

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

Minutes  
Regular Board Meeting

September 17, 2020  
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 Solarz presiding. Other Board members present: Bob Dillard, Melissa Cribbins and Dr. Charles Sharps. Water Board staff present: Ivan D. Thomas, General Manager; Jeff Page, Operations Manager; Matt Whitty, Engineering Manager; Karen Parker, Administrative Assistant; Board Legal Counsel Jim Coffey was present. Media present: None. Chair Solarz opened the meeting at 7:00 a.m. and asked Mr. Thomas to lead the Board and assembly in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Chair Solarz asked if there were any corrections or additions to the September 3, 2020, Regular Board meeting minutes. Dr. Sharps moved the minutes be approved as written. The motion was seconded by Ms. Cribbins and passed unanimously.

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

Regarding employee recognitions, Mr. Thomas stated two employees were present who have been doing an outstanding job for the Water Board and asked Operations Manager Jeff Page to introduce them. Mr. Page introduced Micah Demanett, Distribution Technician. A letter was received from a citizen on Alder Avenue stating on Saturday, Jun 27<sup>th</sup>, a water pipe had ruptured in their back yard. Mr. Demanett responded to the call and shut their water down. They discussed calling a plumber when Mr. Demanett stated he could possibly do a quick fix with permission from his supervisor. Mr. Demanett proceeded and sealed off the line that had been damaged thus restoring the water service and also stayed on scene to ensure the fix was secure. The citizens commended Mr. Demanett for going above and beyond his call of duty for helping them, stating entities, both private and public, could use more examples of kindness and empathy as shown by Mr. Demanett.

Mr. Page introduced Ryan Storm, Crew Leader. On August 28<sup>th</sup> a call was received from a customer on Bay Park Lane stating Mr. Storm had done a fantastic job repairing their water service after a car had driven through their property. They complimented Mr. Storm for his professionalism, the quality of work he performed and the time it took to repair their service. Mr. Storm shows a high level of care and dedication in his work. The Board congratulated Mr. Demanett and Mr. Storm for their work performance.

Regarding the Tank Asset Management Program, Operations Manager Jeff Page stated the Water Board entered into an agreement with Utility Service Co, Inc. (SUEZ) to refurbish and maintain its steel welded water storage reservoirs. To date, five of the seven reservoirs have been refurbished and put back into service with new epoxy coating systems. The two remaining reservoirs, Radar and Isthmus Heights, are scheduled to be started in calendar year 2021.

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. 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 are completed to refurbish the tanks to like new condition.

The total due for fiscal year 2021 is \$263,000. Staff has received an invoice for \$181,000 that is currently due and the overall payment and work schedule. The remaining fiscal year 2021 payment of \$82,000 will be due in March 2021. The invoice has been reviewed by staff and work that SUEZ has completed to date and all is satisfactory.

Dr. Sharps asked how much money the utility has saved since starting the tank maintenance program with SUEZ. Mr. Thomas stated to date at least \$500,000 to \$1,000,000. Mr. Page agreed and stated their work performance has been good. Mr. Dillard inquired if the unpaid balance of \$82,000 accrues interest. Mr. Thomas confirmed there is no interest charge. Ms. Cribbins asked if the taste and odor issues had been resolved. Mr. Thomas stated those issues were resolved at least 9 months ago.

After a brief discussion, motion was made by Dr. Sharps authorizing staff to make payment in the amount of \$181,000 to Utility Service Co., Inc. (SUEZ) for the first part of the fiscal year 2021 payment due. The motion was seconded by Mr. Dillard and passed unanimously.

Regarding proposed pay equity increase for Customer Service leader positions, Mr. Thomas stated in fiscal year 2019, the Water Board completed a comprehensive classification and compensation study for all of its positions. All positions that were below market value for salary were increased to market value based on market data and historical internal job comparisons.

The two Customer Service Leader positions were largely compared to historical internal job comparisons because of the long history of job data available at the Water Board. At the conclusion of the study, adjustments were made and accepted by the Union and the Water Board to move forward with implementation of the plan as presented.

Since implementation, a pay equity issue for the Utility Billing Leader and the Customer Service Leader positions has been identified. These positions are depended upon to lead staff on day to day directives. These positions are both located within the Customer Service Division. These positions lead and manage staff that are currently compensated at a higher hourly rate than they are.

After research and budgeting, using the same methods of the compensation study that was completed in fiscal year 2019, it is suggested these two positions receive a pay equity adjustment effective October 1, 2020. An increase of 8% would increase the salary of the two Customer Service Leader roles to .59 cents per hour more than their subordinates. These increases are included in the current fiscal year's budget. Following is the suggested pay scale.

	Step 1	Step 2	Step 3	Step 4	Step 5	Step 6
Current	17.88	18.77	19.71	20.70	21.74	22.83
Proposed	19.31	20.28	21.29	22.35	23.47	24.65

Dr. Sharps asked if this would be go into effect immediately or retroactive. Mr. Thomas stated he had suggested the pay equity adjustment to be effective October 1, 2020 as he wanted to see what revenues were for the first quarter of the fiscal year. Mr. Dillard inquired how many lead positions there are. Mr. Thomas stated there are 7 management positions and 4 lead union positions. Ms. Cribbins commented if the pay equity adjustments should be retroactive. Mr. Thomas stated he would leave that for the Board of Directors to decide but staff did include it in the budget as of July 1, 2020. Mr. Dillard asked if revenues went down. Mr. Thomas stated August revenues were up by \$75,000, and the utility will be resuming collection activities on October 1, 2020. Mr. Solarz inquired what the effective date was for those who received increases from the last compensation study. Mr. Thomas stated July 1, 2019 and the union has been notified of the proposed increases for these two positions but staff has not heard back from them as of this date. Mr. Thomas stated he didn't anticipate there would be a problem with the union accepting this.

After a brief discussion, Dr. Sharps moved to authorize the General Manager to implement the proposed pay equity adjustments retroactive to July 1, 2020 for the Utility Billing Leader and Customer Service Leader positions pending review and acceptance the with the SEIU Local 503 Employees Union. The motion was seconded by Mr. Solarz and passed unanimously.

The Board's next regular meeting was set for Thursday, October 1, 2020, at 7:00 a.m.

Updates were given as follows:

- Springbrook Upgrade – Springbrook will upgrade the system with the most recent version and should be completed with the installation by January 2021.
- FY 2020 Financial Audit – The auditors will be on site today.
- 4<sup>th</sup> Street Main Replacement – The project is complete and the first pay request has been received but staff is waiting for approval of the City's engineer.
- McCullough Bridge Painting – West Coast Contractors have suspended the main and the painting is approximately half way complete. Estimated completion date for painting, dependent on the weather, is by the end of October.
- McDaniel Street Water Main Replacement – A request for quotes has been sent out and quotes are due today by 2:00 p.m.
- Camera System – Jeff Page met with a couple of vendors and is waiting on receipt of quotes, and will also look into self- installed systems.

At 7:22 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 information of programs relating to security pursuant to ORS 192.660(2)(n)(E). They returned to open session at 7:43 a.m.

There being no other business to come before the Board, Chair Solarz adjourned the meeting at 7:43 a.m.

Approved: \_\_\_\_\_, 2020

By: \_\_\_\_\_  
Chair Greg Solarz

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