

(PLSD), and Woodmoor Water and Sanitation District (WWSD). The three-member Joint Use Committee acts as the board of the facility and consists of one director from each of the three owner districts' boards: Don Smith of Monument, Ken Smith of Palmer Lake, and Rich Strom of Woodmoor. Several other members of these three owner district boards, as well as Monument District Manager Mike Wicklund, Palmer Lake District Manager Becky Orcutt, and Woodmoor Assistant District Manager Randy Gillette, also attended the meeting.

Discharge permit publication delayed again

Background: At the five-year Arkansas River basin held by the Colorado Water Quality Control Commission in Alamosa in June 2013, the Water Quality Control Division had asked that the commission require all the wastewater treatment facilities in the Arkansas River basin to apply early for new five-year permits that would start in 2014 to re-align all of their permit periods with the five-year Regulation 32 Arkansas River basin hearing cycle. However, the division had routinely not been issuing new replacement five-year discharge permits until two to four years after current permits had expired.

After the Alamosa basin hearing, the division mandated that Arkansas River basin wastewater treatment facilities apply early for new five-year discharge

permits. These unprecedented early applications had to be filed with very short notice before the end of 2013, despite all the legal, financial, and regulatory uncertainty that accompanies the issuance of a new discharge permit.

When a new permit is issued, state regulations require that all comments and corrections for the draft discharge permit must be completed within a 30-day public notice review cycle. This very short review cycle length often requires scheduling and posting of special wastewater facility board meetings for the affected special districts and municipalities for review of the draft permits by consultant engineers and lawyers to react to the new, and frequently unexpected, limits and testing requirements that are being imposed by the division.

This brief 30-day review rule will apply to the new Tri-Lakes draft permit despite the division issuing this draft permit a year late. Furthermore, Tri-Lakes and the other affected Arkansas River basin wastewater treatment facilities will also be subject to another early renewal cycle in only four years, at the end of 2018, even though the division has already failed to respond to its demanded early applications in a timely manner.

At the Oct. 14 JUC meeting it was still unknown when the draft of the new Tri-Lakes discharge permit would be issued, after several months of division staff promises that the draft permit would be issued "next month" followed by successive unexplained failures to publish it and the mounting uncertainty that this caused for budgeting as well as delays in obtaining construction bids, despite the state construction grant's May 2016 deadline for the phosphorus treatment expansion's completion and certification. Also unknown at the Oct. 14 JUC meeting was how the new discharge permit limits would affect Tri-Lakes' expanding operations and staffing, and the rising costs they will create in the 2015 budget.

Financial reports

Burks reported receipt of a fifth state nutrient treatment grant payment of \$13,981 in September that was divided in thirds and individually credited to the September invoices for each of the three owner districts. Last year the Tri-Lakes facility was awarded a three-year \$80,000 state nutrient planning grant and a three-year \$1 million state nutrient design and construction grant for a total phosphorus treatment expansion of the facility.

The state's new Control Regulation 85 mandates that facilities rated over 2 million gallons per day (MGD) for in u-

ent wastewater ow would be required to meet a treated ef uent discharge limit of 1 milligram per liter (mg/l) for total phosphorus. There were no phosphate limits when the existing Tri-Lakes activated sludge facility was designed and constructed in 1988, nor were there any EPA or state Water Quality Control Division or commission discussions at that time that there would ever be specific organic discharge constituent limits for phosphorus in treated ef uent in 1988 or later in 1998 when the Tri-Lakes facility was modified.

The Control Regulation 85 discharge limit for total inorganic nitrogen (TIN) is 15 mg/l, which the Tri-Lakes plant already meets because it was originally designed to remove ammonia.

All of the money from the \$80,000 nutrient treatment planning grant has already been issued to the facility as reimbursements, and this fifth payment came from the \$1 million nutrient treatment design and construction grant for the total phosphate removal clarifier plant expansion. The state has indicated that it will reimburse all design and construction payments made by the facility as soon as possible to ensure that all of these grant funds are disbursed before they expire in May 2016.

The financial reports were unanimously accepted as presented.

Draft 2015 budget reviewed

Burks presented the second draft of the facility's 2015 budget. He noted, as he had at the September JUC meeting, that several parts of the 2015 budget may change based on what new and possibly tighter discharge permit limits are issued by the state. He again estimated that total expenditures for 2014 would be \$3.96 million, up from the originally budgeted \$2.86 million, and \$3.57 million in 2015. No refinement of this initial estimate can be made until the draft discharge permit is issued by the state. Revenues in 2015 will come from the remainder of the state nutrient design and construction grant and the monthly invoices issued to the three owner districts that will cover the rest of the facility's actual 2015 costs.

The amount that each of the three owner districts will contribute to pay for their ownership shares of the new total phosphorus discharge permit constituent plant expansion, as well as the method used to determine their separate shares of future phosphorus chemical treatment operating costs, is still being negotiated by the owner districts in separate private inter-district meetings that do not involve the JUC. No results of these private negotiations have been announced by the JUC or the three owner districts.

Monument Sanitation District Manager Wicklund reminded Burks that total phosphorus sampling of each district's in uent wastewater needs to begin immediately to be able to more

closely estimate the operation and chemical costs for removing phosphates in the new tertiary phosphate removal clarifier. Allocation of the new phosphate removal capacity percentages between the three owner districts may have to be different than the long-standing current ownership percentages for in uent hydraulic ow capacity and in uent biosolids organic capacity.

There was a lengthy question-and-answer discussion about JUC options available for various 2015 budget line items but no final decisions were made.

Burks noted that the facility has already paid the state \$4,035 for a site amendment application that includes installation of a new high speed turbo (HST) blower to supplement the three existing blowers already installed at the facility. The new HST blower, if installed, would provide more control of the amount of air pumped into the existing aeration basins, improving aeration efficiency and electrical efficiency. Tetra Tech has stated that this HST blower would pay for itself within seven years. Burks added that in the future, the JUC could request division certification of additional rated organic capacity in the plant's permit by sending in a capacity evaluation and a site application report.

Burks said an alternative option would be for the JUC to immediately pay additional fees for Tetra Tech to prepare a separate state site application and separate additional fees to the state for its engineering review and approval of the higher rated biologic oxygen demand (BOD) organic treatment capacity that the new HST blower will immediately create. Burks said Tetra Tech, the facility's consultant engineering firm, had also advised him, at the request of Wicklund, that it would cost an additional \$20,000 payment to Tetra Tech for preparation of a site application for the state's engineering review and approval process for official certification of the additional 1,600 pounds per day of biosolids treatment capacity that the new HST blower will provide.

The technical term used in the wastewater industry for this biosolids treatment capacity is biologic oxygen demand (BOD) capacity. Biochemical oxygen demand is the amount of dissolved oxygen needed by aerobic biological bacteria growing in the facility's aeration basins to break down organic waste material present in sanitary sewer in uent. The term also refers to a chemical procedure for measuring this amount of oxygen consumption. This demand is measured in pounds of waste treated per day.

During a lengthy technical discussion to clear up the confusion caused by the blower proposal for higher BOD capacity unrelated to the phosphorus treatment expansion, Burks said the original activated sludge process site application

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