

**COLTON WATER DISTRICT
MEETING OF THE BOARD
April 15, 2025**

CALL TO ORDER:

- The meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m.

Board Members Present: Ken Carroll, Colin Wait, Alan Gross, Carl Stephens

Board Vacancy: Position 1

Others Present: Betty Hodges/Coats, Pete Dostert, Lacey Starr, Mike Simmons, Phillip Merrill, Lyle Hallgren

APPROVAL OF MARCH 18, 2025 MEETING MINUTES:

Carl Stephens moved to approve the Meeting Minutes for March 18th, 2025. Ken Carroll seconded. Roll call was taken as follows:

Ken Carroll - Aye
Colin Wait – Aye
Alan Gross - Aye
Carl Stephens – Aye

FINANCIAL REPORT:

Carl Stephens moved to approve the Financials for March 2025. Collin Wait seconded. Roll call was taken as follows:

Ken Carroll - Aye
Colin Wait – Aye
Alan Gross - Aye
Carl Stephens - Aye

MANAGER'S REPORT:

Betty Hodges/Coats told the Board that Pete had to replace the radiator in the Colton Water District truck, and the truck still needs further maintenance. The obligation of \$150,000 transfer for the year has been completed. A collections company has been chosen for customer with delinquent accounts. The collections company charges 30% if nothing goes to legal and 40% if it goes to legal and all fees upfront by them. The water district will get paid from the collections agency, when the collections company gets paid. Two customers will be sent to collections. Janell Bynum will be meeting with chief Gary, and he will be giving her a tour of the districts. Betty is still working on the budget.

SUPERINTENDENT’S REPORT:

Pete Dostert told the board that on April 11th, 2025, there was a pressure reducer valve failure due to the brass speed controls, causing water pressure issues. The failure of the valve caused high pressure and blew out the bottom of a meter, causing a ripple effect of water pressure issues at the homes of some of our customers. Two customers' water heaters malfunctioned because they did not have pressure reducers on their side of the meter. One of the two customers told Pete they would install a new pressure reducer to prevent it from happening again. Pete did not discover any mainline breaks from the issue. The brass speed control that controls the speed of the water flow was installed 4 months ago and had already failed. Pete said all four speed controls need to be replaced with stainless steel controls from the current brass ones. Pete also told the board that the Dodge transmission failed after he replaced the radiator, and he has received a quote of \$4,500 from Curt Jacques for a transmission rebuild.

Pete discovered a water leak on Mrs. Coy’s side of her meter box, and he repaired the issue promptly. The leak was approximately 10,000 gallons.

OLD BUSINESS:

OB-1: Grant Team Update:

Water Smart Grant:

Betty Hodges/Coats reported that the WaterSmart small-scale Water Efficiency Project Grant was moving along sufficiently until they discovered that potentially 15% of Colton Water Districts meters were older than fifty years old. We may need to pay to have a Cultural Resource Survey done, which is required under section 106, of the National Historic Preservation Act. They will need to do a full investigation to see what affects that the old meters will have, before they move forward with the grant. She has been reaching out to agencies on the list to schedule the Survey. Colton water district was granted program approval by the Bureau of Reclamation to increase total project costs over the \$250,000 threshold.

Water Master Plan Grant:

The application has been completed for the Water Master Plan Grant and is ready for Ken Carroll, Board President signature. The application was handed to Ken and signed. Betty will submit tomorrow.

OB-2: Water Loss:

Pete Dostert said that he is tracking the water data.

OB-3: GWorks:

Betty Hodges/Coats reported she is one step closer with GWorks to get the meter route to download correctly. A couple of entries for new reads and practice runs were performed. There were some issues with the numbers aligning correctly on the bill cards. GWorks may be able to go live by the end of the month.

OB-4: Out of District Customer Rates:

Two District Customers, Mike Simmons and Lyle Hallgren, were present to discuss the out-of-district water charges. Also, Betty Hodges/Coats presented a letter from Nina Baurer to the Board.

Lyle Hallgren, a twenty-year resident, spoke about his out-of-district cost concerns. He read a letter to the board, which mentioned he has been getting city water for about twenty years, and that it was his understanding that the water district would start implementing a 20% out-of-district charge on customers who are out of the water district. He stated he was never informed until the last election that he was not in the district. Lyle does not want to pay the out-of-district fee in the future because he has not paid it in the past years. Lyle Hallgren mentioned the possibility of being annexed into the water district. Ken Carroll mentioned the outrageous costs that would entail for the Colton Water District to annex the out-of-district customer into the District. Alan Gross followed up, stating that the out-of-district charge has been a policy for many years and should have been charged in years past. Ken Carroll said the out-of-district policy has been in place for 25 years. Betty Hodges/Coats confirmed the policy has been in place since 1990.

Mike Simmons also told the board he was there with the same concerns. As a longtime customer who was never aware he was out of district, and is apprehensive about having to start paying out-of-district rates.

Nina Baurer's letter to the Board also discussed her being unaware that she was out of district prior to the last election. She is concerned and feels she is being penalized for arbitrary boundary lines. She proposed in her letter that the Colton Water District maintain the same rate for all customers.

Alan Gross and Colin Wait communicated to those present that, yes, it was unclear where the district boundaries were prior to the previous election, and it is now apparent and understood where the boundary lines are, and we are communicating that with any new out-of-district customers.

The board will evaluate all options, and the conversation will continue at future Board meetings until resolved.

NEW BUSINESS:

NB-1: Merrill Water Proposal

Phillip Merrill explained to the board that after touring the District, Treatment Plant, and discussing all the operator requirements, he had finalized his proposal for the Colton Water District's water operator as a contractor. Phillip discussed that the proposal prices include the labor for seven days a week at six or eight hours per day with himself and two of his employees. He discussed the complexity and hours needed at the water treatment plant and in the field. He told the board that his proposal includes a value with understanding that there is always a demand in the field and at the treatment plant, and those hours will fluctuate dependent on where the demand is and he will adjust as needed. Colin Wait asked about his intent to switch over to liquid chlorine from gas. Phillip said he would require the switch to liquid chlorine and also needing to switch over to a dialer. He said this is first level monitoring and is also included in his proposal. Additional fees will be invoiced to the Water District if there are call-outs or out-of-normal hours

113 and/or special projects. Phillip’s proposal includes insurance, transportation, maintenance,
114 employee costs, and labor. His model in this proposal is price stability for the Water District and
115 business stability for his operators. Carl Stephens asked Phillip how communication would work
116 between Phillip’s team and the Water District Manager. He told the Board that, at a minimum, he
117 would give a full monthly water report to her. He assured that the Manager will receive
118 immediate notification of any emergencies. At the one-year mark, he will request an evaluation to
119 discuss how the contract and relationship are going; if appropriate, he will then ask for a five-year
120 contract. Phillip assured the board that he would not spend money without written authorization,
121 and no mobilization hours would be charged, as the hours are all on-site.

122 Phillip Merrill thanked the board for their time and then left the meeting at 07:36 p.m.

123 Alan Gross asked Pete Dostert how often there is work in the field, and if the proposal was
124 appropriate. Pete told the board this was accurate and appropriate. The board discussed the
125 financials and costs of Pete Dostert’s superintendent pay, benefits package, and vehicle costs in
126 comparison to Phillip Merrill’s proposal. The board agreed to continue discussing their options
127 for hiring a future water operator.

128 **NB-2: Board Member Applications:**

129 Board Member applications were reviewed for Sarah Anne Jones and Kyle Harrington, but they
130 were unable to attend the meeting. Discussion will continue at the next board meeting.

131 **NB-3: DP102.5 – Accounting: Collection of Accounts – Ordinance**

132 Ken Carroll explained that the District Policy 102.5 needs to be changed to an Ordinance.

133 Colin Wait made a motion to change District Policy 102.5 Accounting; Collection of accounts, to
134 become Ordinance 2025-02 with corrections. Carl Stephens seconded. Discussion followed.

135 Roll call was taken as follows:

136 Ken Carroll - Aye
137 Colin Wait – Aye
138 Alan Gross - Aye
139 Carl Stephens - Aye
140

141 **Executive Session Pursuant to ORS 192.660 (2) Performance Evaluations**

- 142 • Meeting adjourned for executive session at 8:10 p.m.
143 • Executive Session adjourned at 8:42 p.m.
144

145 **Regular Session:**

- 146
147 • Reconvened at 8:42 p.m.
148 • Staff evaluations were discussed and no decisions were made at this time. Further
149 discussion will continue at the May 20th 2025 Board meeting.

150 **Public Comment:**

151

152 **ADJOURNMENT:**

153 The meeting was adjourned at 08:59 p.m.

154

155 _____ Director _____ (Date)