

**DURANGO WEST METROPOLITAN DISTRICT No. 1**  
**BOARD OF DIRECTORS**  
***REGULAR MEETING September 27, 2023***

**Call to Order:** Meeting called to order motion by Melissa, Jeanne 2<sup>nd</sup> at 6:35pm.

Board Present: Melissa Schneider, Tom Phelps, Jeanne Matthews, Joel Peterson.

Staff/Reps Present: Janet Anderson, Kathy Phelps. Brian Davies was on approved vacation.

**Visitor Business:** No visitors were present.

**Trash Single Service Survey:** After the August meeting, residents raised concerns and there were some complaints from residents who wanted more input and time to consider using a single service company. Janet reported she spoke with some of those residents and agreed the District could put out a survey and there were more details that should be reviewed prior to making a solid commitment. List of questions and concerns that were raised: costs, contract term length, cancelation penalties, services are not equal between the 2 choices of companies (Waste Management and Phoenix Recycling) regarding number of trucks used, bear containers, number of recycle pickups of weekly versus biweekly, rate increases, future services, using a locally owned versus nationwide company, and costs to convert from one company to another (if any).

Survey results addressed some of the above but not all questions were able to be answered based on the information the District had from Phoenix and Waste Management. Results were reviewed and the most meaningful results were: 1) residents overwhelmingly supported the idea of using one company versus the three companies that currently service Dw1. While the concept of one company was well received, the details on which company should be used was more evenly split. 2) Bear containers were noted to be a much larger request and many residents thought bear containers were a big positive. The District had not expected as much interest in keeping bears out, which was good given the amount of education La Plata County, Bear Smart, and the District have tried to emphasize over the years. People felt strongly that bear containers were highly desired and should be used by all residents, 3) costs were very important with preference to pay the lowest price per year, but the every other week services were not well received and are reflective in price differences, and 4) more residents still preferred Phoenix over Waste Management even if costs were higher. Locally owned, better personalized service, and weekly pickup with what they felt was better reliability were noted as plusses for Phoenix. What was not specified is exactly how much cost difference residents would be willing to pay for choosing Phoenix.

Janet discussed her largest concerns was that the District would be stuck in a commitment with Waste Management for too long and that did not seem acceptable. It was determined residents

would want to receive much more detail and everyone would need more than 3 months advance notice, and the largest problem at this point is length of contract and dealing with fees that could be charged to end or begin service. While Phoenix charges a cart deposit and Waste Management does not, Waste Management charges way too much to terminate service for cart pickup fees. Phoenix would not have a termination fee or charge to pick up carts if the District wanted to discontinue their agreement as a single service provider. Ultimately the board believes the decision should be made by residents. Either decision will have pros and cons and residents will need to accept the negatives that come with one decision or the other before moving forward. Road fees need to be increased regardless, but the hope was that a single service company would keep fees lower over the next couple of decades than not using one company.

**Meetings:** For the months of October, November, and December board meetings move to the 2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday to avoid holiday absences and extra commitments as well as to comply with budget drafts and adoption deadlines the District uses of October 15 and December 15.

**House Construction:** Andrew Stratton, owner of Stratton Building Company, LLC has been delayed getting to Durango but he is ready to jump in and begin building very soon. Janet has been talking with Alpine Bank and has submitted all the documents they have requested to date. The Board authorized and ratified borrowing funds from Alpine Bank for the house construction. Janet asked how involved the board wanted to be with details during construction and the board discussed meeting more regularly would be a good way for everyone to obtain information as the process will go very quickly. It was agreed to hold two meetings in October and November, then the board will later decide on dates for December and January meetings.

**LDWA Report:** Janet reported on behalf of Mike that Dw1 should expect a fee increase at LDWA for the 2024 budget. There is much discussion at their meetings about a problem water tank that needs replacement and searching for grant writers and grant funds. Mike had nothing pressing to pass on and was not present at this meeting.

**Potpourri:** Kathy asked the board if she should continue to keep an item on each agenda for rate increases and the board confirmed yes. Janet said rate details would very much be part of the discussions for 2024 budget given the rates of inflation and absolute need to increase revenues.

**Adjournment:** The meeting was adjourned by motion from Joel, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Melissa at 8:45pm.

M. Schmidt  
10-25-23