

LEWIS AND CLARK COUNTY
WATER QUALITY PROTECTION DISTRICT
BOARD MEETING
Helena, MT 59601
316 N. Park, Room 226
December 4, 2012

Members Present

Stan Frasier, chair
Gary Ingman, vice-chair
Commissioner Mike Murray
Eric Regensburger
Jennifer Lowell
Jamie Schell
John Rundquist

Members Absent

Kris Goss
Kammy Johnson

Staff

Jim Wilbur
Jennifer McBroom
James Swierc
Norman Rostocki
Jolene Helgerson

Guests Present

Rod Caldwell, USGS

Stan Frasier, chair, called the 185th meeting of the Lewis and Clark County Water Quality Protection District (WQPD) Board of Directors to order at 5:30 p.m. A quorum was established. Introductions were made.

MINUTES

Stan Frasier asked if there were any corrections or additions to the minutes October 23, 2012. Jamie Schell moved to accept the minutes with a correction to page 4 of the board packet regarding the Asarco property redevelopment planning discussion second sentence to the last. The sentence should read “ Jamie Schell stated that 2009 the Trust Group annexed into the City of East Helena a large portion of land which the City of East Helena has yet to complete the zoning for. Mike Murray seconded the motion. The motion carried 6-0.

REVIEW OF AGENDA

No additions were made.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

FINANCE MANAGER’S REPORT

Norman Rostocki, Finance Coordinator, presented the cash flow statement and comparison to budget and cash flow analysis for the WQPD on pages 8-9 of the board packet. As of October 31, 2012, we are 33% through the fiscal year, beginning cash is \$119,847; total revenues received are \$14,398 or 5% amount budgeted; total expenditures are \$98,872 or 30% amount budgeted; revenues are under expenditures by \$84,473; ending cash balance is \$30,153. Norman stated that by the end of the October, the District was safely within the limit of the 30-day cash reserve.

INVESTIGATION OF URANIUM & OTHER NATURALLY OCCURRING RADIOACTIVE ELEMENTS IN GROUNDWATER OF JEFFERSON COUNTY & SURROUNDING AREAS

Rod Caldwell with the United State Geological Service (USGS) gave a PowerPoint presentation on the investigation of naturally occurring radioactive elements found in wells in the Boulder Batholiths and surrounding areas and presented a handout on the USGS samples for radioactive constituents in groundwater of southwestern Montana (see Attachment "A"). Mr. Caldwell highlighted the groundwater flow of the Boulder Batholiths and how that affects the amount of radioactive elements in the groundwater, the health effects of high concentrations of radioactive elements, and the outcomes of the 2007 and 2009 investigation and study. Mr. Caldwell noted that in 2007, 40 wells were sampled in various areas of the batholiths and those studies found that 5 wells out of the 40 had levels of uranium that exceeded the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) drinking water standard of 30 MCL Ug/L., high radon levels were found in 16 of the 39 wells, high gross alpha levels were found in 8 of the 12 wells, and high levels of radium 226 and 228 were found in 4 out of 12 wells tested. Mr. Caldwell and staff continued the study in 2009 with the sampling of 128 wells in the surrounding areas. Radioactive elements were found in all 128 wells with 48 exceeding the drinking water standard. The USGS has recommended the use of reverse osmosis filters as a way to remove the radioactive elements.

PRICKLY PEAR CREEK RE-WATERING PROJECT AND FUNDING ISSUES, NF & WF GRANT APPLICATION

Jim Wilbur, Water Quality District Coordinator, presented a PowerPoint of the re-watering of Prickly Pear Creek (PPC). Jim highlighted the history of the de-watering of PPC and the Montana Water Trust attempts in 2008 to re-water PPC in the low flow months of July and August by purchasing water from the Bureau of Reclamation via the Canyon Ferry reservoir for the re-watering PPC. Jim noted that the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) provided a 319 Non-Point Source grant for the re-watering project. The Bonneville Environmental Foundation agreed to sponsor the project for three years. Currently, there no sponsors for the re-watering project. The Trust is looking for sponsors to fund the \$25,000 cost of the project. Jim noted the concerns of water rights with the Department of Natural Resources and Conservation (DNRC). The Trust recommended a change in the water rights to allow for in-stream use added into the late summer use for individuals affected by the change. The Water Quality Protection District along with the Trust is applying for a Wells Fargo grant from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation that will help support the project. Jim requested written letter of support by the Board for the grant application. Stan Frasier made a motion for the District to provide a letter of support for the Wells Fargo grant application and future support of the of the PPC re-watering project. Gary Ingman seconded the motion. The motion carried 6-0.

UPDATES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

WQPD Anniversary: The WQPD held its Anniversary public open house on November 15, 2012. County Commissioners presented the District with a framed print of the WQPD.

ASARCO East Helena Facility Interim Measures Work Plan 2013: The Montana Environmental Custodial Trust Group (MECTG) has completed their 2013 Interim Measure Work Plan for the former Asarco facility. Comments regarding the plan are due by December 7, 2012. The plan included the relocation of PPC, construction of a Evaportranspiration Cover (ETC) system and the demolition of buildings on site. A copy of the work plan can be found at the MECTG web page.

Lake Helena Watershed Restoration Planning: Part of the Lake Helena Watershed grant was to develop a watershed restoration plan (WRP). An advisory committee has been formed as part of the

restoration plan to create a list of stakeholders. The committee has also hired Head Waters Policy Planning consultant firm to assist with interviews to compile information regarding the WRP from selected stakeholders.

District Laboratory Solicitation: The state general administrative contracts that the District uses for their laboratory needs have solicited for new ground water analysis contracts. Two laboratories have put their bids in and they are Pace Laboratory out of Billings and MEIC out of Butte. No local laboratories placed their bids. Jim stated the concern for the District will be the reliability of out of town labs along with the cost. Jim will solicit local labs in the area.

Emerald Ridge Homeowners Well Memo: James Swierc, Hydrologist, highlighted a memorandum on pages 13-19 of the board packet regarding the water monitoring results for Emerald Ridge area. James attended the Emerald Ridge Homeowners Association meeting in which he discussed his findings and the residents' concerns regarding the de-watering. At the request of the residents, the District will add more wells that will be monitored in the subdivision. Jim has discussed with their homeowners association the need for a public water supply.

BOARD MEMBER DISCUSSION

Jim will have a presentation on the new plume that has surfaced near the Dr. Wise Drycleaner at the January board meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 7:20 p.m.

Stan Frasier, chair