

London Water Cooperative

Meeting

May 14, 2025

7:00 p.m.

Present: Eric Vortriede, Jen Vortriede, Alaine Lewis, George Estes, Quint Barnaby, Vicki Whisler, Jon Woodward, Sandy Woodward, Mary Jackson, Randy Jackson, Diana Hawkins, Kevin Brown (Direct Responsible Contact), Gayle Kiahana (Grange rep.)

Call to Order: by President Eric Vortriede

Appointment of Interim Secretary:

Eric announced that he had asked Alaine for her resignation as Secretary due to her availability and Eric's need for additional support concerning the upcoming building of the new water treatment plant. Eric has appointed Jen Vortriede as Interim Secretary until a formal election for Secretary can take place at the next meeting. Eric thanked Alaine for stepping up to the plate when there was a need.

Agenda Review and Approval:

Eric reviewed the agenda and asked for approval. Randy moved to approve the agenda, and Jon seconded. The agenda was unanimously approved.

Approval of Minutes from October 15, 2024 meeting:

Eric asked for a motion to approve the minutes, which had been previously distributed. Sandy moved to approve the minutes, and Diana seconded. The minutes were approved.

Treasurer's Report:

Vicki reported that the balance of the account is \$37,855. This year \$3,873 has been collected, and \$3,720 has been spent, for a net positive of only \$152.

Old Business:

There was no old business to report.

New Business:

Eric read his prepared statement. (***See page 3 below.***)

Precision pumping in Idaho will be building the pump station, which will be transported here to be installed.

RH2, the engineering firm, will be facilitating advertising in various publications for contractors to bid on installation of the new water treatment plant, which will include building pads, storage tanks, installing pumping station, etc.

LWC members are welcome to attend the meeting when the bids will be presented by the contractors on June 12 if they like. Please let Eric know if you are interested.

Eric reported that the water quality has been worse for some reason. Since we are so close to the new water treatment plant being built, it's unclear as to how much money should be spent on trying to rectify the situation. Should we try different chemicals? Eric and Kevin may be looking into various options. Randy mentioned that bacteria like E. Coli has been kept out, which is good.

Filter cartridges will be used in the treatment of water in the new plant, which will make things much easier and more streamlined. They may cost more or not. Time will tell.

Comments from membership:

Randy asked whether the ongoing changes to the federal government have affected our access to grants. Eric replied that the funding for the new water treatment plant has not been affected so far and that our Business Oregon contact says it is "business as usual" to which Randy replied "no news is good news." The Oregon Health Authority is doing what they can to make this project happen. The State wants us to be in compliance.

Randy asked whether anyone had volunteered to weed whack around the meter areas, and Eric responded that George had taken care of it. Thank you, George!

Randy reminded everyone that this is a cooperative, which means that more people should be involved in volunteering to help out.

Gayle mentioned that the Grange will be holding a yard sale June 13-14. Eric is a bit concerned with the timing as the bid meeting will be held on June 12, and he does not want the set up for the yard sale to interfere with the meeting. Gayle suggested that the timing could be worked out.

Adjournment:

A motion was made to adjourn the meeting by Eric. Alaine seconded. The meeting was adjourned at 7:35 p.m.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Jen Vortriede, Interim Secretary, May 15, 2025

Eric Vortriede's Prepared Statement:

Our last meeting was back on October 2024. Last year, we delivered 1,026,690 gallons of treated water to co-op members. So far, this year, we have delivered 301,320 gallons. Last year, for the same period, we delivered 326,710 gallons. That is 25K more last year than this year. The average usage per connection last year was 3565 gallons.

The big news today is that the design of the new water treatment plant has been completed and approved by Oregon Health Authority. Earlier this year, we completed the process of securing the grant funding for the project. We have been awarded \$766,544 of which we have spent \$154,113, primarily on design and engineering. Central to the design is a packaged water treatment plant that will be built by Precision Pumping Systems of Boise Idaho. We initiated the purchase of the plant back in December to lock in the price in anticipation of the tariffs and inflation. LWC is purchasing the plant directly from PPS in order to avoid contractor markup. We will be advertising the bid package for the project on May 16 with a bid opening date of June 12 and construction starting on June 26. If anyone would like to have a look at the bid package, it is available for download on our website.

With regard to rates: we are not making any immediate changes; however, we need to start having discussions because change is inevitable. We are currently operating on a razor's edge with regard to cashflow. Last year we took in \$15,979 with expenses of \$12,189 for a net positive cashflow of \$3789; however, in 2023 our net cashflow was negative by \$1223. (\$14,684 in and \$15,907 out.) And, as our treasurer has reported, our net cashflow to date is only \$152. This year, we are required to perform testing for radioactive nucleotides as well as other tests that do not happen every year, so at the current rates, we will be significantly in the red by the end of this year. And the co-op is not immune to inflation, which is affecting the cost of our chemicals, testing and electricity. So, change is inevitable and what we would like to do is to have a workshop to study and decide on what changes to make. We invite any co-op members who would like to participate in the workshop to let the treasurer or president know of their interest.

With regard to water quality: we have been having a rough go of it for the past six months or so. We have tried a lot of things to make it better with minimal results. There are other things that we can try, but they are costly. If we were not building the new WTP, we would spend the money without question. We probably have the better part of a year before the new plant comes online, so we may want to spend more on the existing plant, but it is debatable. While the turbidity has been high enough to require a boil water notice, the microbial testing has consistently shown no contamination. So, it truly is debatable whether or not we should spend more on the old plant for the time it has left. This is open for discussion.