

OTTER Transcript August 20, 2025 BCPUD Board Meeting

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The Board of Directors of the Blamus Community Public Utility District met on August 20, 2025, to discuss various issues. The resident permit parking committee requested continuation for another year, citing the need for follow-up on four items. The board agreed to maintain the committee but suggested quarterly meetings. They also approved a \$31,000 proposal from Urban Forestry for a roadside hazardous tree study, despite concerns about the financial commitment. Additionally, they granted a 90% leak relief to Nikki Murch, who had a blind leak on her property, noting her thorough investigation and repair efforts. The meeting discussed a water leak issue, with a motion to grant 90% relief on overage costs, which passed 5-0. The board addressed encroachments on public right-of-way, recommending the removal of a cargo container and installation of a windbreak fence. They also reviewed employee pay scales, proposing to increase shift operators' pay to \$35/hour and not hiring a fourth operator. Water usage data showed that 39% of active short-term rentals (STRs) exceeded the 2700 cubic feet per quarter limit, compared to 26% of non-STRs. The board will consider policy modifications based on these findings. The meeting discussed the challenges of seasonally staggered meter reads affecting water usage data. Georgia Woods highlighted discrepancies between STR water usage allowances and county restrictions, noting that STRs use more water than average residential homes. The board considered policy changes, including a "use it or lose it" policy for water allowances. They also discussed the need for better tracking of STR compliance and the potential for more stringent enforcement. Additionally, the board reviewed draft accounting procedures and policies, and addressed the need for more detailed and user-friendly meeting minutes. The meeting concluded with updates on the post office project and a lawsuit against the county for negligence related to beach closure.

Action Items

- [] Approve a pay increase to \$35/hour for shift operators.
- [] Bring back the meeting minutes for further review and formatting improvements.
- [] Reach out to the hardware store owner to facilitate a connection with Layla regarding parking options.

Outline

Community Expression and Meeting Agenda

- Speaker 2 calls the meeting to order and introduces the agenda, including community expression and action items.

- Speaker 3 suggests no changes to the agenda order.
- Speaker 2 moves to action items, public hearings, receipts, and notices.
- Speaker 2 mentions no special reports or updates.

Update from Resident Permit Parking Committee

- Speaker 2 asks for an update from the resident permit parking committee.
- Speaker 1 expresses gratitude for the board's support and mentions the need for another year of operation.
- Speaker 1 discusses the committee's work, including issues with two streets leading to the beach and the need for signage and protocol updates.
- Speaker 1 highlights the importance of managing the volume of people coming into town and the benefits of the permit program.

Discussion on Committee Continuation

- Speaker 4 suggests the need for a standing committee for downtown issues due to aging out of the current committee members.
- Speaker 4 emphasizes the importance of addressing downtown issues, including roads, drainage, and Mason Park.
- Speaker 2 and other board members discuss the potential formation of a downtown committee and the need for continuity.
- Speaker 5 suggests a hybrid approach, combining the current committee with new members and meeting quarterly.

Evaluation of Parking Committee and Future Plans

- Speaker 2 and other board members discuss the evaluation of the parking committee and its continuation.
- Speaker 4 stresses the importance of having a standing committee to address downtown issues and maintain credibility with the county and sheriff's office.
- Speaker 2 suggests addressing issues on an ad hoc basis rather than forming a permanent downtown committee.
- Speaker 1 and other board members agree on the need for a liaison to handle downtown issues and communicate with the county.

Approval of MOUs and Resolutions

- Speaker 2 introduces items related to MOUs and resolutions, including a mutual benefit MOU amendment to the resource recovery license agreement and a cost-sharing MOU for repairing the downtown park.
- Georgia Woods explains the details of the MOUs and resolutions, including the need for approval by the Mesa Park Board and the council.
- The board approves the MOUs and resolutions, with some members expressing concerns about the financial implications and the need for ongoing support.

Proposal for Tree Assessment Study

- Georgia Woods presents a proposal from Urban Forestry for a roadside hazardous tree study.
- The proposal includes assessing trees on both BPUD land and private property, with BPUD covering the cost for BPUD land and private property owners covering the cost for their property.
- Board members discuss the financial implications and the importance of the study for addressing hazardous trees along ingress and egress routes.
- The board approves the proposal, with some members expressing concerns about the financial commitment and the need for ongoing support.

Consideration of Leak Relief Request

- Speaker 2 introduces a request for relief from a water bill due to a leak.
- Nikki Murch explains the nature of the leak and the steps taken to address it, including the use of BPUD water to maintain pressure in her well system.
- Board members discuss the policy for granting leak relief and the specifics of the leak in this case.
- The board approves a 90% reduction in the water bill, considering the nature of the leak and the steps taken to address it.

Water Leak Discussion and Relief Motion

- Speaker 2 explains the distinction between a blind leak and a toilet leak, emphasizing that blind leaks are more deserving of relief.

- Speaker 2 seeks opinions from other participants, including Kevin and Grace, on the categorization of the leak.
- Speaker 3 appreciates the property's efforts to minimize water usage and suggests that the leak was hard to track down and fix.
- Andrew Alexander Green agrees with Grace, noting the property's low water usage and efforts to conserve water during drought years.
- A motion is made and seconded to grant a 90% relief, which is favorably voted on by all participants.

Encroachment and Public Right of Way Concerns

- Speaker 2 introduces the next item on the agenda, addressing encroachments and public right of way issues.
- Speaker 9 expresses discomfort in withdrawing a complaint filed by their father, who has a bad back and cannot attend the meeting.
- Speaker 2 and Speaker 9 discuss the resolution reached between Chuck and Cass, with Speaker 9 mentioning a friendly conversation about the issue.
- The board's recommendation includes moving a cargo container and installing a fence as a windbreak instead.
- Speaker 2 and Speaker 9 discuss the details of the fence placement and the need for a windbreak to protect the property.

Fence and Windbreak Solutions

- Speaker 2 and Speaker 9 discuss the specifics of the fence placement, including the location of the propane tank and the use of a cargo container as a windbreak.
- Georgia Woods prefers to work with the neighbors and mentions the financial impact of the current setup.
- Speaker 2 emphasizes the board's role in responding to complaints and the need for a resolution.
- Speaker 9 suggests a six-month timeline for the neighbors to agree on the fence design.
- The board agrees to leave the resolution to the neighbors, with the expectation that they will implement the agreed-upon solution.

Legal and Responsibility Concerns

- Speaker 10 raises concerns about the board's legal responsibility for approving encroachments on public right of way.
- Speaker 2 explains the board's control over unpaved roads and the need to respond to complaints.
- Speaker 6 and Speaker 2 discuss the board's responsibility for maintaining roads and the impact of encroachments.
- Andrew Alexander Green questions the board's legal accountability for approving structures like fences and propane tanks.
- The board decides to withdraw the complaint and leave the resolution to the neighbors, with the understanding that the board's decision can be used as a defense in future legal actions.

Employee Pay Scale Review

- Georgia Woods presents a detailed analysis of employee pay rates compared to other districts, highlighting the need for higher entry-level pay for shift operators.
- The board discusses the impact of inflation and the need to pay living wages to employees.
- Georgia Woods recommends increasing the pay rate for shift operators to \$35 an hour and not hiring a fourth operator to assess the impact of short staffing.
- The board supports the recommendation and agrees to review the pay structure comprehensively in the fall.

Production and Consumption Updates

- Georgia Woods provides updates on production and consumption, noting a decrease in consumption compared to the previous year.
- The board discusses the impact of natural moisture and fewer people visiting the area on water usage.
- Georgia Woods mentions the transition to drawing water from the upper impoundment due to the state of the radial gate.
- The board is informed about the installation of monitoring wells and the ongoing augmented monitoring program for groundwater at the treatment plant.

Short-Term Rental Water Use Concerns

- Georgia Woods reviews the county's short-term rental program and its implications on water use.
- The board discusses the need to align information provided to short-term rental operators with county requirements.
- Georgia Woods presents data on water use by active short-term rentals and registered short-term rentals, highlighting the need for strategies to reduce water use.
- The board agrees to review the information and consider any necessary policy modifications in the future.

Online Billing and Public Outreach

- Georgia Woods discusses the challenges of increasing online billing sign-ups and suggests potential incentives like discounts or events.
- The board considers the idea of having a laptop to sign people up for online billing at meetings.
- Georgia Woods mentions the reenactment of the newsletter and its inclusion in customer bills as a way to promote online billing.
- The board agrees to continue publicizing online billing options and explore additional outreach methods.

Water Usage Analysis and STR Registration

- Georgia Woods explains the challenges of seasonally staggered meter reads, which makes water usage data less precise.
- Georgia Woods discusses the discrepancy between the water usage allowance for STRs and the county's restrictions, highlighting the confusion and potential issues.
- Speaker 5 inquires about the reporting requirements for STRs, mentioning a similar situation in Scotland.
- Georgia Woods suggests that the analysis is ongoing and open to further feedback and potential policy changes.

Enforcement and Compliance

- Georgia Woods mentions the lack of clarity in enforcement mechanisms for STR compliance.
- Speaker 5 discusses the county's requirements for garbage service and how it affects STR qualification.
- Georgia Woods notes that the county is not currently tracking STR compliance in their customer database.
- The conversation touches on the potential need for more stringent enforcement and tracking of STR water usage.

Policy Recommendations and Water Usage Caps

- Speaker 6 suggests a "use it or lose it" policy for water usage allowances, especially for STRs.
- Georgia Woods expresses concerns about incentivizing water usage through such policies.
- The discussion includes the standard water usage allowance of 2700 cubic feet and the potential for adjusting it based on usage.
- Speaker 6 emphasizes the need for a policy that reflects actual water usage rather than historical allowances.

Resource Recovery and Parking Solutions

- Speaker 5 updates the group on the challenges of finding a suitable location for resource recovery parking.
- The area initially considered was in Lake County right-of-way and was not feasible due to marsh conditions.
- Speaker 5 suggests alternative locations, including a hardware store and a parking area on Brighton.
- The group discusses the potential for using a land trust project area for parking once a gas station reconfiguration is complete.

Meeting Minutes and Policy Development

- Speaker 5 expresses concerns about the accuracy and detail of the meeting minutes, suggesting a need for more substantive reporting.

- Georgia Woods explains the process of preparing the minutes and the discretion involved in summarizing discussions.
- The group discusses the importance of capturing board members' opinions and the potential for amending the minutes.
- Speaker 6 supports the use of timestamps and video links for detailed information, while acknowledging the need for more comprehensive written notes.

Approval of Warrants and Future Agenda Items

- The group approves the warrants without any objections.
- Georgia Woods and Speaker 2 discuss the format and content of future agendas, including the inclusion of committee updates.
- The conversation touches on the ongoing monitoring of the post office project and the potential for future updates.
- The group agrees to continue the parking committee as an agenda item, with the possibility of recruiting new members.

Legal Action and Beach Closure

- Speaker 2 provides an update on the legal action against the county for the beach closure.
- The county's argument for immunity based on discretionary decisions is challenged by Speaker 2, who argues that the decision was negligent.
- The group discusses the potential outcome of the lawsuit and the involvement of the downtown merchants association.
- Speaker 2 mentions the possibility of filing an amended complaint to include more specific details and parties.

Final Remarks and Meeting Adjournment

- The group discusses the importance of clear and comprehensive meeting minutes for transparency and record-keeping.
- Speaker 2 provides an update on the beach closure signs and the ongoing legal action.
- The meeting is adjourned with a reminder of the next meeting date and the need for continued collaboration and communication.

- The group expresses gratitude for the detailed updates and the opportunity to provide feedback and suggestions.