

**Rhododendron Water Association
2019 Annual Meeting**

Saturday May 18, 2019
1:00PM – 2:00PM
Mt. Hood Oregon Resort – Trees Room
68010 E Fairway Ave Welches, OR 97067

1 **PRESENT:** President, Steve Graeper; Vice President/Treasurer, Ralph Pitt; Secretary, Merv
2 Novinger, Bob Phillips, Dan Holm, John Young.
3 Others present: Water Master, David Jacob; Executive Secretary, Laura Patty; Recording
4 Secretary, Katy Arnold.
5 A total of 27 members signed the sign in sheet.
6 **ABSENT:** Board Member, Bill Nylund (unexcused)

7
8 **CALL MEETING TO ORDER**

9 **Quorum Determination:**

10 Graeper determined a quorum was present for the meeting to proceed.

11

12 **Welcome and Opening Remarks:**

13 President Steve Graeper opened the meeting at 1:05 PM. Graeper thanked everyone for attending
14 and announced that RWA was providing pizza and beverages for the meeting to say thank you to
15 the membership.

16 He then introduced the RWA Board of Directors: Vice President/Treasurer, Ralph Pitt;
17 Secretary, Merv Novinger; Board Members, Bob Phillips; Dan Holm; and John Young.

18 He went on to introduce Water Master, David Jacob; Executive Secretary, Laura Patty; and
19 Recording Secretary, Katy Arnold and praised them for their dedicated service to RWA.

20

21 **SECRETARY'S REPORT**

22 **Approval of 2018 Annual Meeting Minutes**

23 Graeper asked for any corrections or amendments to the 2018 Annual Meeting minutes that were
24 previously distributed, via email and listed on RWA's website.

25 John Young moved and Regina Lythgoe seconded a **motion to approve the 2018 Annual**
26 **Meeting minutes as distributed.** Motion carried.

27

28 **PRESIDENT'S REPORT**

29 **Rhododendron Water Association Now and in the Future**

30 Graeper reiterated the importance of the Board members and thanked them for their fourth site
31 efforts towards RWA's accomplishments. Within Graepers 10-year Presidency (2006 to current),
32 the Board has taken the water association and infrastructure from the 18th Century into the 21st
33 Century.

34 RWA has a 135GPM maximum water usage and water rights. In 2006, 85GPM of that was
35 wasted water and is now down to less than 30GPM. Metering is complete with all services being
36 monitored allowing early leak detection. RWA's infrastructure has improved substantially since
37 weathering a 2009 disaster when a tree fell on and demolished the treatment plant. RWA
38 received a Drinking Water Revolving Loan Fund with a 30% loan forgiveness. The loan enabled
39 improvements to the infrastructure, to build a Sand Filtration Plant, build a 135-gallon Reservoir
40 Tank on Hofeldt Rd with a hydro-electric generator which can be sold back to the grid when
41 filling with water, and to install meters.

42

43 Graeper stated, "*RWA is providing tomorrow's quality and reliability of water today*".

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1 Graeper said most of RWA's major infrastructure projects have been accomplished without
2 raising rates substantially. The rates are raised 3% every two years to stay within the 1.5 yearly
3 inflation. The association will be looking over the future income and budget to see about not
4 increasing rates next year.

5 The State Revolving Loan Fund granted RWA with \$30,000 to pay Sustainable NW to research
6 and negotiate with the property owners on either side of RWA's water shed located on Henry
7 Creek. The goal is to prevent turbidity interruptions.

8 Bob Phillips commended Graeper for his efficient efforts as RWA's President.

9

10 **GUEST SPEAKER**

11 Graeper introduced today's guest speaker, Oregon Legislature District 52 Representative Anna
12 Williams. Representative Williams spoke about her accomplishments during her first term as
13 District 52 Representative. Williams is local to Hood River and represents the entire Hoodland
14 area and is on the following Committees: Energy and Environment, Agriculture and Land Use,
15 and Human Services and Housing. The last 10 years, she has been involved with social work and
16 how to improve the "standard model" of rural Oregon community living care and affordable
17 housing concerns.

18 Williams briefly discussed funding for HB 2860 A (House Bill, relating to wells that supply
19 ground water for domestic purposes). Today she provided information on current ground water
20 studies and ground water contamination bills for the members to review.

21 She also commented on the 84th Revision of HB 2020 A (House Bill, relating to greenhouse gas
22 emissions; declaring an emergency). Williams said she is feeling good about how funds are
23 coming back into the communities.

24 Williams asked for any questions from the members. Ralph Pitt asked about Hood River's
25 homeless problem. She replied Hood River has a robust shelter system for the homeless
26 population and is statistically no larger than other communities.

27

28 President Graeper asked for Representative Anna Williams' viewpoint on the following:

- 29 **1) Tax kicker rebate.**
30 **2) Senator Courtney, Representative Kotek, PERS Reform SB 1049.**
31 **3) Bipartisan coming together for the benefit of all Oregonians.**
32 **4) Greatest accomplishment or what could be in this long session.**

33

34 Representative Anna Williams' viewpoint:

35 **1) Williams said she does not think the tax kicker rebate will be issued this time around and no**
36 **changes will be made to it. The kicker is unsustainable, and no monies go towards schools or**
37 **mental health due to their ongoing costs. The long-term tax kicker would need to be addressed**
38 **by the State and changed through the constitutional congress.**

39 **2) Williams stated the PERS Reform SB 1049 (Senate bill relating to public employee**
40 **retirement; and declaring an emergency), was significantly amended recently. She said**
41 **businesses and public employees do not like the proposed PERS reform; While, she thinks it may**
42 **be better than anything else that may be ran through the ballot or if amended through a broader**
43 **political support.**

44 **3) Williams said Bipartisan is complicated. In the Oregon House, each bill is completely read**
45 **and reviewed which takes time. Typically, each party (Republican and Democrat) tend to**

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1 disagree with one another and vote towards their own party. When it comes to the leadership
2 level, in general, it seems to be more commonly about which political party wins.

3 **4)** Williams declared her greatest accomplishment in the long session would be education
4 reforms coupled with the education funding, and the HB 2020 A, Cap and Invest bill. These
5 would create major change for the way that all of Oregon does business, does education, and
6 does taxes. It would essentially reformat how the people work with government and how the
7 government work with the people.

8
9 Representative Williams welcomes all comments or concerns from the public.

10 *Please refer to Oregon Legislature District 52 Representative Anna Williams website for details.*

11
12 **EXECUTIVE SECRETARY/TREASURE'S REPORT**

13 **Review of 2018 and 2019 Financials YTD**

14 Secretary, Laura Patty reported the following for 2018: Total Income is \$172, 479.11 (Fees and
15 Water Dues); Operated Expenses is \$88, 271.17, leaving a Net Income of \$84,307.94 (went
16 towards Capital Expenditures); Current total collected is \$143,062.89; and Total Expenses is
17 \$40,941.28 (Jan 1 through May 17, 2019) and expenses are looking to be right in line.

18
19 **Account updates, billing changes**

20 Graeper reported there have been no recent account updates or changes to the billing. The only
21 known change was that RWA has done away with monthly billings and only quarterly billings
22 are accepted. Up until May, the credit cards have been shut off and credit card shut off and
23 unpaid notices were sent out.

24
25 **Investment in Municipal Bond Funds and CD's for Capital Improvement Projects**

26 Vice President, Ralph Pitt reported the current Assets are about 6 times the Liabilities. He said
27 the investment of the past Ameriprise Bond Fund was underperforming and is now resting in a
28 Money Market State Farm CD. The total Savings is at \$107,749 with one of the Money Markets
29 of \$35,500 maturing next year. Some of these savings will be used for current operations and
30 future investment plans.

31
32 **WATER MASTER REPORT**

33 **2018 Consumer Confidence Report**

34 Filtration Plant Operator David Jacob reported RWA has received Outstanding Performer. He
35 said surveys are now performed every 3 years instead of every 5 years; therefore, saving money.

36
37 **BUSINESS MEETING**

38 **RWA Financial Assistance Program**

39 Board Members Bob Phillips and Bill Nylund oversee the confidential Financial Assistance
40 Program. Phillips reported two eligible customers have requested assistance and are being
41 financially aided by the fund. The program is strictly donated funds by the community where
42 neighbor helps neighbor. The non-taxable current funds are at \$180.

43
44 **Capital Improvement Projects Recap and Update**

45 Graeper reported the Sand Filtration System has been online since September of 2018. It is
46 working great and is saving nearly 18,000 a year on not having to replace filters. The inspector

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1 completed the sanitary survey and was impressed with the type of slow sand system and its
2 cleaning process. Graeper commended Jacobs for his services to the system.

3
4 **Woodlands Water Storage Tank**

5 Graeper reported the Water Tank has been online producing water since March 1, 2019 and is
6 servicing the Faubion and Woodlands area. No complaints have been made regarding the taste of
7 water. In the rare case of the Redwood tank failing, the Woodlands 135-gallon water tank has the
8 possibility to push water all the way up to the treatment plant.

9
10 **Service Metering Project along Highway 26**

11 Graeper reported all meters have been installed and every serviced home has a meter. The meter
12 installs were not for generating revenue but are for service line leak detections and were also a
13 pre-requisite for receiving the State Revolving Loan Fund.

14
15 **Hoodland Area Coalition (HAWC) Meeting**

16 Graeper reported the HAWC has not had a 2019 meeting and is currently seeking out a guest(s)
17 speaker. 58 water associations meet, from Alder Creek to Government Camp, and come together
18 to speak about mutual interests. The goal is to bring safe drinking water to communities. A
19 benefit of HAWC is if a natural disaster occurs, financially able associations can provide aid
20 funds to one another. Communication and networking between the associations are other benefits
21 of HAWC.

22 RWA recently took on the Forest Service and are now being paid for water services. NW Natural
23 Gas and Salmon River Water are interested in an intertie with RWA's service lines. This would
24 generate revenue by selling excess water to Salomon River Water and bring the possibility of
25 barrowing water if an emergency arises.

26
27 Melanie Farnsworth asked what the criteria is for becoming an RWA Board Member. Graeper
28 mentioned the current criteria of attending two Annual Meetings can be amended. He said a
29 current Board Member is leaving; therefore, a chair will be open for the 2020 ballot election.
30 Ms. Farnsworth also asked if RWA had enough spare water to sell. Graeper replied, Yes by the
31 metered cubic feet, at the current commercial rate. Jacob added the costs for a metered water
32 hookup is an initial \$1,500 buy in and \$5,000 for installation with an adequate main. If new
33 service is at an inadequate main it is an additional \$5,000 which is put into Capital
34 Improvements.

35
36 Graeper briefly talked about current construction along the South side of Highway 26. The new
37 water line will run up the right of way of the parking lot at Don Guido's and down to the loop to
38 Holden Rd. It will serve two new services and allow a tie in if need be in the future.

39
40 Jacob said the leak on Road 12-A was unfounded last winter and digging will continue soon.
41 Gordon Rice asked about construction on John Lake and Marion Rd. Graeper said the
42 construction is going to be a priority Capital Improvement as a distribution project.

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1 **RESULTS OF BALLOTING**

2 **Director Election Results**

3 Patty reported the results of the RWA election ballot for Director. The 27 ballots received were
4 all for reelection of Merv Novinger and Bill Nylund.

5

6 **MEMBER QUESTIONS/SUGGESTIONS**

7 Nothing noted.

8

9 **ADJOURNMENT**

10 President Graeper thanked everyone for attending the 2019 Annual meeting and adjourned at
11 2:10 PM. The next RWA Annual Meeting will be held in May 2020. PTD.

12

13

14 Respectfully submitted,

15 Katy Arnold, Recording Secretary