

DONALA WATER AND SANITATION DISTRICT  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS  
MEETING MINUTES  
SEPTEMBER 23, 2021

The Board of Directors of the Donala Water and Sanitation District met in regular session at the District's office, 15850 Holbein Dr., El Paso County, Colorado on September 23, 2021 at 1:30pm.

Directors Present: Ed Houle  
Wayne Vanderschuere  
Kevin Deardorff  
Bill George  
Ed Miller

Staff Present: Jeff Hodge  
Christina Hawker  
Tanja Smith

Consultants Present: Brett Gracely (LRE)  
Joel Barber (LRE)  
Roger Sams (GMS)  
Haley Orahod (CDPHE) (Online)  
Kristy Richardson (CDPHE) (Online)  
Margaret Talbott (CDPHE) (Online)  
MaryAnn Nason (CDPHE) (Online)  
Steven Brown (Radiation Pros)

Guests: Jackie Burhans (OCN)  
James Howald (OCN)  
Bonnie Lavin  
Pete Smith (Online)  
Eric (Online)

President Houle called the meeting to order at 1:30pm.

Approval of Agenda:

- Approved.

Public Comment Non-Agenda Items:

- None.

Review of Minutes:

- Minutes from August 2021 Board Meeting accepted
  - George motioned to approve, Deardorff second, all aye.

Review of Financial Statements and Check Summaries:

- Donala revenue at 21.58% and expenses at 44.21%.
- Waste Plant revenue at 46.61% and expenses at 43.79%.

- General Fund return is 0.09%.
  - George motion to accept, Vanderschuere second, all aye.

Public Remarks on Radium Levels:

- Houle opened the public remarks session stating that each of the Board members do live in the District and drink the same water that all of the constituents do. Their number one goal is to provide the entire District the best water possible. He then turned the floor over to Hodge who provided an overview on the situation:
  - Donala was notified of a violation of EPA standards to the radium levels tested at our Holbein plant.
  - Gleneagle is located on top of a mesa and we live on rock. We pump our water from deep wells that penetrate the rock to extract the water that is millions of years old.
  - The water is tested at the plant, right after the filtration system. The water is then pumped to the Holbein tanks and it is blended with other well water as well as surface water. The water delivered to customer's homes will likely test at a lower level due to the blending. We have tested several homes and are awaiting those results as well as the most current test results from the plant.
  - We have obtained a water model from GMS which helps better understand how the water moves throughout the District and will allow us to manage the variety of water we have.
  - The water we receive from CSU is actually OUR water from our ranch water right in Leadville. CSU serves as a mechanism to treat, convey and deliver that water to us. There are no radionuclides in that water.
  - Bonnie Lavin inquired to the timeframe for mitigation. Our notice stated 2 years. Hodge verified that along with verifying that the State has provided a timeframe of 5 years for mitigation.
  - Bonnie Lavin asked if the radium could be absorbed through the skin.
  - Steven Brown from Radiation Pros, who is an expert, Board Certified Health Physicist who specializes in the health aspects of radiation who is currently the safety officer approved by the Colorado Department of Health and Environment made the following comments:
    - Based on EPA drinking water limits for radionuclides, we can assume that consuming water regularly with 5 pCi/liter radium is equal to an additional approximately 4 millirems of annual exposure.
    - Because we live in Colorado our exposure is much higher than other parts of the country due to higher elevation resulting in less atmosphere above us and more naturally occurring radium in the rocks and soil we live on.
    - Living here on the front range every person is exposed to an annual background exposure of approximately 400-500 millirems versus living in Florida where their average annual exposure is about 100-150 millirem.
    - We live in a radioactive environment, there is radioactive material in the food we eat, the water we drink, the air we breathe, the cosmic rays and the gamma rays we are exposed to daily. Our levels of exposure are higher than in other parts of the country because we are choosing to live along the front range.
    - Mr. Brown is not all that concerned with the levels we have, although he did indicate that we do need to get those levels below EPA's criteria of 5 pCi/liter total radium. At our current levels we are incurring approximately 1% of the already existing difference in risk from the annual radiation background exposure by living along the front range versus Florida. Regarding its naturally occurring radioactive material content, he believes that the water is currently safe to drink.
  - Haley Orahod of CDPHE confirmed that the excess cancer risk is one in ten thousand. If ten thousand people consumed water at the level of 5pCi/L for a lifetime, one person may contract cancer.
  - Kristy Richardson, also of CDPHE and is the State Toxicologist agreed with Haley's statement and elaborated that if we had 10 pCi/L that risk would be doubled. 10 thousand people drinking water at that level for a lifetime then 2 to 3 people may contract cancer.

- The current cancer risk in Colorado is 1 in 3.
  - The level of radiation at our water level is equal to one chest x-ray a year.
  - A larger threat may be radon, as the radium in the rocks do break down to radon gas. She recommends that those concerned have their homes tested for radon.
  - Showering and bathing may result in a higher risk of radon which can be mitigated by turning on the exhaust fan or opening a window.
  - Mr. Brown elaborated that the radon in water is not directly associated with the amount of radium in the water. Most of the radon has been dissolved in the water directly from the geologic formation it came from.
- Bonnie Lavin asked how it happened in the first place. Is the growth contributing to the problem? Hodge responded that Special Districts in Colorado have no planning authority, therefore Donala has no control over growth.
  - Bonnie also asked if we have enough water. Hodge assured her that we do have plenty of water. We are always searching for renewable water rights to purchase to add to our water portfolio.
  - Bonnie also brought up recharging the aquifer. Yes, this may be an option. We currently have our water engineers, LRE working on a project to do just that.
  - Bonnie asked if we are encouraging xeriscaping and if Donala will provide incentives for that. Hodge responded that this is something we will be evaluating in the near future.
  - Roger Sams stated that GMS has met in depth with staff to make changes to our process.

#### LRE Well Study:

- Testing of water quality was performed August 25<sup>th</sup>. The initial Total Radium results indicate that the District should engage in additional engineering review to identify treatment options and costs to address the Radium. We have one quote to undertake this work for \$60,500.
- Joel Barber announced that we did get a grant to develop the framework to partner with Triview for Aquifer Storage Recovery (ASR). Each party will pay \$25,000 and the State will provide \$150,000.
- We may need to re-drill a couple of wells.
- Hodge noted that we will be leasing 120 AF of water for \$60,000. Board directed Hodge to sign the agreement when it's available.

#### Pikes Peak Regional Water Authority (CSU Loop):

- The participants will hold an update meeting September 24<sup>th</sup>.

#### County Loop:

- The group has submitted a letter requesting funding from the El Paso County Commissioners in the amount of roughly \$40 million. The County received American Rescue Plan (ARP) monies and part of the project could be funded these monies.

#### Northern Water Delivery Line:

- Triview met with CSU to discuss the proposed System Availability Fees.

#### North Monument Creek Interceptor (NMCI):

- Nothing new to report.

Hodge wanted to add the for the majority of the staff and himself, our time this month has been taken up meeting with engineers, talking with and returning emails regarding the notice that was sent out to our customers informing them that the radium levels have been above the limit imposed by the State. Houle and the rest of the Board offered many thanks to Victoria, Christina and Tanja for fielding the many calls the District has received.

## Status of Operations:

- Water Report:
  - District consumed 39.552 million gallons in August.
    - 28.038 from our wells and 11.513 from Willow Creek Ranch delivered by CSU.
    - Wastewater Treatment Plant received 12.273 million gallons of water as influent, the remaining amount, 27.279 MG, or 68% was used for outside watering.
  
- Water Meter Upgrade and Replacement:
  - The completion date for this project is October 2021. As of today, 1,400 meters/transmitters have been installed.
  
- Wastewater Report:
  - UMCRRWTF continues to produce a good quality effluent that exceeds all State discharge permit standards
  - Biosolids were found to be above the TENORM exempt level of 5 pCi/gm – a pCi is one trillionth of a curie. We believe the level is within an acceptable range for land application. We will be tested annually for TENORMs.
  - Our average biosolids test results for Radium 226 was 8.6 pCi/g-dry and for Radium 228 was 9.9 pCi/g-dry.
  - BOD5 resulted in 99% removal.
  - Total Suspended Solids results = 98% removal.
  - Completed work project by staff consisted of:
    - UVAS/UVT probe has been removed and sent to HACH for its annual rebuild and bench test.
    - Cleaned Disinfection Equalization Basin (DEB).
    - Cracked scum through drain in SBR 2 was repaired.
    - Tested #2 SBR tank drain for proper operation in preparation to put this unit on-line to drain #3 SBR for equipment rotation.
    - Aaron and Amy have started cross training program.
    - Plant H2) wet-well was cleaned and returned to service.
    - Staff disassembled, cleaned and rehabbed the 30ft mag hydroxide chemical tank delivery fill line.
  - Roger Sams stated that rule making hearing are coming up which may impact the plant.

## Additional Comments:

- None.

Meeting adjourned 3:20 p.m.

These minutes are respectfully submitted for record by Tanja Smith on September 23, 2021.