

April 2020 Newsletter

Please submit questions/comments to admin@sallal.com

<p>Pandemic Preparation at Sallal</p>	<p>To ensure continuous operations at Sallal during this pandemic, staff have implemented distancing such as teleworking, locking the office full-time, field staff going directly from home to the field (skipping the office), and wiping down door handles, etc. at the office. If any staff were to get sick, the General Manager has the ability to run all aspects of the system. On-call backup operators from neighboring purveyors may be available including City public works staff.</p>
<p>Financial Help for Members During Pandemic</p>	<p>Many utilities are suspending late fees and shut offs during the pandemic. Sallal, like other utilities, wants to make sure you have the water you need to survive and keep your family healthy. If you are struggling to pay your water bill, please reach out to us so we can make alternative arrangements to help you through this challenging time.</p>
<p>Annual Members Meeting Summary & Update</p>	<p>A total of 14 members participated virtually in Sallal's annual member meeting on March 30th. Despite being our first virtual meeting with members, things went relatively smoothly. A list of questions and answers from the meeting is below. Some members didn't see why they needed to vote since there were five candidates on the ballot for five openings. Per the bylaws, to appoint anyone to the Board, completed ballots must be received by at least 5% of the membership. So, we had to receive at least 90 ballots for any candidates to be confirmed; and to be confirmed, a candidate must receive votes from at least half of the valid ballots received. You did it! Sallal sends its appreciation to those that cast the 118 completed ballots we received! We were able to reach the required quorum to hold the required meeting and fill all five of the board seats that were available.</p>
<p>Board Changes</p>	<p>Sallal welcomes Ann Reed, Larry Costello, Joyce Hibma, Rich Formisano, and Shawn McKone to the Board of Trustees! The unprecedented turnover over the Board over the last nine months was due to long-time members retiring and/or moving out of the service area.</p>
<p>Water System Plan Presentation & Member Comments</p>	<p>The Department of Health requires water utilities to update their Water System Plans at least every 10 years. Sallal is in the process of finalizing its latest update, which outlines a long-term planning strategy for the next 10- and 20-year planning periods. Members are invited to review and provide comments on the draft Water System Plan. A presentation of the plan will be held virtually on May 5, 2020 at 7 p.m. The draft plan is available on Sallal's website and members may request to join the meeting and submit comments in writing to admin@sallal.com. The deadline for submitting comments is May 25, 2020.</p>

Annual Member Meeting Q&A - March 30, 2020

Q: (E-mailed) Since we had an issue last year with contaminated water, what if anything are we doing to protect our water source at this time? Since the E-coli incident we have started chlorinating the entire system. We maintain a steady chlorine residual throughout all areas, aiming for the minimums .20 ppm at the far ends of the system, which is required by the DOH. We try to maintain the residual between .30 and .60 ppm (as required by DOH), which is not excessively strong, but strong enough to kill any bacteria that might get into our system. We do system checks every day throughout and test at the wells themselves on a daily basis for a steady chlorine residual, which we have been able to achieve without any problems. We have been chlorinating at different locations but Wells # 1 and 2 at Rattlesnake have been set up for the

disinfection process and we should have that system online by the end of this week. We have continued to sample Well #2 every month since the incident and all the samples have come back good. We check the wells and all booster sites daily and have all the well sites secured behind locked gates and fences, with a double lock entry protection on the well building itself.

We have the Scada telemetry set up on the well buildings and water tanks to call us out if anyone tries to climb the tanks or break into one of the buildings.

Q: (E-mailed) What is the status of the latest appeal in the lawsuit with King County over the proposed easement rental fees? There have been no changes since the last update in the January newsletter.

Q: (E-mailed) How did you arrive at the 8% increase in our water bills? Where did that number come from? *From January newsletter:* In addition to the E. coli incident and associated lawsuits, engineering expenses, and costs to comply with Department of Health, Sallal has had other unanticipated expenses over the year. These include legal fees to fight the Franchise Fee, review the bylaw amendment petition, and respond to the UTRC appeal. Additional extraordinary expenses included items such as additional meter repairs, hydrant replacements, employee medical insurance, liability insurance (doubled), and taxes.

Q: (E-mailed) How is the Board going to be accountable to us for the money they spend on the new office? Financial statements are available for members to review in the office. Progress and updates including costs will be in future newsletters.

Q: Which watershed are our Rattlesnake wells in?

Engineer Warren Perkins responded that documentation indicates the wells are geographically located within the boundaries of the Snoqualmie watershed. (Note this question did not address the source of the water that is pumped by these wells.)

Q: Will we get E. coli test results including lab data?

The GM stated he had already provided all the information he has to FOSVTR.

Q: Will we be able to review the annual financial statement information presented by the accountant?

Eric will look into it. It will be available at the office for review.

Q: When will our water system plan be ready and will members get to comment on it? We are still working on it, hopefully it will be ready soon. Sallal will try to make it available for member review.

Q: When will North Bend's WSP be ready? Their draft is on their website.

Q: Who should we ask for questions about the assumptions and statistics used in the WSP?

Warren Perkins, through the General Manager.

Q: How many water certificates are left to provide? (ERU's)

Approximately 100-150 depending on projected water usage.

Q: Would you put that number on our website?

This does not seem to be of value to the general membership. Anyone planning a project can call to ask. (It also changes, so there is workload involved in keeping up with any posted number.)

Q: Will we be flushing the system less now that we are chlorinated? Yes.

Q: Where are we headed on voluntary vs involuntary measures for conservation?

No one on the Board is interested in trying to implement what the City proposed last summer.

Q: Has there been any discussion with Ecology about acquiring additional water rights?

It's been considered. No strong decision one way or another. Consultants with expertise in this area are being considered to study feasibility of acquiring new water rights.

Q: What about the cost to acquire new water rights?

The new connections would help pay for that. The philosophy is to make growth pay for growth.

Q: Isn't there a rule against charging different rates for different members? Doesn't that include the hook-up fee? The general facilities charge varies over time based on additions of new and replacement facilities and changes to the capital improvement program. Connection charges are allowed to periodically adjust and they are much higher than years ago.

Q: How many certificates of water availability (in terms of ERU's) have been granted but are not yet used? We'd have to compile that information and get back to you later.

Q: Have we thought about tightening up that process? We did that with the recent amendments to rules 40 and 41.