

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

Minutes  
Regular Board Meeting

November 20, 2025  
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 Bill Richardson presiding. Other Board members present: Greg Solarz, and Rob Kilmer. Board Members absent: Carmen Matthews. Water Board staff present: Ivan D. Thomas, General Manager; Jeff Miller, Operations Manager; Matt Whitty, Engineering Manager; Monica Kemper, Finance Director; Aimee Hollis, Customer Relations Manager; Jason Mills, Distribution Supervisor; and Stacey Parrott, Executive Assistant & HR Specialist. Board Legal Counsel Melissa Cribbins was present. Jeremy Doze from Confederated Tribes of Coos, Lower Umpqua, and Siuslaw Indians (CTCLUSI) was present. Media present: None.

Chair Richardson opened the meeting at 7:00 a.m. and led the Board and assembly in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Chair Richardson asked if there were any corrections or additions to the November 6, 2025, Regular Board meeting minutes. Mr. Kilmer moved the minutes be approved as written. The motion was seconded by Mr. Solarz and passed unanimously.

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

Regarding the watershed right-of-way request from the Confederated Tribes of Coos, Lower Umpqua, and Siuslaw Indians (CTCLUSI), General Manager Ivan Thomas introduced CTCLUSI Director of Planning Jeremy Doze, who delivered a detailed presentation outlining the Tribe's request for right-of-way access across watershed property to reach four parcels, approximately 80 acres, that the Tribe is in the process of acquiring to the west-southwest of the watershed. He clarified that he was speaking in his capacity with the Tribe's Planning Department, not as a formal Tribal delegate.

Mr. Doze opened with historical context illustrating the Tribe's long-standing connection to the area and the historical loss of Tribal lands from the mid-1800s through termination in 1954, followed by restoration in 1984. Maps were shown depicting former Tribal territories, land removals, and the location of the proposed parcels in relation to the Pony Creek Reservoir. Mr. Doze described two potential access routes:

- A former pack-trail route connecting to the existing Water Board Loop Road – primary option.
- A southern access alignment from Libby Lane, currently overgrown but still in usable condition – secondary option.

He reviewed Tribal land-management credentials, including established Tribal codes and forestry management plans, and emphasized CTCLUSI's commitment to environmental stewardship, regulatory compliance, and especially the protection of water resources. He

noted the Tribe's recent \$152,000 contribution to the Water Board in support of ensuring that local residents continue to receive water from the Pony Creek Reservoir as intended.

Mr. Doze highlighted the potential for long-term government-to-government collaboration, shared environmental goals, and opportunities for mutual benefit. The Tribe is seeking a formal agreement for right-of-way, either a new easement or an extension of the existing City/Water Board agreement, restricted at this time to forest-management access purposes.

Following the presentation, Board members thanked Mr. Doze, noting they had no additional questions. Mr. Thomas stated that the Board would review and discuss the request further and would follow up with Mr. Doze and the Tribe once a response is prepared. No formal action was taken at this time.

Regarding Task Order No. 34 with Dyer Partnership for engineering services related to installing fall-protection davit arm systems at the Pony Creek Water Treatment Plant, Operations Manager Jeff Miller shared that the plant contains five filters and four basins, each exceeding 15 feet in depth. Historically, rescue capability relied on an on-site crane equipped with a personnel basket; however, the crane has since been sold, leaving the facility dependent on the Fire Department for confined-space rescue, which staff and OSHA both identified as less than ideal.

To improve safety and meet OSHA recommendations, staff proposed installing engineered davit arm mounting systems at each required location. Dyer Partnership, in coordination with their subcontractor VLMK Engineering, would perform site visits, confirm mounting locations, complete anchorage design, and provide the necessary supporting calculations.

The task order includes a not-to-exceed fee of \$9,000. Funding is available within the FY2024-25 capital budget, which includes \$12,000 allocated for this project. Staff noted the intent to utilize an existing davit system from the distribution division when not in use, minimizing overall project cost and providing both retrieval and fall-arrest capability for employees working inside the basins.

Mr. Solarz moved to approve Task Order No. 34 from Dyer Partnership for the required engineering services for the fall protection davit arm mounts, not to exceed \$9,000. The motion was seconded by Mr. Kilmer and passed unanimously.

Regarding the proposed purchase of a 72" Scag Turf Tiger II zero-turn mower, Distribution Supervisor Jason Mills presented a recommendation to replace the Water Board's aging zero-turn Husqvarna riding mowers, which have become obsolete and increasingly difficult to maintain. He reported that the existing mowers require disproportionate maintenance time, approximately 75% operating to 25% maintenance, resulting in significant downtime and currently have limited parts availability.

To identify a suitable replacement, staff consulted with Clean Rivers, who recommended wither Kubota or Scag equipment. Based on performance feedback and durability, staff proposed the purchase of a 72-inch Scag Turf Tiger II mower, providing higher mowing efficiency and improved deck and blade performance.

Three price quotes were obtained and are as follows:

- Horner's Inc. (Cottage Grove, OR) – \$17,556.00
- Corvallis Power Equipment (Corvallis, OR) – \$17,765.00
- Outdoor Living and Rental Center (Bandon, OR) – \$19,655.00

The lowest responsive quote was provided by Horner's Inc. of Cottage Grove. Although slightly above the original budget, due in part to tariffs, funds are available through the Vehicle Replacement Fund (VRF). Mr. Mills noted that the existing equipment would be surplus following replacement.

After a brief discussion Mr. Solarz moved to authorize the General Manager to purchase a Scag Turf Tiger II from Horner's Inc. of Cottage Grove, Oregon, in the amount of \$17,556. The motion was seconded by Mr. Kilmer and passed unanimously.

Regarding the Board of Directors discussion concerning the FY2025 Coos Bay-North Bend Water Board Water Rates & System Development Charges (SDC) analysis results, General Manager Ivan Thomas noted that Board Member Matthews was absent and asked whether the Board preferred to defer any final decisions until all members were present. The Board agreed to postpone action but proceeded with brief discussion.

Several Board members shared comments after reviewing the consultant's rate study in detail. They expressed appreciation for the thoroughness of the analysis, noting the complexity of allocating the cost of providing service across customer classes. Members also discussed the significant challenge posed by aging water infrastructure, much of it installed in the 1930s and 1940s, now reaching the end of its useful life, a problem facing utilities nationwide.

Board members and staff acknowledged that addressing both cost-of-service equity and long-term infrastructure reinvestment will require sustained adjustments over time; noting that alignment does not need to be achieved within a fixed timeframe and can be adjusted annually based on system needs, contingencies, and customer growth. Board members agreed that the study provides a strong foundation for long-term planning. They agreed to continue the discussion at a subsequent meeting when all members are present. A final analysis will be presented for public review and formal adoption at a future Board meeting.

The Board's next regular meeting was scheduled for Thursday, December 4<sup>th</sup>, 2025, at 7:00 a.m.

Updates were given as follows:

- High-level Roof Replacement – the project has been completed. The reservoir has been fully cleaned, debris removed, and double-chlorinated. Water quality sampling has taken place, if results pass, the reservoir is expected to be brought back online as early as Friday. Staff noted that the contractor performed well and completed the large, complex project more quickly than anticipated. Images of the completed work will be presented at a future meeting.
- Ford Explorer – staff confirmed that the new Ford Explorer has been received and is now in service.

- 11<sup>th</sup> Court Water main Replacement – the water main replacement is nearing completion. Initial water-quality samples did not pass and the main required flushing and re-chlorination. A second round of sampling is underway, with expectations that the line will be ready for tie-in early next week.

At 7:39 a.m. Chair Richardson directed they go into executive session for the purpose of discussing real property transactions pursuant to ORS 192.660(2)(e) and potential litigation pursuant to ORS 192.660(2)(h).

Board member Carmen Matthews, who had been absent during the earlier portion of the meeting, joined the session via phone at 7:41 a.m.

Upon returning to open session, the Board reopened the discussion of the right-of-way access request from the Confederated Tribes of Coos, Lower Umpqua, and Siuslaw Indians (CTCLUSI). With no further discussion offered, Mr. Kilmer moved to deny the request for the right-of-way access from CTCLUSI and to direct legal counsel to draft and send a letter to notify them of the Board's decision. The motion was seconded by Mr. Solarz and passed unanimously.

There being no other business to come before the Board, Chair Richardson adjourned the meeting at 8:02 a.m.

Approved: \_\_December 4\_\_\_\_, 2025

By: \_\_\_\_\_  
Bill Richardson, Chair

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