

Oregon Water Resources Commission
Meeting
August 9, 2002
Hatfield Marine Science Center
Newport

WRC Members:

Dan Thorndike
Ron Nelson
Tyler Hansell
Jim Nakano
Jay Rasmussen
Susie Smith

WRD Staff

Paul Cleary
Cindy Smith
Shannon O'Fallon
Adam Sussman
Diane Addicott
Debbie Colbert
Kristen Richert
Tom Paul
Dave Jarrett
Bruce Moyer
Marc Norton
Fred Lissner
Juno Pandian
Dick Bailey

Others

Ed Henricks
Kimberley Priestley
Jerry Schmidt
Mary Meloy
Brad Harper

Written material submitted at this meeting is part of the official record and on file at the Oregon Water Resources Department, 158 12th Street NE, Salem, Oregon 97301-4172. Audiotapes of the meeting are on file at the same address.

A. Commission Meeting Minutes

The minutes of the June 6-7, 2002, meeting were offered to the Commission for their consideration. Nelson moved to approve the minutes as submitted; seconded by Hansell. All voted approval.

B. Commission Comments

Nakano reported that Beulah Reservoir is out of water. District patrons of Vale Oregon Irrigation District will get some return flow for another week, but their corn and sugar beet crops will suffer from the water shortage. Warm Springs Irrigation District patrons should still be receiving water since that district has water rights on the Malheur River. Nakano said that Willow Creek, tributary to the Malheur River, is being treated for E.coli bacteria.

Nelson announced that he has accepted a position as Manager of the Nevada Irrigation District in Northern California, and will be leaving the Commission in September.

Rasmussen thanked those who made it possible for the Commission to meet in Newport. The previous day's discussion on coastal issues was most interesting.

Hansell said yesterday's tour of the Rocky Creek watershed was very interesting — seeing areas in person really helps when considering issues that come before the Commission. He thanked staff for their high quality written reports.

Thorndike thanked the meeting planners for yesterday's tour and work session. He reported that he attended a two-day retreat of the Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board in July.

C. Director's Report

Cleary thanked Debbie Colbert and Adam Sussman for their work behind the scenes in helping to plan and develop reports and presentations at each Commission meeting.

Cleary briefly reviewed his written report with the Commissioners; and talked about the water year and shortages of water supply throughout much of the state. On September 17 he will be in the Klamath area touring the Wood River restoration projects.

Adam Sussman, Senior Policy Coordinator; and Barry Norris, Technical Services Administrator, gave the Commissioners an update on the activities of the Joint Task Force on Water Supply and Conservation (Senate Bill 93 Task Force) and responded to their questions and comments.

D. Legislative Concepts and Budget Development

Bruce Moyer, Administrator of Administrative Services, reported on the development of the 2003-05 biennial budget. He reviewed his written report, explaining that revenue shortfalls of the current biennium have created a challenge for preparing the 2003-05 budget and legislative concepts. The agency will streamline proposals, concentrating on important issues that must be

addressed and maintaining current service level capabilities.

Commissioners encouraged Department staff to consider developing a cost recovery policy that will help explain the need for major increase in fees for agency services. Rasmussen said it would be helpful for Commissioners to have a brief information sheet explaining how the revenue shortfall is impacting the agency's programs and the need for adjusting the fee structure to cover customer services. Cleary agreed and said staff would also prepare a history of the Department's application processing cost recovery and a customer profile compiled from application statistics.

Adam Sussman, Senior Policy Coordinator, reviewed his report describing the Department's two remaining legislative concepts. He explained that there will still be time at the October meeting for Commissioners and staff to consider adjustments to the bills that are now being drafted by Legislative Counsel.

E. Well Construction Rules Amendment

Barry Norris, Technical Services Administrator; and Juno Pandian, Enforcement Manager, presented this request for adoption of amendments to well construction rules, OAR Chapter 690, Divisions 205 and 240. They explained the Rules Advisory Committee process, the proposed amendments, and the single comment that was received during the public comment period.

Rasmussen moved to adopt the proposed rule amendments as presented in Attachment 1 of the staff report; seconded by Hansell. All voted approval.

F. Walnut Hills Ground Water Update

Fred Lissner, Ground Water Manager; and Marc Norton, Hydrogeologist, presented this informational report to the Commissioners and responded to their questions. Staff have been monitoring wells in the Amity Hills/Walnut Hills area of Yamhill County since 1995. Data collected have shown a strong connection between ground water levels and precipitation; that recharge occurs fairly rapidly to aquifers in both the basalts and marine sediments; and that there are areas of instability in the ground water resource.

Because of concerns regarding the adequacy of rural water supplies from ground water in the Willamette Valley, staff are planning a September workshop with other state and local governments, consultants, and interest groups. At this workshop attendees will brainstorm approaches to issues such as those presented by the Amity Hills/Walnut Hills area, and evaluate ways to strengthen the state-local partnership in addressing land use and ground water supply concerns.

G. Public Comment

Mary Meloy, Public Works Director for the City of Redmond, spoke on the confusion that exists in smaller communities that are trying to deal with the layers of rules and regulation relating to municipal water rights. She suggested that some type of public education effort in cooperation with the cities and the state might be helpful.

Ed Henricks, Weyerhaeuser, spoke on his favorable history of working with the Department over the years. He said he observes the Department, with no increase in staff, working smarter with technology; and is appreciative of the knowledgeable field staff and the help they offer.

Respectfully submitted,

Diane K. Addicott
Commission Assistant