

Donala Water and Sanitation District, July 15

District reviews budget at midyear

By James Howald and Jackie Burhans
The Donala Water and Sanitation District (DWSD) board met on July 15 to hear a report on the district's finances and a report from General Manager Jeff Hodge that included a review of action items from a previous board workshop. The board heard an update on the district's new billing system and the status of district operations.

2021 budget on track

Hodge told the board that relative to revenue, the budget was "tracking well" although water sales were slow due to rain that he expected to continue through October. Sewer service revenue was "spot on" at just over 56% of expected revenue collected.

Midyear operating revenue was at 55% of what was anticipated, Hodge said.

Expenditures were also "tracking where we want," Hodge said, adding engineering, legal fees and exploration of water rights were over the budgeted amount, but overall expenditures were at 66% of the expected amount.

The board voted unanimously to accept the financial report.

Manager's report details workshop action items

Hodge reviewed outstanding action items from a previous workshop, including:

- The water re-use project nicknamed "The Loop," whose goal is to return water flows from Fountain Creek to some of the water districts east and north of Colorado Springs, had initial proposals from consultants on the cost of studies needed for the project. One of the proposals was out of line with the other two. The studies would include proposed routing for the service lines to move the water to the receiving districts. Representatives from Cherokee Metropolitan District and Woodmoor Water and Sanitation District met with mayors from El Paso County to discuss The Loop and its potential funding.
- DWSD and Triview Metropolitan District have applied for state funds to look at groundwater storage potential, or aquifer storage recharge.
- Meetings with county commissioners, Colorado Springs City Council and Colorado Springs Utilities (CSU) are ongoing.

New billing system implementation underway

Christina Hawker, the district's Accounts Payable specialist, told the board that the billing system from Tyler Technologies should be up and running by May 2022.

Hodge said that hardware upgrades for water meters were back-ordered, and the Tyler billing system required those upgrades to be in place for one billing cycle before it could produce accurate results. A new chart of accounts is being developed as part of the implementation, Hodge said.

Office Manager Tanja Smith commented on the difficulty of using the current billing system in the last billing cycle.

Highlights of operational reports

- DWSD customers used 37.51 million gallons of water in June, with nearly 30 million gallons pumped from wells and 7.626 million sourced from Willows Ranch and delivered to Donala customers by CSU. Of the total use, nearly 26 million gallons were used for out-

side watering.

- Chief Waste Treatment Plant Operator Mike Boyette reported that summer weather was helping the wastewater treatment plant operate well under permit levels.
- Beginning in August, the district will begin testing its biosolids, the residue remaining after waste processing, for compliance with Colorado's regulations for Technologically Enhanced Naturally Occurring Radioactive Material (TENORM). This must be completed by March 2022. If TENORM levels are too high, biosolids could not be applied as fertilizer, and incoming wastewater might need to be treated before it enters the waste treatment plant. Alternately, biosolids might need to be

hauled and stored.

- If TENORM levels are too high, the district will try to identify the source of the TENORM.

The next meeting is scheduled for Aug. 19 at 1:30 p.m. Generally, board meetings are held the third Thursday of the month and include online access due to coronavirus restrictions; call (719) 488-3603 or access www.donalawater.org to receive up-to-date meeting information. The district office is located at 15850 Holbein Drive, Colorado Springs. See <https://www.donalawater.org> for more information about the district.

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