

RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

MINUTES OF SPECIAL MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS THREE LAKES WATER AND SANITATION DISTRICT

HELD

Monday, August 1, 2017
1:00 p.m. at the Administration Building
1111 County Road 48
Grand Lake, CO 80447

A special meeting of the Board of Directors of the Three Lakes Water and Sanitation District was held in accordance with the applicable Statutes of the State of Colorado.

The following Directors were present and acting:

Julie Gasner
Dan Knox
Pat Farmer
Les Shankland

Others present: Sally Blea, staff

Public present: Carol McCracken, Sarah Sjobakken and Ross Blackmer

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Knox called the meeting to order and announced that the special meeting was called for the purpose of interviewing the top two finalists for the District Manager position. He stated that the District Manager will be asking the questions with Board input as necessary.

Sarah Sjobakken was introduced. She is from Parker presently working as an interim District Manager for a Metropolitan District. It services water and wastewater and she has been employed in that position for approximately one year. She previously worked in their Administrative Services department. She has a degree in communication and has worked in marketing. She stated that her passion for District management makes her a good fit for the position, and noted that following Rules & Regulations, the laws set forth for Special Districts, and listening to staff is key to continuing the order of the District. She does not have any background in water and wastewater and would rely heavily on the Chief Operator to lead the field with his expertise, with interaction playing a very important role. She does not have experience in creating a financial plan, short term or long term, although she has worked with those types of plans. She is familiar with Discharge Permits and reporting requirements to the State and the role of the EPA. She stated that opposition from the public from time to time on various issues happens but to allow that their voices be heard is important. As well, believing in the direction the Board has laid out is most important. She has supervised many employees, male, female, young and older. She described the learning process of a new job is like "stepping on a carousel - you have to jump on and keep going". She has performed evaluations but did not endorse peer reviews. As for the District Manager evaluation, she felt that the indicator of how the District Manager is performing is by virtue of how the District is performing as a whole. She felt continued education is an important tool and she is familiar with those resources. She stated that she and her husband are currently having a house built in the District and are planning to move to the area on a full-time basis. Upon questioning from Sarah as to a salary, the Board responded that the salary for the position has not been set but rather is subject to negotiation once an offer has been made by the District. This interview then ended.

Carol McCracken left the meeting and no further public was present.

The Board and Sally continued with general discussion on topics of salary surveys recently completed, salary ranges they represent and the benefit costs as a total that the District currently offers. The Board also discussed generally the logistics of arriving at a reasonable salary range for the position, although no conclusions were arrived at.

Ross Blackmer was then introduced. He is from Greeley presently working as Recreation Services Manager for a Park and Recreation District, having served in this position since 2000, and is simultaneously serving as Executive Director for another Park and Recreation District since 2014. He was first employed in education, moved out of education and worked 10 years with the City of Greeley, and subsequently with Special Districts, which he thoroughly enjoys. He is presently working with three communities who are developing at a high rate of speed, and challenges have been ever present. He also took on a District that was financially strapped and is very successful today. He has managed as high as 24 full-time and over 500 part-time staff and stresses that communication is key to moving forward with the Board, staff and the public. He noted that the hierarchy of his employment is very similar to this District and the Chief Operator overseeing operations is no different. He is very familiar with short and long term financial planning, creates and uses those documents now in his employment. He works extensively with fee surveys to arrive at decisions regarding rate making. He is very familiar with the EPA and State Regulations as they apply to water quality. Opposition from the public is ever present in his Districts but being very prepared with or about any concept and communication with the public is always key. He feels transparency provides a comfort level of what the District is trying to accomplish – accountability simply ties into it by being transparent. Integrity comes out of the hard work put forth in daily work and that commitments are kept; and that everyone is treated fairly is most important in public service. He states that he excels at challenges and will listen and work hard to keep the District moving forward. In response to his opinion on peer reviews, he is open to them but feels that direct evaluations is the better tool and should be done quite often throughout the year. Continued education is a must not only for this position but all employees and utilizes various methods available to obtain educational material. He noted that his wife is getting ready for retirement and would like to move out of the front range. This opportunity fits in with the decisions they will be making and is ready to work hard for the District. The interview then ended.

The Board then discussed the process to move forward, including the process for breaking a tie, etc. as well as if executive session is an option to discuss the applicants, to protect the personal information that may be discussed about each applicant. A legal opinion will be sought on those issues. The Board will be making a decision at its August 14 Board meeting and send a conditional letter of employment to that applicant chosen for the position, to be sent out on August 15.

The Board then discussed housing for new employees and the present situation with the two residences the District owns. Sally will give some thought to the program of providing housing.

Sally also reported to the Board that the Bookkeeper has requested a reduction in her 40 hour workweek in order to accommodate personal matters. They are working out an agreement that will allow her to continue employment with the District.

With no further business before the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 4:38 p.m.


Sally J Blea, Reporting Secretary


Julie Gasner, Secretary/Treasurer