

Academy Water and Sanitation District board meeting, April 17

Costly repairs needed for deep well; board hears of North Monument Creek Interceptor project

By Natalie Barszcz

At the Academy Water and Sanitation District (AWSD) board meeting April 17, Jenny Bishop, senior project engineer, Water Resources, and Earl Wilkinson, Water Services officer of Colorado Springs Utilities (CSU), presented the proposed North Monument Creek Interceptor (NMCI) project, and the board heard about the emergency repairs needed for the deep well from the Operations Manager Anthony Pastorello.

North Monument Creek Interceptor project Bishop gave an overview of the proposed NMCI project, facilitated by CSU and the U.S. Air Force Academy, encouraging small wastewater districts to come together and use one state-of-the-art wastewater facility and fewer costly lift stations. It is still early and no contracts have been signed, although it is hoped that Donala Water and Sanitation District, Triview Metropolitan District, Forest Lakes Metropolitan District, Woodmoor Water Sanitation District, Monument Sanitation District and Palmer Lake Sanitation District will join the NMCI project and cost-sharing.

AWSD currently receives wastewater services from Donala via the Upper Monument Creek Wastewater Treatment Facility (UMCRWWTF) and that contract would continue if the NMCI project goes through. The project would not be on line until January 2021. See www.ocn.me/v18n12.htm#msd, www.ocn.me/v19n1.htm#fmd, www.ocn.me/v19n2.htm#tvm.

Future Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment regulations would require very expensive infrastructure upgrades for the UMCRWWTF due to the strict requirements of Nutrient Management Control, Water Quality Control Commission Regulation 85. However, CSU's J.D. Phillips Water Resource Reclamation Facility is already built

to handle the constraints of Regulation 85, and under Section 208 of the Clean Water Act small wastewater treatment facilities are encouraged to come together and have just one outfall of clean effluent and fewer plants. Building the NMCI, potentially removing the need for two wastewater facilities, would fit well with the goals of Section 208. See www.colorado.gov/pacific/cdhe/nmcwqcc/reg85.

Even if the City for Champions U.S. Air Force Academy Visitor's Center Complex does not happen, the NMCI project would still be a good idea and the AFA easements would be invaluable, said Bishop.

Emergency deep well repairs

Pastorello notified the board of the recent findings of the Denver-Dawson deep well camera exploration carried out due to a 50 percent drop in pumping rate this winter. He recommended replacing the Well 2 pump, cleaning the well casing, and upgrading the pipes. "We need the deep well before summertime."

The board unanimously approved the Well 2 pump replacement and refurbishment project for \$46,070, pending an immediate review by GMS Consulting Engineers.

Because of the unbudgeted expense for repairing the deep well, the consensus was that the purchase of a used generator must be delayed, but Pastorello will pursue getting electrical work done on the pump connections so that they could work with a rented generator to keep the lift stations and water pumps working during future outages.

MVEA outage update

Treasurer Walter Reiss thanked Mark Morton of GMS Consulting Engineers for following up with Mountain View Electric Association (MVEA) in regard to its lack of response during the bomb cyclone, which left AWSD without power for 2½ days, shutting off the lift

stations that should have been taking wastewater to Donala. See www.ocn.me/v19n4.htm#awsd.

Reiss said, "MVEA's delay in returning power to the district brought to light incompetency." He said MVEA had no kind of emergency procedure and prioritized solely on the number of phone calls received, and his greatest concern was to hear that residents had complained to MVEA about work crew noise, so MVEA stopped work, delaying the return to power to AWSD. "It is no way to run a railroad, let alone an electric company," said Reiss. Morton said there was nothing they could do to get on a priority list.

Note: After the meeting, OCN reporter and managing editor Lisa Hatfield helped the AWSD board get in contact with the Pikes Peak Regional Office of Emergency Management to facilitate communication with MVEA.

New attorney

Board President Steve Callicott introduced Joan Fritsche of Shearer & Fritsche PC. Fritsche has 20 years of experience representing public and private entities in Colorado with a strong focus on local government and land use law. The board unanimously approved the engagement terms for contracting with Fritsche as the district's attorney.

The meeting adjourned at 7:46 p.m.

The Academy Water and Sanitation District board meets at 6 p.m. on the third Wednesday each month at the Donald Wescott Fire Station, 15415 Gleneagle Dr. Contact Operations Manager Anthony Pastorello at 481-0711 or see the district website www.colorado.gov/pacific/awsd.

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Donala Water and Sanitation District, April 18

Regional pipeline plans encounter complications

By Jennifer Kaylor

The Donala Water and Sanitation District board met on April 18. Directors discussed recent planning challenges encountered with the potential regional wastewater and water pipelines and received updates on a variety of projects.

Exchange decrees pose potential snag

For the past several months, Colorado Springs Utilities (CSU) has been working with six wastewater districts in northern El Paso County to explore the possibility of regional pipeline that will deliver the northern entities' wastewater to CSU's J.D. Phillips Water Reclamation Facility. The potential participants in this North Monument Creek Interceptor (NMCI) are Donala, Triview Metropolitan District, Woodmoor Water and Sanitation District, Monument Sanitation District, Palmer Lake Sanitation District, and Forest Lakes

Metro District.

District Manager Kip Petersen expanded on information that CSU provided at recent meetings. The wastewater NMCI participants will likely need to file court action to change the locations of their respective "permitted" discharge points. Petersen noted that this information was "not overwhelming, but it can be a time issue." CSU estimated Donala's share of the NMCI cost as \$2 million to \$2.4 million and a one-time wastewater system use fee of \$65,114. Donala's current outside-city treatment rate would decrease. Instead of being charged 1.5 times the current inside-city rate, Donala, as well as the other northern districts, would be charged 1.1 times the inside-city rate. Petersen confirmed that many hurdles must be overcome and, ultimately, the participating entities, including CSU, recognize that the project may develop best if approached from a collaborative partnership instead of a provider perspective.

In addition to the wastewater pipeline, four northern water districts or entities—Donala, Triview, Woodmoor, and the Town of Monument—have indicated interest in coordinating return flows infrastructure for potable, or drinking, water with CSU as well.

The districts that are seeking return flows, on the other hand, recently received surprising news from CSU, Petersen reported. He said during low-flow seasons of the Arkansas River, typically March and September, the northern water districts may not be able to access their respective return flows due to the complex legal ramifications of exchanging water types from other districts through CSU's system. With respect to possible low-flow seasons, however, Director Wayne Vanderschuere expressed little concern and cited the infrequency of flow interruptions in drought years and the potential to manage those seasons with various options.

Petersen emphasized that the other three water districts have welcomed Donala's input regarding return flows, but Donala is not currently committed to fund a second point of return flow delivery in addition to its current arrangement with CSU. If a cost/benefit analysis supports Donala's participation in the return flows infrastructure, Donala may be able to "cascade" water downward instead of having to "boost" it, if Triview, Woodmoor, and Monument construct the

new water line to connect with the Northgate facility. The cost savings would contribute significantly to the district's share of the NMCI pipeline.

District seeks neighbors' input

Design on the facility for groundwater contamination, mitigation, and removal continues, stated Petersen. This facility was referred to as a dewatering station in previous articles. Donala was successful in obtaining an exemption from the El Paso County 1041 permit, a success for which Petersen credited Commissioner Holly Williams' influence. A May 16 groundbreaking is anticipated.

On April 16, Donala staff conducted an informational meeting with the district's neighbors and explained why the facility is necessary, and how, when, and where it will be erected. Questions raised pertained to how the facility will affect the view and whether it would create a health issue. Petersen assured the neighbor closest to the facility that it would be located as far to the southeast as possible, confirmed that the facility would not pose any health concerns, and committed to sound-proofing the compressor room as much as possible. The one-hour meeting was well received, said Petersen. He noted that the neighborhood meeting was not a legal obligation but was completely voluntary and reflects the district's high communication standards.

Additional items

Petersen's additional comments included:

- Waste Plant Operator Aaron Tolman earned his wastewater B certification.
- Superintendent Robert Hull and Tolman also manned the Upper Monument Creek Regional Wastewater Treatment Facility (UMCRWWTF) overnight during the mid-April storm that was expected to be similar to the March bomb cyclone.
- In response to a denied exemption in a 1041 permit application submitted to Pueblo County in 2018, Donala recently submitted a new 1041 application. The new application ensured that additional information would be recognized and considered, whereas applying for reconsideration would not. Petersen confirmed that the application had been received by the county.

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