

SOUTHWEST NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION MEETING
Thursday, October 16, 2025
7:00PM – KYOUDOU CENTER AT GRESHAM JAPANESE GARDEN / ONLINE VIA ZOOM

MEETING MINUTES

1. Welcome, Call to Order and Introductions - Group

Meeting called to order by President Kathy Gardenhire at 7:02pm. Quorum was not initially established so the meeting began with the guest speaker presentation and official business was held until 8:00pm.

2. Guest Speaker – Mike Whiteley, Director, City of Gresham Water Dept. Update on the Cascade Groundwater Alliance transition to groundwater source from current Portland based Bull Run watershed source.

Mike has been department director for 17 years and is presenting an update to city council next week. We are partnered with Rockwood Water People's Utility District (Rockwood PUD) for the Cascade Groundwater Alliance and Gresham's current contract with Portland will end in June 2026. We currently supplement our supply with groundwater during the summer months. The project is currently nearing the end of construction and moving to the testing phase.

The current maximum daily demand is 10-11 million gallons and our rights per contract is up to 18M gallons per day with the partnership with Rockwood. The reason for this new project is that Portland's variance for unfiltered water has ended and Portland's city council made a decision to construct new project for water treatment at \$850M, the costs have now risen to an estimated 2.3 billion dollars.

The system is being designed to meet seismic standards with two tanks, three treatment plants, five new wells and 10 miles of new 36-inch water main lines. There will be a total of nine well sites. Five wells will flow through the existing Rockwood facility that treats for manganese. Manganese is considered an emerging secondary contaminant of concern and both Cascade agencies agreed to be proactive and filter for it.

The plant is ready to start testing next month (November). The wells are drilled, tested and ready. The pipelines are all installed and tested as are the storage tanks. Three treatment plant capacities are: 25M gallons daily at the main Rockwood facility, 4M gallons at Glendoveer and 4M gallons at 223rd and Stark St.

The transition will occur in two phases. The first phase is testing and preparing to transition to groundwater with a blend of 3-6M gallons daily while still purchasing Bull Run water. Phase two will be a new disinfection system and transitioning to fully treated new groundwater sources. Today Portland treats Bull Run water with chloramine which is a blend of chlorine and ammonia. Once we are converted to 100 percent new groundwater sources we will transition to free chlorine. Blended water will continue until around March-April.

Portland's water has a very soft rating today at approx. 11mg/L (<60mg/L is soft). The new water will be a little harder but is expected to end up at the level where people who live in hard water locations and utilize a water softener are after treatment, 58-108mg/L (61-120mg/L is moderately hard, >120mg/L is hard). Water quality will be more consistent being sourced by groundwater all year. Commercial customers will not need to adapt for changes.

Phase two testing will occur in March-April 2026 with transition to groundwater 100% complete and a full system scour occurring over two weeks. When Glendoveer converts from ammonia, all sites will then be using free chlorine. Chlorine will be created onsite using electrolysis. This phase may be where customers detect a difference in taste. Flushing will be done to scour the system quickly. Water will remain safe and may have a slight odor during the blending period but it will dissipate quickly.

Outreach is occurring via a variety of methods including social media posts, postcards to top 1,100 industrial users, newsletters, billing inserts and an upcoming presentation to the Coalition of Gresham Neighborhood Associations in February. There may be an open house with water tastings.

The pH level will be close to current levels. There is some leeching of lead into Bull Run sourced water today. A pilot study shows that chlorine helps with corrosion control.

Whether Gresham stayed with Portland or built this new groundwater system, the cost of water would increase. Council sets a five year rate package and we are currently within year 3. The percentage of rate increases, 9 percent over the five year period, did incorporate dollars for the project cost. There will be significant cost savings in 20-30 years when the bonds are paid off. Portland's costs for their new treatment plant would continue past that time.

The chances of contamination are very low as the wells are 750-850 feet deep in a sand and gravel aquifer. Contaminants would have to traverse several layers of containment barriers.

There has been a vulnerability assessment performed to protect from cybersecurity attacks. Kathy mentioned that there was a 60 Minutes segment regarding bad actors from China hacking into government computer systems. Mike said the EPA takes this seriously and in Oregon the Department of Environmental Quality administers federal regulation for water bureaus. There isn't expected to be any delays to the project as a result of the current government shutdown.

Dale Cervený, Gail Cervený and Bruce Arnold joined the meeting and quorum was established at 7:50pm.

3. Meeting Minutes - Kathy

The last SWNA meeting was the ice cream social in July so draft minutes from the Apr. 17, 2025 meeting were presented for approval. Motioned, seconded and passed.

4. Treasurer's Report - Dana

Treasury balance of \$286.65 with revenue and expenses as follows. \$920.00 City of Gresham Neighborhood Matching Grant dollars were awarded for the July 24 information fair and ice cream social, with 62.75 volunteer hours equaling \$1,568.00 of in kind labor. The matching grant post event report was submitted on Aug 3rd to the city. Total expenses for the event were \$920.86 and there was \$28.00 in donations received.

We had 14 information booths/organizations including a Metro recycling event at the July event. Gresham Police and Gresham Fire attended.

5. Election of Officers

Elections for the board of officers is held during the annual meeting in October each year. Each position's duties were announced by Kathy. Online and in person voting procedures were described. There was a call for nominees for any position. There were no initial open nominees so each position was called, returning to any role with no nominees.

President – no nominees

Vice President – Monica Ford nominated herself, seconded by Brandon Harer, elected via vote of all in favor.

Secretary – Brandon Harer was nominated by Thea Hayes, seconded by Kathy Gardenhire, elected via vote of all in favor.

Treasurer – Dana Duval nominated herself, seconded by Brandon Harer, elected via vote of all in favor.

Land Use Director – Thea Hayes was nominated by Monica Ford, seconded by Kathy Gardenhire, elected via vote of all in favor.

President – Kathy Gardenhire was nominated by Thea Hayes, seconded by Dana Duval. Kathy indicated willingness to serve one more year. Elected via vote of all in favor.

Brandon indicated that new volunteers are very important and the importance of keeping Gresham Neighborhood Associations in an active status.

6. Land Use Report - Thea

Thea received notification this month of 33 parcels applying for middle housing division from Tracy Brown/Jim Leeper Development Group. This was announced previously during initial application and now the notification for the subsequent division of each lot into two sites is occurring.

Michelle Wilkinson announced that there is a for sale sign on one of the approximately 2 acre single family home lots at 190th+ Willow Parkway.

Jim W asked whether there would be any commercial development at the Pleasant Valley town center. Kathy indicated it is possible at the lowest elevation area of the land, around 190th St and 39th-41st Streets.

There were general comments about the middle housing guidelines not being sustainable and shoehorning new residents into smaller sites. Jim indicated traffic is worsening on Linnemann Drive and the city should have a road system to handle the new traffic.

A brief review of middle housing implementation occurred. It was a state land use requirement originating from the governor and state legislature. Objections to middle housing could be taken to the Gresham City Council and Gresham Planning Commission

7. Future Meetings and Speakers

Next meeting will be January 22, 2026. The tentative presentation is emergency preparedness. We need a speaker for the April meeting. If you have a recommendation for a speaker or topic, please contact the Board.

8. New Business

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A new traffic pattern around Butler Creek School during pickup and drop-off hours was announced in September.

E-bike courtesy is reportedly improved. There have been some newer signs posted in the Marpol Ridge area.

Adjourned 8:30PM, motioned, seconded and passed.

Respectfully Submitted,

Brandon Harer
SWNA Secretary