

COOS BAY-NORTH BEND WATER BOARD  
P O BOX 539 – 2305 Ocean Boulevard  
Coos Bay, Oregon 97420

Minutes  
Regular Board Meeting

July 20, 2023  
7:00 a.m.

Coos Bay-North Bend Water Board met in open session in the Board Room at the above address, date, and time with Chair Greg Solarz presiding. Other Board members present: Carmen Matthews, and Rob Kilmer. Board Members absent: Bill Richardson. Water Board staff present: Ivan D. Thomas, General Manager; Matt Whitty, Engineering Manager; Jeff Howes, Finance Director; Rick Abbott, Distribution Supervisor; Jeff Miller, Water Treatment Supervisor; Aimee Hollis, Customer Relations Manager; Bryan Tichota, Customer Relations Manager; Vince Stonesifer, Field Services Technician; and Karen Parker, Administrative Assistant. Board Legal Counsel Melissa Cribbins was present. Dan Draper of Coos Watershed was present. Media present: None.

Chair Solarz opened the meeting at 7:00 a.m. and asked Ms. Parker to lead the Board and assembly in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Chair Solarz asked if there were any corrections or additions to the June 15, 2023, Regular Board meeting minutes. Mr. Matthews moved the minutes be approved as written. The motion was seconded by Mr. Kilmer and passed unanimously.

Chair Solarz asked if there were any public comments and there were none.

Regarding the invoice from Utility Service Co., Inc. (SUEZ) for FY2024 in the amount of \$314,594.70, Mr. Thomas stated the Water Board entered into an agreement with Utility Service Co, Inc. (SUEZ) in FY2018 to refurbish and maintain its steel welded water storage reservoirs. To date, all seven reservoirs have been refurbished and put back into service with new epoxy coating systems.

The tank asset management program allowed the Water Board to work with SUEZ to cover the cost over several years rather than paying for the program up front. The invoice received for FY2024 is for year 7 of 8. SUEZ makes annual inspection visits to all tanks, ensures the coatings and structural environment at each tank is adequate, and cleans each of the tanks every three years. This is in addition to the repairs that have been completed to refurbish the tanks to like new condition.

Staff has reviewed the invoice and work that SUEZ has completed to date and it is on schedule and satisfactory.

Mr. Matthews moved to approve the FY2024 payment for the tank asset management program to Utility Service Co., Inc. in the amount of \$314,594.70. The motion was seconded by Mr. Kilmer and passed unanimously.

Regarding the proposed Contract with Coos Watershed Association for Environmental Monitoring Services for FY2024, the Water Board has contracted with Coos Watershed Association (CWA) for its environmental monitoring needs on many different projects and requirements. The Water Board's FY2024 budget includes an exclusive scope of work with Coos Watershed for environmental monitoring and regulatory monitoring requirements.

The scope of work includes continued streamflow gauging to maintain water rights for Tenmile Creek, required vegetation monitoring and invasive control, fish monitoring, photo monitoring at Matson Creek, and completion of the 2023 fisheries management plan. These results and reports must be submitted in a timely manner to the associated regulatory authority (ODFW) within the next year. The scope of work, including a 10% contingency, totals \$46,850. This amount is included in the Water Board's FY2024 budget.

Mr. Thomas welcomed Dan Draper of Coos Watershed Association and asked if he had any additional information. Mr. Draper stated the scope of work is similar to last year. Mr. Draper went to Matson Creek yesterday and took photos. Elk exclosures were put in two years ago and planting was done in the upper Matson Creek valley on both the north and south arms and the plants are doing much better. The creek and channel both look good. Last year an evaluation was done on the four culverts that were installed at Upper Pony Creek to make sure fish were on both sides. Joe Ney was also evaluated at the fish ladder to check on passage of fish and there were fish upstream.

The following is a breakdown of the total projects for the FY2023-2024:

• Tenmile and Eel Creek Gauging Stations:	\$19,740
• Matson Creek – Vegetation Monitoring and Invasive Control:	14,418
• Matson Creek – Photo Monitoring:	3,459
• Fisheries Management Plan-2023:	4,974
	Subtotal: \$42,591
	10% Contingency: <u>4,259</u>
	Total Project: \$46,850

After a brief discussion, Mr. Kilmer moved to authorize the General Manager to enter into the FY2024 contract with Coos Watershed Association for the proposed environmental monitoring and reporting in an amount not to exceed \$46,850. The motion was seconded by Mr. Matthews and passed unanimously.

Regarding the proposed 2023 Timber Sale award, Engineering Manager Matt Whitty stated in December of 2022 the Board of Directors authorized the preparation and solicitation of bids for the 2023 Timber Sale. The area proposed for harvest contains 69.5 acres with an estimated harvest volume of 2.29 MMBF. Revenue from the timber sale was estimated at \$600,000 to \$800,000 based on prices from the 2019 Water Board timber sale and the 2022 City of Coos Bay timber sale.

Bids were solicited from multiple potential buyers statewide and opened on June 15, 2023. The following bids were received:

Scott Timber Company	\$1,084,919
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Swanson Group	\$ 737,682
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Mr. Kilmer asked if both bids were based on the same groups. Mr. Whitty confirmed they were. The loggers cruise the area obtaining their own estimation of volume.

The primary access road for the watershed runs through the 100' variable width resource management area (RMA) along Merritt Lake, leaving a 2.6 acre strip of RMA between the primary access road and the harvest area. In March the Water Board's consultant submitted an initial plan for alternative practice (PFAP) and briefed ODF personnel on the need to remove all of the trees in this strip of land to mitigate safety and emergency response in the case of windthrow to the road. After several communications with ODF the State requested an updated written PFAP which was submitted on June 29, 2023. Staff are still waiting for a final decision regarding the PFAP.

In addition to improving safety, if the Department of Forestry allows removal of the trees on the 2.6 acres it would increase the sale area to 72.1 acres with additional revenue estimated at \$30,000.

After a brief discussion, Mr. Kilmer moved to award the sale to the high bidder and authorize the General Manager to sign a contract with Scott Timber Company for the 2023 Timber Sale. Motion was seconded by Mr. Solarz and passed unanimously.

Finance Director Jeff Howes presented staff's request for payment of Springbrook's annual maintenance invoice in the amount of \$39,267.73. Mr. Howes stated Springbrook software is used for the utility's accounting and billing needs. Staff and Springbrook partnered in creating custom billing reports for the billings of the Water Board and Cities of Coos Bay and North Bend.

Springbrook's annual maintenance fee has increased by 5 percent from last year (\$37,769.27). There was no increase of Civic Pay Online and IVR product pricing. Comparatively, the US Consumer Price Index: Information Technology, Hardware, and Services for all US cities for June 30 was 7.135%.

Mr. Thomas commented if the Board approves payment of this now, and we go to cloud migration (to be decided by the Board at a future Board meeting), then it would be prorated and only a month of this will go towards Springbrook's annual maintenance and the remainder will go toward the cloud migration.

After a brief discussion, motion was made by Mr. Matthews to approve payment of Springbrook's annual maintenance invoice in the amount of \$39,267.73.

The Board's next regular meeting was set for Thursday, August 3, 2023, at 7:00 a.m.

Updates were given as follows:

- Dam Inspection - Keith Mills, Dam Safety Engineer, is at the Water Board today for an annual inspection of both dams. He is also one of the authors of the Water Board's Emergency Action Plan and will take part in an exercise today.
- Springbrook IVR – The interactive voice response (IVR) is currently in use for phone calls and emails. Due to delays, staff are still delivering door hangers but beginning August 1<sup>st</sup> door hangers will no longer be used for late payments. Staff need to complete one more IVR test for shutoff notices before we begin using them for shut offs. Customer Service is experiencing a better response with the IVR, typically getting calls the same day as the customer gets their email or phone call and paying their bills.
- AMR Installation - Staff have used the new AMR System on the most recent reading for cycle nine which consists of 1,200 meters. Staff only had a few rereads where a meter reader was sent back out to check the reads. The new system has reduced staff's read time from 4 1/2 days for one reader to 3 hours with two readers. The Field Services Technician will be visiting the Mueller plant next month to tour the plant and observe their meter testing program. Staff is in the process of negotiating a contract for the additional 4,000 meters and once a contract has been finalized staff will bring it to the Board for approval.

At 7:17 a.m. Chair Solarz directed they go into executive session for the purposes of discussing potential litigation pursuant to ORS 192.660(2)(h) and personnel issues pursuant to ORS 192.660(2)(a). The Board returned to open session at 7:40 a.m. There being no other business to come before the Board, Chair Solarz adjourned the meeting at 7:40 a.m.

Approved: \_\_\_\_\_, 2023

By: \_\_\_\_\_  
J. Gregory Solarz, Chair

ATTEST: \_\_\_\_\_