

LEWIS AND CLARK COUNTY  
WATER QUALITY PROTECTION DISTRICT  
BOARD MEETING  
Hybrid - Zoom  
January 23, 2024

Members Present

Patrick Johnson, Chair  
Diana Hammer  
Ryan Leland  
Brie MacLaurin  
Comm. Candace Payne  
Jeff Ryan  
Jon Staldine

Staff

Drenda Niemann  
Jennifer McBroom  
Laurel Riek  
Kegan McClanahan  
Dawn Sullivan  
Natalie Emerson

Members Absent

Ed Kerins, Vice Chair

Guests Present

Patrick Johnson, Chair, called the 273<sup>rd</sup> meeting of the Lewis and Clark County Water Quality Protection District (WQPD) Board of Directors (Board) to order at 5:39 p.m. A quorum was established. Introductions of Board members and WQPD staff were made.

**REVIEW OF AGENDA**

There were no changes made to the agenda.

**MINUTES**

No changes were made to the December 5, 2023 minutes and they were approved.

**FY 24 QUARTER 2 REPORT**

Ms. McBroom presented the 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter report on progress toward Strategic Plan goals. Goal 1 targets have been met or exceeded. Some tools are being updated to new platforms to improve access and ease of understanding for the public. Projects in goal 2 are underway or in discussions. Staff are reviewing, revising, and updating the monitoring plan for over 160 wells. The Grizzly Gulch Project is underway after the DNRC and landowner assistance contracts were signed. The project will restore the Grizzly Creek by reconnecting the creek and monitoring water quality and quantity, riparian vegetation, and wildlife. Discussions have also begun with USGS on potential funding for a water budget for a water conservation plan. The target audience would be city and WQPD residents. Activities in goals 3 and 4 work in conjunction with regard to collaboration with City and County planning, sanitarians, and developers on new developments. WQPD has been attending meetings discussing subdivisions processes, specifically with respect to water quality and quantity issues prior to subdivision approval. Discussion has also begun regarding expansion of WQPD fee boundaries to be able to include the rapidly expanding Helena valley.

## **FINANCIAL REPORT 2<sup>ND</sup> QUARTER**

Ms. McBroom presented the budget at the end of the 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter FY 24. The budget is 50% through its annual cycle. Total personnel is at 40.6% due to some vacancy savings at the beginning of the fiscal year. Postage costs are showing 71.8% because the annual thank you letters to the entire WQPD network have been sent. Professional Services 204.9% overage reflects issues with some well probes that are not usual and were not budgeted for. Overall, total expenditures are good at 45% halfway through the fiscal year. Total revenues are slightly higher than expected at 56.7%.

## **WATERSHED NEWS**

Ms. McBroom announced that the WQPD is now the contact for the Manlove Subdivision for their arsenic testing and treatment. If any homeowners want treatment or a reverse osmosis system, the WQPD will help them. The WQPD will work with Ms. McCauley in an effort to find a way to cover the full cost of the reverse osmosis system.

Ms. Niemann shared with the board that the WQPD and the Environmental Division will be relocating this spring to the Murray Building at 1930 9<sup>th</sup> Avenue to join the rest of the Lewis and Clark Health Department. The move will be staggered, beginning in April, with all staff and services relocated by June 2024.

## **BOARD MEMBER DISCUSSION**

Mr. Ryan mentioned the Montana Conservation Elders Youth Expose on April 13<sup>th</sup> at the Fairgrounds. The expose will explore environmental issues in the area. Ms. McBroom agreed to be the contact for the WQPD.

Ms. Hammer raised a follow up regarding draft language for the subdivision review and approval process, specifically for sufficient water availability review. Ms. McBroom apologized that she has not had an opportunity to follow up to see if the language of the board's letter was adopted. She will check and let the board know. Ms. McBroom stated that there has only been one subdivision in review since that draft language and the DNRC has stopped all exempt well review since the Broadwater County case is in court.

## **PUBLIC COMMENT**

There was no public comment.

Next meeting will be February 27, 2024, at 5:30pm

There being no public comment, the meeting adjourned at 7:21pm.