

it was required by state statute to notify its customers when they will be talking at all about any rate fee or charge penalty. Since revenue from rates and fees are part of the annual budget, for transparency Fritsche included that notice as part of the official notification about the 2021 budget hearing in November. The district is not planning on a rate or fee increase yet.

However, after January, when GMS Inc. Consulting Engineers is expected to announce the results of its rate and fee study, the board might decide to discuss rates or fees with the intention of changing them. Hamilton said tap fees for MSD were the main reason for asking for the rate study in the first place this summer. See www.ocn.me/v20n9.htm#msd.

Fritsche explained to the board that a rate study will provide the information that justifies the capital needs for improvements in the future. Tap fees have to be sufficient to cover those costs of new development. She emphasized that neither rates nor tap fees can be decided by looking at those of neighboring districts but must be derived from MSD's needs.

Kronick said the mailed insert could have been worded better since it mentioned rate increases and she didn't know how to answer her neighbors' barrage of questions. "We are dealing with perceptions."

Several financial questions to answer

Items covered included:

- Board consensus to direct Femery to point out any questions she has each month when sending the monthly financial report to the board.
- Certifying a list of delinquent sanitation service accounts and charges totaling \$4,500 to the El Paso County treasurer for collections.
- Confirming that Allsup is the only person with a district credit card now.

MSD's \$8,000 check, part of its October invoice to the Tri-Lakes Wastewater Treatment Facility (TLWWTF) was delivered late and only after a phone call from TLWWTF manager Bill Burks. See related TLWWTF JUC article on page 14.

In the past, Wicklund or Krueger handled these monthly payments, while all the board members also got a copy of the invoice email from Burks. However, after Wicklund and Krueger left, no one added Allsup's name to Burks' distribution list, and none of the board members noticed the omission.

Compounding the problem for TLWWTF, Woodmoor Water and Sanitation District (WWSD) also

didn't get its \$28,000 check to Burks on time, causing a cash flow crisis at the treatment facility. Hamilton said it was illogical that TLWWTF didn't have more of a buffer for monthly operating expenses.

Kendrick said short turnaround time was the policy of the Joint Use Committee (JUC) and that JUC members (MSD, WWSD, and Palmer Lake Sanitation District) approved the early payment on the first day of the month. He suggested that the board invite Burks to MSD to explain how cash flow at JUC works.

Hamilton had another issue to "bring to light." The board just found out that the former district manager allowed a tenant to pay in gift cards instead of cash for money it owed the district as its landlord. "Obviously, we can't let that happen anymore."

He asked Fritsche what to do with the \$1,276 in gift cards they had. Reisig suggested the MSD holiday party might be catered by the Black Forest Deli, which issued the gift cards. Howe said he and Kronick used one of the cards to have lunch while doing board work in the MSD office. The issue will be discussed again at the December meeting.

Finally, on the cash flow summary, Fritsche asked the board why "legal" was the only line item that had a year-to-date (YTD) total as well as a monthly total. Hamilton said it was because there was "more going on in legal recently." Fritsche Law invoiced \$10,830 from Sept. 16 to Oct. 20. Board consensus was to have YTD totals for all the categories included from now on.

Engineer's report and ORC tasks list

Dave Frisch of GMS submitted his monthly status report with details about all the work he's doing as the district's engineer and as its temporary licensed operator in responsible charge (ORC) in the absence of a licensed district manager for MSD.

The report noted that on Sept. 29 Frisch and Hamilton met with Wicklund to create a list of ongoing responsibilities on a daily, weekly, monthly, and annual basis. The document they compiled should help with understanding MSD's expectations for a contract ORC in the future.

Frisch stated that MSD could consider hiring Wicklund back as a contractor to do certain tasks, but those specific needs would be clearer after the district contracts with an ORC.

Possible ORC contractor found

Donala Water and Sanitation District's new General

Manager Jeff Hodge visited the meeting to present a proposal to MSD wherein Donala might contract as MSD's ORC. Several of Donala's employees have the appropriate licensing and could be available on short notice if there is an alarm from MSD's monitoring system.

Donala also provides the ORC and does wastewater billing for Forest Lakes Metropolitan District, which shares a wastewater treatment plant with Donala and Triview Metropolitan District.

Donala also works with GMS already, and, "Hopefully we can work out mutual interests," Hodge said.

Later in the meeting, the board directed her to move forward with discussions with Donala.

Fritsche said it would also be necessary to hire a "knowledgeable point person on the management side," perhaps on a part-time basis, to handle any issues not included in the licensed operator ORC task list.

Legal report

Fritsche's comments included:

- MSD needs to include proportionate design costs for the North Monument Creek Interceptor (NMCI) in the 2021 budget, and she will talk to Howe, the appointed budget officer, about that. See www.ocn.me/v18n12.htm#msd.
- NMCI is moving at a glacial pace due to water return flow issues among water districts, but that doesn't involve MSD.
- A second draft of the new personnel manual needs to be reviewed by the employment lawyer with changes to vacation and sick pay before going to the board.

She referred to "an email that went out about the Dan and Joan show" and said she's been forwarding emails to the board as quickly as possible. She encouraged all the board members to ask questions between meetings if they had concerns. Reisig and Howe said it was hard to get in touch with Hamilton.

Monument Sanitation District meetings are normally held at 9 a.m. on the third Wednesday of the month in the district conference room at 130 Second St., Monument. The next regular meeting is scheduled for Nov. 18 at 9 a.m. See <https://colorado.gov/msd>. For a district service map, see <https://colorado.gov/pacific/msd/district-map-0>. Information: 481-4886.

Lisa Hatfield can be reached at lisahatfield@ocn.me.

Triview Metropolitan District, Oct. 6 and 22

Scammer masquerading as Triview personnel?

By Jennifer Kaylor

The Triview Metropolitan District met for a remote Oct. 6 special meeting and a regular Oct. 22 Board of Directors meeting. Among the regular reports presented and topics discussed, directors voiced concerns about potentially fraudulent water meter visits to district residents.

All board directors and water attorney Chris Cummins attended the two meetings either remotely or in person. District counsel Gary Shupp attended the Oct. 22 meeting in person.

Triview is a Title 32 special district in Monument that provides road, landscaping, and parks and open space maintenance, and water and wastewater services to Jackson Creek, Promontory Pointe, Sanctuary Pointe, and several commercial areas. See <https://triviewmetro.com/districtMap> for a map of district boundaries.

The two-part Oct. 22 board packet may be accessed via https://triviewmetro.com/assets/documents/board/agenda/2020/BoardPacket_RegularMeeting_Part_1_2020-10-22.pdf and https://triviewmetro.com/assets/documents/board/agenda/2020/BoardPacket_RegularMeeting_Part_2_2020-10-22.pdf.

Signs of an authentic Triview visit

Director Marco Fiorito expressed concern that a water meter scam may be in operation throughout the district. A social media post indicated that someone had made a "cold call" to a resident's home asking about water meters. Fiorito surmised that the potential scammer might be attempting to canvass homes for future theft.

District Manager Jim McGrady emphasized that Triview personnel will always make an appointment, always wear a Triview uniform, and always be driving a Triview truck. Director James Otis indicated that the Monument Police Department aggressively pursues scamming activity. Monument Police may be reached

at 719-481-3253. If residents suspect fraudulent activity, they should also inform Triview at 719-488-6868, Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., or <https://triviewmetro.com/contact/1>.

District prepares to finance water and wastewater improvements

The Oct. 6 special meeting initiated steps to fund Triview's anticipated participation in improvements such as the potential regional wastewater pipeline known as the North Monument Creek Interceptor and a regional water delivery project.

Resolution 2020-12 established parameters for a taxable bond deal that would allow the district to finance improvements when there's a "cash call" and prevent it from having to seek financing in an uncertain market. Parameters included a maximum interest rate of 4.5%, a prepayment penalty of not more than 3% premium, a purchase price of not less than 99%, a principal amount no greater than \$12.75 million, a maximum annual payment of \$700,000, a maximum total of \$21 million, and a final maturity date of Dec. 31, 2050. Directors voted to approve the resolution.

At the Oct. 22 meeting, McGrady presented resolution 2020-15, which essentially converted the previous 2020-12 resolution from a taxable bond issuance to a tax-exempt bond issuance with all other parameters remaining the same. McGrady confirmed that, after consultation with attorney Kim Crawford of Butler Snow and Nate Eckloff of underwriter Piper Sandler and Co., the intended projects qualified for tax-exempt financing. Two IRS requirements of the tax-exempt status stipulate that the proceeds must be spent on governmental purposes and within three years of receipt.

Eckloff provided an appraisal of potential market expectations. He confirmed that a tax-exempt issuance would drive down costs of the financing because taxable rates were rising more quickly than

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