

Donala Water and Sanitation District, Aug. 20

Board says no water rate increases in 2015 yet again

By Jim Kendrick

On Aug. 20, Donala Water and Sanitation District General Manager Kip Petersen and board members reiterated that Donala would not increase water rates midyear. Petersen also reported that water sales revenues were up slightly in July due to a little less rain, but were still 17 percent short of the amount budgeted, year-to-date, while total expenditures were 4 percent less than budgeted. However, the current strong El Niño wet weather pattern will continue to produce higher than average precipitation in Colorado through next spring. He said he expects that total water sales revenue will be about 10 percent less than budgeted by the end of the year.

Financial reports

Petersen noted that over 98 percent of district’s 2015 property tax revenues had already been remitted to Donala by the county. Total tap fees received through July, \$68,000, already exceeded the total amount budgeted, \$60,000, and Donala’s auto sales tax revenues are already 96 percent of the amount budgeted, \$100,000. Petersen again reiterated that Donala will postpone some non-critical capital projects as required to maintain a balanced budget for 2015. No critical capital projects have been postponed this year.

There was a brief discussion about Forest Lakes home construction starting after the new Baptist Road bridge over the railroad tracks and associated widening of the west end of Baptist Road are completed, using Pikes Peak Rural Transportation Authority, Baptist Road Rural Transportation Authority, and county funding. Petersen said a total of 457 new homes are scheduled for construction within the Forest Lakes Metro District service area. Forest Lakes Metro already owns all the treatment capacity in the existing Upper Monument wastewater treatment plant it needs for buildout within its service area.

Petersen reported that on Aug. 12 the Academy Water and Sanitation District board had approved the final draft of the intergovernmental agreement (IGA) for Donala to take over wastewater treatment for Academy’s 300 homes on a straight fee-for-service basis. Academy will not become a co-owner of the Upper Monument facility. The state has given Academy a compliance

schedule in its new discharge permit that requires Academy to cease operations of its failing lagoon systems that cannot meet current ammonia discharge limits by October 2018. A new Academy lift station and force main will deliver Academy’s sanitary sewer wastewater to an adjacent Donala manhole for treatment at the Upper Monument facility. Donala already owns all the treatment capacity in the existing Upper Monument wastewater treatment plant it needs for buildout within both the Donala and Academy service areas.

Manager’s report

Petersen noted that all the inputs from the Arkansas River Basin Roundtable for the latest draft of the new state water plan will be formally voted on at the Sept. 9 roundtable meeting. Directors Ken Judd and Bob Denny agreed to attend this important meeting with Petersen.

Petersen currently serves as the vice president of the Pikes Peak Regional Water Authority. He noted that he chaired the special Aug. 5

authority meeting due to the absence of the president. He also gave a presentation in Salida for the authority at the Aug. 11

meeting of the state Legislature’s interim water resource committee. The authority’s presentation was developed with the assis-




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