

Rates increases for 2024 approved

At the beginning of the public hearing on rates, District Manager Jessie Shaffer told the board that an incorrect rate for Tier 2 water usage had been published on the district's web page. The Tier 2 rate covers water usage from 6,001 to 25,000 gallons per month. Shaffer said the district intended to raise the rates for all usage tiers by 4% but had incorrectly published a 1.9% increase for Tier 2 water. Correcting the rate would require a 30-day waiting period while the new rate was announced to the public, he said. Shaffer explained that the average residence uses 6,785 gallons of water a month, so the bulk of revenue is from Tier 1 water sales and the impact of the lower rate would be negligible. He recommended keeping the lower rate in place, enabling the board to finish its work on rates quickly.

There were no comments from the public, and board President Brian Bush closed the hearing.

The board accepted Shaffer's recommendation and voted unanimously in favor of Resolution 23-04, which adopts the rates as published. Note: Details about the 2024 rates and fees can be found in the December issue of OCN here: <https://www.ocn.me/v23n12.htm#wwsd>.

2024 budget approved

Bush continued the hearing on the 2024 budget opened at the November meeting.

Shaffer told the board that the proposed budget included a 25% increase in potable water

tap fees but made no change to sewer tap fees. He estimated the district would see \$4.2 million in tap fees in 2024 if it sells 90 new taps as expected. He listed some fees that will increase in 2024 to allow the district to recoup the cost of delivering services, such as installing new water meters, which are more expensive than previous meters. Engineering fees charged by the district are increasing to \$120 per hour. He noted that some construction projects expected to be completed in 2023 needed to be carried over to 2024.

There were no comments from the public on the budget, and Bush closed the hearing. The board voted to approve Resolution 23-05, which adopts the budget as proposed and appropriates the funds required. Bush and Directors Bill Clewe, Roy Martinez, and Tom Roddam voted in favor; Director Dan Beley voted against, arguing that the water tap fees should have been raised 47% as the district's rate consultants advised.

Contract with Chilcott Ditch Co. renewed

Shaffer asked the board to renew its contract with the Chilcott Ditch Co., explaining this contract needed renewal every year. The contract obligates WWSD to provide accounting and administration services to the ditch company for a fee of \$1,500 per month. The new contract did not increase the fee, Shaffer said. WWSD also provides labor to the ditch company for an hourly rate. Shaffer said the new contract increased the hourly rate from \$36 to \$39 per hour.

The board voted unanimously to renew the

contract.

Financial, operational, and engineering reports

Board Treasurer Roy Martinez told the board that November was a normal month in terms of water usage. He said the district was at 81% of its expected water sales for the year.

Operations Superintendent Dan LaFontaine said there had been some small breaks in pipelines during November, one of which was complicated by the presence of an unmarked electric line. The district was running entirely on ground water, he said.

District Engineer Ariel Hacker gave the board an update on the status of new and existing wells. Site work has begun on Well 22. Drilling of the well at the Central Water Treatment Plant property, just northwest of the Lewis-Palmer Middle School football field, has not yet begun, she said. Some equipment had to be abandoned at the bottom of Well 12. Well 16 is out of production due to a motor failure.

The next meeting is scheduled for Jan. 8, 2024 at 1 p.m. Meetings are usually held on the second Monday of each month at 1 p.m. at the district office at 1845 Woodmoor Drive; please see www.woodmoorwater.com or call 719-488-2525 to verify meeting times and locations.

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Monument Sanitation District, Dec. 20

Board sets bonuses and salary increases

By Jackie Burhans and James Howald

At its December meeting, the Monument Sanitation District (MSD) board decided on bonuses and salary increases for its staff. It also renewed letters of engagement with the district's engineering, accounting, and auditing companies and scheduled a workshop to review its duties and responsibilities.

Bonuses and salary increases

Board President Dan Hamilton told the board that he was happy with the performance of the district staff and had surveyed the bonuses given by surrounding districts to their managers, which varied from no bonus to \$5,000. Last year, MSD gave General Manager Mark Parker a bonus equal to one month of his salary. He proposed giving Parker a \$4,000 bonus for 2023.

After some discussion, the board settled on a \$4,500 bonus for Parker, and bonuses for Accounts Administrator Cheran Allsup and Environmental and Regulatory Compliance spe-

cialist James Kendrick proportional to their pay rates. The board voted unanimously in favor of a motion to provide bonuses in those amounts.

Regarding salary increases, Hamilton reminded the board that last year it had given 9% increases. He said the Denver Aurora Consumer Price Index was 4.5% and suggested rounding that up to give a 5% salary increase to district staff in 2024. The board voted unanimously for a 5% increase.

Letters of engagement renewed

Parker told the board that the district's auditors had asked the board to renew letters of engagement with companies providing services every year. He provided the board with letters of engagement for GMS Engineering Inc., the district's consulting engineers, for Haynie & Co., the district's accountants, and for Olson Reyes & Sauerwein, the district's auditors. The board voted unanimously to renew all three letters of engagement.

Workshop scheduled

At the request of board Treasurer John Howe, a workshop to review the board's duties and responsibilities with Allison Ulmer, of Collins Cole Flynn Winn and Ulmer, the district's legal advisors, was scheduled for Wednesday, Jan. 17 at 5 p.m. The workshop will be held at the MSD headquarters building at 130 Second St. in Monument.

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 Jan. 17, 2024. See <https://colorado.gov/msd>. For a district service map, see <https://colorado.gov/pacific/msd/district-map-0>. Information: 719-481-4886.

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Woodmoor Improvement Association, Dec. 13

Board changes fencing standards, parking limits, election process

By Jackie Burhans

At its December meeting, the Woodmoor Improvement Association (WIA) board discussed modifications to fencing, parking, and elections. It also discussed the Christmas lights contest, got updates on past items, and heard board reports.

Fencing standards modified

The board considered a modification to the fencing standards in its Project Design Standards Manual (PDSM), which can be found under Governing Documents at <https://woodmoor.org/governance/>. Citing recent variance approvals and the need to modernize its standards, the board unanimously agreed to the changes, which were read aloud. Under "Fencing, walls, enclosures, & raised gardens," the language will include the following points:

- No fence or partial fence, section or walls, or enclosures may be placed on any lot without the approval of the Architectural Control Committee (ACC).
- The only three decorative fences approved are split rail, dowel, and slip board built with the tongue and groove technique without the use of metal hardware and require either two or three rails. These fence types are to be rustic and open in appearance, shall not be painted or stained, and must remain of natural color. It may be protected by a clear sealant. Residents are permitted to add galvanized 14- to 16-gauge 2-by-4 wire mesh to contain animals and children.

For further clarification, residents are encouraged to reach out to ACC Administrator Bob Pearsall.

The board voted unanimously to approve these changes.

Driveway parking limit increased

Board President Brian Bush introduced the topic of increasing the maximum driveway parking limit from three to four cars as a way of modernizing WIA's rules and recognizing reality. He noted that when the original limit was set, it was unusual for families to have two cars, whereas now it is not unusual for kids of driving age to have their own cars. He also noted that county ordinances allow for street parking but said it was an

appearance, safety, and security benefit to have owners park in their garages or driveways. Finally, he said, this increase would cut down on the number of complaints, covenant hearings, and requests for variances.

Covenants and Forestry Administrator Justin Gates reported that Woodmoor Public Safety (WPS) had processed 276 visits to houses for excess vehicle complaints over the last three years, the vast majority of which were for four cars. The complaint process can take up to 24 hours of WPS' time to check the houses, send a letter, and follow up.

Covenants Director Per Suhr asked why WIA has this limit at all. Bush replied that no one wants to see Woodmoor look like a recreational vehicle park or used car lot. ACC Director Ed Miller said this rule could be reviewed annually and increased or eliminated as needed. Public Safety Director Brad Gleason suggested there should be some deterrence, but WIA still can issue a variance for someone with more cars, noting that this is usually only a request from people with larger driveways or otherwise it would be hard to move the cars around. This change would reduce WPS responses, staff issue handling, and resident street parking, which is a win, he said.

The board voted unanimously to approve this change.

Board election process

Resident Jennifer Davis asked if the board still intended to do its own ballot counting for its board elections. Bush replied that the counting would be done by two staff tallying the votes simultaneously. Anyone could watch, he said, and it takes about an hour and a half. The board had previously had the League of Women Voters do the counting, but doing it internally saves about \$1,000.

Ballots will be sent out on Jan. 2, according to Homeowner Association (HOA) Manager Denise Cagliaro. Bush asked the board to consider not sending stamped return envelopes with the ballots, noting that only about 600 of the 3,400 ballots sent out are returned, and the cost of stamps will rise to 68 cents in January. Residents can drop their ballots off for free or put their own

stamp on the envelope. Bush pointed out that WIA could save over \$2,000 by eliminating the stamps, but there was a risk that it might not receive a quorum of 340 votes. Miller pointed out that including stamps only started in 2009, and WIA had never missed its quorum. Cagliari noted that about 10% of residents dropped off their dues in person and confirmed that some people reuse the stamped envelopes for their own mail. Bush said WIA could send an eBlast and put up signs reminding residents to turn in their ballots.

The board voted unanimously to approve this change.

Board reports

- The board had previously agreed to take advantage of Mountain View Electric Association's (MVEA) offer to provide bill credits for winning a Christmas light contest run by WIA. There will be three \$75 and three \$25 bill credits for the top two winners in three categories. The board unanimously agreed to run the contest, with WPS providing the nominations for the board to review and pick the top two winners.
- Common Areas Director Steve Cutler got unanimous approval to apply for a \$9,075 matching grant for noxious weed spraying.
- Cutler reported that the new pet waste station contractor had started on Dec. 1, saving hundreds of dollars per month and improving the consistency of service.
- Bush reported for Treasurer Connie Brown that it looked like WIA's revenues would exceed its expenses by \$25,000.
- Suhr said there were 15 covenant-related items in November, with nine resolved via friendly communication, one unfounded complaint, and one HOA check. No hearings were scheduled for December or January. Bush noted that WIA preferred informal resolution of covenants.
- Gleason noted that it is the season for porch pirates and recommended the use of delivery lockboxes available by Amazon and others. He also said the damaged Toyota RAV4 was at the body shop and should be ready around the first of the year.