Sanitation District for access to an operator in responsible charge (ORC). See <https://ocn.me/v20n11.htm#msd>.

**Background:** Since July, MSD has lost District Manager Mike Wicklund and Interim District Manager Erin Krueger. This means ORC day-to-day tasks have been largely completed by GMS Inc., MSD’s consulting engineer, but this is not sustainable. See [www.ocn.me/v20n10.htm#msd](http://www.ocn.me/v20n10.htm#msd).

During a review of Donala’s draft proposal, Kronick said there seemed to be a 10% overhead charge in addition to the base fees. “If you can’t tell me the specific amount, that bothers me,” she said. Reisig said, “Tell me what it will cost bottom line.”

Board members seemed confused about the division of labor between Donala as ORC, GMS as the district’s contract engineer, and the tasks for a possible new part-time administrator.

The board directed Fritsche to verify costs with Donala and to attach any required addendums to the contract. Ultimately the board authorized Hamilton to enter into an agreement with Donala, hopefully by Dec. 1, which will be ratified at the December meeting.

Ongoing projects

- North Monument Creek Interceptor design work is ongoing, but water return flow issues are delaying the overall project. Fritsche said \$168,000 has been allocated in the 2021 budget so that MSD can pay its share of the design costs, which equates to 5% to 6% of the total design.
- Boone said the Wagons West development is going gangbusters, but she also asked who she would pay for a tap fee. Hamilton asked her to send him an email to coordinate this.
- Willow Springs needs to submit drawings for review by GMS.
- GMS is due to deliver the rates and fees study in January or February.

Coping with no district manager

- Howe asked what to do about the district manager’s office. “Having looked at Mike and Erin’s job descriptions, there are a lot of blanks there that need to be filled,” he said. Fritsche suggested that former employees could come in to assist.
- In addition to COVID-19 restrictions on offices being open, it appears the public doesn’t often know when the office is open to pay bills or tap fees in person since Allsup can’t always be there.
- Hamilton agreed to review the part-time administrator description and post that job at the beginning of 2021.
- Website updates have not been getting completed. “Who is running the website?” asked Howe.



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