

# **MAPLETON WATER DISTRICT**

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES

June 9, 2026 - 3:00 p.m.

Mapleton Lions Club Kitchen

88151 Riverview Avenue, Mapleton, Oregon

Chair West called the special meeting to order at 3:02 p.m.

Commissioners Present: Vanessa West, Chair; Art Donnelly, Vice Chair; Dustin Basurto, Commissioner

Commissioners Absent: Sharon Kelly, Treasurer; Steve Elliot, Commissioner

Staff Present: Jordan Walker, Office Administrator

Community Members Present: Ray Mader; Matt Ferkey

## **1. Approval of the Agenda**

Vice Chair Donnelly requested that an item concerning an increase in Walker's compensation be added before public comment.

Vice Chair Donnelly moved to approve the agenda as amended. Commissioner Basurto seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously, with Chair West, Vice Chair Donnelly, and Commissioner Basurto voting in favor.

## **2. Current Status of Operations**

Walker reported that he had been operating the water treatment plant with assistance from the District's Direct Responsible Charge operator, OHA, OAWU, and Ferkey. The treatment skid was operating and producing compliant water. Walker explained that, under the interim protocol for an uncertified operator, he could start and stop the skid and make adjustments in consultation with qualified operators and regulators.

Commissioner Basurto reported that he had shadowed the former operator during sewer operations and was receiving additional training from the District's contract sewer operator. The wastewater measurements were satisfactory, and the contract operator remained available to answer questions and provide oversight. Chair West was also participating in the training.

Vice Chair Donnelly reported that OAWU circuit riders were available to provide water and wastewater support, training, and onsite assistance as needed. The Board emphasized the importance of proactively communicating unusual wastewater conditions to the contract operator and DEQ.

## **3. Interim Operational Plans**

### **3.1 Water Operations**

Walker estimated that interim operational arrangements could be needed through the beginning of August while the District completed the hiring process. His immediate priority would remain maintaining compliant water service, although this could delay some administrative work.

The Board discussed cross-training commissioners and staff to complete basic operational tasks under appropriate supervision. Employee meetings could be used for training and completing routine work, including checking the intake and cleaning the treatment skid strainer.

Walker agreed to establish a group communication channel involving those assisting with operations and the District's water and sewer advisors. A weekly checklist would also be developed to identify routine tasks and clarify who was authorized to perform them.

The Board reviewed the District's water storage level and determined that adequate water was available.

### **3.2 Sewer Operations**

Commissioner Basurto and Chair West would continue sewer training under the contract operator's supervision. Once both were trained, they anticipated developing a schedule to share daily wastewater duties.

The Board agreed that Walker's sewer cross-training should occur later, after the immediate operational transition had stabilized. Sewer activities and unusual conditions would be communicated through a shared group message so the contract operator and District personnel could coordinate coverage and regulatory communications.

## **4. Filling the Two Vacant Operational Positions**

The Board discussed the anticipated hiring timeline and agreed that the interim arrangements might remain necessary for approximately two months. Walker explained that completion of the job descriptions, review by HR Answers and legal counsel, Board approval, advertising, and application review could delay hiring until early August.

### **4.1 Development of Revised Job Descriptions with OAWU Guidance**

The Board discussed whether the District should fill two or three operational positions and how supervisory and scheduling responsibilities should be assigned. Members agreed that the job descriptions should clearly define responsibilities while leaving reasonable flexibility to establish schedules based on the applicants selected.

The Board emphasized that the lead operator must receive regular, guaranteed time off. The job descriptions should also address weekend coverage, minimum workdays, overlap between operators for two-person projects, and responsibility for preparing the operating schedule.

Walker and Commissioner Basurto agreed to meet at the District office on Friday, June 12, with Commissioner Elliot if available, to continue preparing the job descriptions. The Board would revisit committee participation at its June 15 regular meeting if Commissioner Elliot remained unavailable.

### **4.2 Submission for Review by HR Answers**

Commissioner Elliot had attempted to coordinate with the District's HR Answers representative, but scheduling conflicts had delayed the consultation. Walker had distributed materials received from HR Answers to the commissioners working on the job descriptions.

The Board agreed that the revised descriptions should be developed in consultation with HR Answers.

### **4.3 Preliminary Approval by the Board and Submission for Review by Legal Counsel**

The Board reaffirmed that the revised job descriptions would be submitted to the Board for preliminary approval and then forwarded to legal counsel for review.

### **4.4 Final Approval and Posting of Opening**

Following legal review, the job descriptions would return to the Board for final approval. Walker recommended advertising the positions for at least two weeks to allow adequate public notice and recruitment.

### **4.5 Application Review and Hiring**

Applications would be reviewed after the posting period. The Board anticipated that applicants might be available for review by early August.

## 5. Office Administrator Compensation

Vice Chair Donnelly stated that Walker had assumed additional responsibilities and that his existing wage of \$22.50 per hour did not adequately reflect those responsibilities. He moved to increase Walker's wage to \$25.00 per hour.

Commissioner Basurto seconded the motion. At Walker's request, Vice Chair Donnelly amended the effective date to June 16, 2026, corresponding with the beginning of the next pay period.

Chair West expressed concern about the District's overall personnel costs, limited revenue, and the community's ability to support additional rate increases. She nevertheless concluded that the increase was justified by Walker's added water-treatment responsibilities, operational experience, and anticipated sewer cross-training.

The motion to increase Walker's wage to \$25.00 per hour, effective June 16, 2026, passed unanimously, with Chair West, Vice Chair Donnelly, and Commissioner Basurto voting in favor.

## 6. Public Comment

Ferkey thanked the commissioners and Walker for assuming responsibility for water and sewer operations. He apologized for the circumstances surrounding his departure and explained that the continuing demands and stress of operational responsibility had affected him significantly. Although he was not available to volunteer or work without compensation, he remained willing to answer questions and provide guidance.

The Board discussed the importance of adequate staffing, scheduled time off, board training, and preventing operational responsibilities from becoming concentrated on one employee. Chair West suggested that additional personnel matters could be discussed at a future executive session with more commissioners present.

No additional public comments were received.

## 7. Adjournment

Chair West adjourned the meeting at 3:48 p.m.

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Board Chair

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Date