MAPLETON WATER DISTRICT
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

July 20, 2026 | 6:00 p.m.
Mapleton Lions Club Kitchen
88151 Riverview Avenue, Mapleton, Oregon

1. CALL TO ORDER

President West called the regular meeting to order at 6:04 p.m.

2. ROLL CALL

Commissioners Present: President Vanessa West; Vice Chair Art Donnelly; Commissioner Dustin Basurto; Commissioner Steve Elliott.

Staff Present: Office Administrator Jordan Walker; Water System Operator Matt Ferkey.

Community Members Present: Cameron Forrette; Lauren Hesse; ShirleyMarie Raven.

3. SAFETY COMMITTEE MEETING

The Board reviewed outstanding safety matters involving fire extinguishers, bee control, and confined-space entry. Ferkey reported that bees at the water treatment plant had been addressed. The Board discussed obtaining a regulatory-compliant multi-gas detector for confined-space work at the sewer facilities, pump stations, and Chestnut booster station. Staff will consult Heath Copley regarding appropriate specifications, calibration requirements, and available models before seeking purchase authorization. The Safety Committee meeting concluded at 6:10 p.m.

4. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Walker requested the addition of Item 6.13, authorization of the auditor engagement letters for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2026.

> **Motion:** Donnelly moved to approve the agenda as amended. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously: West, Donnelly, Basurto, and Elliott voted yes.

5. CONSENT AGENDA

The Board discussed the volume of draft minutes presented and West requested additional detail in the July 7 minutes. Approval of all minutes was postponed to allow further review and revision. The Board reviewed questions regarding the expenditure detail and payroll entries.

> **Motion:** Donnelly moved to approve the consent agenda, excluding Item 5.1, Approval of Minutes. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously: West, Donnelly, Basurto, and Elliott voted yes. July timesheets and July expenditures were approved.

6. DISCUSSION ITEMS

6.1. Nomination of Cameron Forrette for Board of Commissioners Position 5

Donnelly nominated Forrette for the vacant Position 5. Forrette stated that he wished to make a difference and believed he could work effectively with the Board. The Board and community members discussed the need for a fifth commissioner, Forrette's relevant experience and willingness to serve, the value of differing viewpoints, and concerns about whether recent conflicts involving the District were too fresh to support an effective working relationship. Hesse and Raven spoke in support of filling the vacancy and of Forrette's appointment. West and Elliott expressed concern about unresolved conflict; Donnelly and Basurto supported the appointment and emphasized the Board's need for a fifth member and the ability to work through disagreement.

> **Motion:** Donnelly moved to appoint Cameron Forrette to Board Position 5. Elliott seconded. Vote: Donnelly - yes; Basurto - yes; West - no; Elliott - abstain. The motion failed for lack of the three affirmative votes required for appointment.

6.2. Oaths of Office for Basurto and Elliott

Basurto and Elliott completed and signed their oaths of office.

6.3. Customer-Requested Review of Sewer Classification Policy

The Board reviewed a request from the owners of the former Buds For You building to change the property's sewer classification from commercial to residential because the commercial area is vacant and the owners reside in the apartment. The Board discussed the existing five-year noncommercial-use practice, differences between commercial and residential rates, wastewater volume and contents, consistency among similarly situated properties, and the potential revenue impact on the financially constrained sewer system. The Board directed staff to develop additional financial and policy information and prepare a proposed policy resolution for a future meeting. No classification change was approved.

6.4. District Policy Regarding Septic Tank Pumping for Sewer Customers

The Board discussed requiring the approximately 20 sewer customers served through individual septic tanks to have the tanks pumped or inspected at least every five years. Members emphasized that solids entering the collection system could shorten the useful life of the District's drain field. The Board reached consensus that staff should prepare a separate proposed resolution, including reasonable advance notice to customers, for consideration at a future meeting. Donnelly noted that enforceable customer requirements may ultimately need to be adopted by ordinance.

6.5. Ground-Penetrating Radar Demonstration Scheduling

Ferkey summarized a recent field demonstration with Copley and reported that ground-penetrating radar successfully identified lines and approximate depths at several District locations. The Board discussed the equipment's usefulness for safer excavation, improved utility locating, and documentation of the District's locating efforts. Ferkey agreed to coordinate a demonstration with Nick and notify all commissioners. Tuesday, July 28 was identified as the proposed date, with the time to be confirmed; the Walnut Avenue valve location may be used as a demonstration site.

6.6. Authorization of District Work Performed by Commissioners

Following guidance received during SDIS training, the Board discussed the need to expressly authorize commissioner work so that activities are within the scope of District insurance coverage. The discussion also addressed volunteer releases and the need for additional research before permitting work by minor volunteers.

> **Motion:** Donnelly moved to authorize commissioners to perform general landscape maintenance using power tools at District property, facilities, hydrants, and valves; conduct and deliver daily and biweekly sewer samples; operate vehicles for District purposes; attend training; and assist

operators with water- and sewer-related training and tasks. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously: West, Donnelly, Basurto, and Elliott voted yes.

6.7. Current Draft of Lead Operator Job Description

The Board conducted a detailed, line-by-line review of the draft and recommendations received from organizational representatives. Revisions included separating compensation and pay structure from the job description; clarifying hours, availability, on-call responsibilities, emergency coverage, leave, supervisory authority, essential functions, performance expectations, and assigned duties; and removing confusing references to 'secondary responsibilities.' The Board agreed that compensation requires additional discussion before recruitment. Members also agreed that an Assistant Operator job description is needed and should be developed promptly, with Lead Operator input where practical.

Motion: Donnelly moved to adopt the Lead Operator job description with the changes made during the meeting and forward it to District legal counsel for review. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously: West, Donnelly, Basurto, and Elliott voted yes.

6.8. Sewer Designated System Supervisor Alternatives

Walker reported that the current designated system supervisor will be moving and the District must obtain alternate coverage. The current supervisor had contacted DEQ and provided possible candidates, including recently retired operators. The Board also discussed the possibility of recruiting a Lead Operator who holds both water and wastewater certifications. Staff will follow up with the identified candidates.

6.9. Review of Draft O&M Outline, Schedules, and Priorities List

Walker reported that the draft materials were an early effort to document operations based on prior Board direction. The item was deferred for later review.

6.10. Resolution 2026-19 - Transfer of Funds from the General Fund to Project Funds

Walker explained that the resolution would transfer $35,000 to project funds to pay Verdantas invoices pending reimbursement: $25,000 to the EPA Rice Road Capital Project Fund and $10,000 to the Storage Tank Improvement Capital Fund. The Board confirmed that these costs are supported by grant funding or reimbursement and discussed the need to clearly segregate engineering invoices by project.

Motion: Donnelly moved to adopt Resolution 2026-19. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously: West, Donnelly, Basurto, and Elliott voted yes.

6.11. Project Updates

6.11.1. EPA Rice Road

Donnelly reported that Wildish had been selected as general contractor and an archaeological services firm had been retained to satisfy project requirements. A preconstruction meeting was expected within the week, with an anticipated construction start near August 3. West reported that a site had been arranged for equipment and material storage.

6.11.2. ECWAG Intake Improvements

The principal remaining prerequisites for bidding were the Coos Bay Rail Line crossing agreements and a Lane County runoff permit for the gravel access road. Donnelly reported that the parties were working to resolve both items promptly, with work anticipated during the September in-water work window.

6.11.2.1. Authorization to Sign Coos Bay Rail Line Crossing Agreements

Donnelly explained that legal counsel considered the agreements the best available resolution. The agreements preserve access without annual crossing fees, cover the District's identified crossings, require coordination between the parties, and include a 30-day negotiation period before termination for breach.

> **Motion:** A motion was made and seconded to authorize execution of the Coos Bay Rail Line crossing agreements. The motion passed unanimously: West, Donnelly, Basurto, and Elliott voted yes.

6.11.3. Wastewater Facilities Plan

Donnelly reported that the approximately $80,000 Wastewater Facilities Plan had been completed, incorporating review comments from Brian Stevens, and submitted to DEQ. DEQ indicated that review may continue through December.

6.11.4. Storage Tank Refurbishment

USDA approved the preliminary engineering report. A work session with USDA was scheduled for July 21 to advance the RD Apply process. The approximately $900,000 project is expected to proceed to design and bidding, with construction anticipated in spring 2027 and an expected 10- to 15-year extension of tank service life.

6.11.5. Wastewater Rehabilitation/Hardening

The District is awaiting a decision on its approximately $1 million EDA grant application for wastewater-system rehabilitation and flood hardening. The proposed work includes raising flood-vulnerable equipment, pipe lining, system extension, a dedicated backup generator, and SCADA improvements. Because funding has not been awarded, future agendas will identify this as a prospective project or grant application.

6.12. Purchase Approvals

No purchase was approved. Staff will obtain additional technical information before purchasing a confined-space gas detector. Walker will pursue warranty service or replacement for the recently purchased sewer flow meter.

6.13. Auditor Engagement Letters

Walker reported that Grimstad & Associates had provided engagement documents for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2026. The anticipated cost for the two related services is approximately $7,000 and is within the adopted budget.

> **Motion:** Basurto moved to authorize President West to sign both auditor engagement documents. West seconded. The motion passed unanimously: West, Donnelly, Basurto, and Elliott voted yes.

7. BUSINESS REPORTS

7.1. Treasurer's Report

Walker reported that the District ended the fiscal year near budget. General Fund beginning cash was approximately $167,000, compared with the budgeted $160,000. Sewer Fund cash was approximately $4,500 and was expected to improve during July. Restricted grant funds were reflected in the financial statements.

7.2. Billing Report

No billing report was presented because bills had been issued late and current delinquency information would not be representative.

7.3. Risk Management Report

Public meetings training was substantially complete, with Elliott's online training remaining. SDIS will arrange an appraisal of District assets to confirm appropriate insurance coverage. The District's existing asset inventory will be available to support that review. The Board also acknowledged the recent Board training summary.

8. COMMITTEE REPORTS

8.1. Grant Committee

Donnelly reported that recent requests to Three Rivers Foundation and Lane County United Way were unsuccessful. The USDA storage-tank application continued to progress. The Riverview Avenue Distribution Line Replacement proposal advanced through both House and Senate committee processes with recommended federal funding of approximately $700,000, about half the original request. Donnelly cautioned that funding remains contingent on congressional approval, agency processing, and a required local match; if successful, construction would likely occur no earlier than fall 2027.

8.2. Emergency Committee

The committee's work remains temporarily inactive. Basurto reported attending Red Cross emergency-preparedness training. Staff will provide him the existing Lane County emergency materials, and the Board discussed replacing outdated, lengthy materials with a concise and current emergency contact reference.

8.3. Finance Committee

Bank signature authorities have been updated. The FY 2024-25 audit remains in progress after the auditors identified an additional procedural requirement.

8.4. Operations Committee

Walker presented the Operations Manager report, recent staff meeting notes, and Copley's field-visit summary. The Board supported including a water-conservation article in the next customer newsletter because Berkshire Creek is seasonally low, while emphasizing that the District is not presently in a water emergency.

Ferkey discussed potential skid improvements, including a finer pre-strainer that may extend membrane life and reduce backwash water use. FilterTech is reviewing the proposed configuration and scheduling support. A meter has been installed at the fire department for monitoring; future Board action will be needed regarding billing. The Mapleton Evangelical Church service was located and needs a meter. The cemetery service remains shut off below a suspected leak and is a lower priority because it currently serves no paying customers.

Basurto and Walker planned to take the small-system water-operator examination in Springfield. Future work discussed included the Walnut Avenue valve replacement, booster-station pressure tanks, a suspected First User line leak, and the Riverview/Highway 36 valve leak. Ferkey planned to attempt adjustment of the valve packing.

For the sewer system, influent pump No. 2 had been running continuously and may be operating inefficiently. Staff had contacted an electrician and was pursuing diagnosis; influent pump No. 1

continued to provide lead-lag backup. The new sewer flow meter appeared defective and warranty service was being pursued.

8.5. Administration Committee

The District records project was not separately discussed. Walker reported that the RCAC rate study was under supervisory review and continued to progress.

9. BOARD REPORTS

No additional Board reports were presented.

10. PUBLIC COMMENT

No additional public comment was presented on items not appearing on the agenda.

11. FUTURE ITEMS

Future agenda items include sewer customer policies and resolutions addressing sewer classifications and septic-tank inspection or pumping requirements; compensation and recruitment materials associated with the Lead Operator position; an Assistant Operator job description; fire department, church, and cemetery meter and billing matters; and continued review of operations and maintenance documents.

12. ADJOURN

President West adjourned the meeting at 9:17 p.m.

Approved by the Mapleton Water District Board of Commissioners on ____________________.

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Vanessa West, President

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Jordan Walker, Office Administrator