

# **BIG MESA MDWCA NEWSLETTER**

## **Winter 2019**

Happy New Year to all Big Mesa Members and their families! 2019 looks to be a big year for your water association. After complying with an extraordinary amount of regulatory requirements, Big Mesa may finally be getting some traction of securing funding for three projects as described in the Fall 2018 newsletter for the planning and Phase I work scope of our Preliminary Engineering Report (PER)! A few state legislators are interested in seeking funding during the 2019 Legislative Session for an appropriation to make improvements to the water system. Of course, it's politics and too early to know what funding Big Mesa might achieve.

Late last fall Kelly McFarland, your association's Certified Public Accountant, presented our annual financial statement as well as our 2017, 990 Tax Return, as a 501-C non-profit entity. Fortunately, Big Mesa's financial position is again strong, with several restricted reserve accounts helping our ability to continue plan for future system improvements. The major liability Mr. McFarland sees is the age and condition of our existing water system.

Numerous issues were discussed and Board decisions were made over the last couple monthly meetings: (1) Finalize the remaining scope requirements to allow our pumping-filtering-treating water system's goal to become fully "automated"; (2) Replacing the turbidity meters (measures water clarity) at a significant cost since they are no longer being supported by the manufacturer; (3) Purchasing a much needed work truck through the state purchasing procurement requirements; (4) Continue to electronically map our entire distribution system; (5) Fire hydrant testing has been completed; (6) A new website for Big Mesa; (7) A new office phone system; (8) In anticipation of spring, the work barge (used to maintain the pumps in the lake) is being upgraded (structure, flotation, and replacing the motor with a new used motor).

Over the winter, your Water Board and Office Management have attended several industry training sessions as well as numerous beneficial meetings with the NM Environmental Department, the Drinking Water Bureau (DWB) and State Legislators. The voluntary efforts put forth by your Board far exceed any Member's perceived understanding of what is required of board membership.

Field employee Jay Allen passed his Small Water Advanced Certification, while Field Manager Bruce Ford is studying for his next certification exam. Please welcome Harold and Marge, as new employees working at the Trash Transfer Station. Your Water Board is focused on the needs of our employees to help ensure the longevity of our excellent staff.

The issue of “Disabled Services” was brought to the Board’s attention which resulted in a specific, member-requested policy. Here-to-fore, Transfer Station employees will help anyone in a vehicle displaying a “Handicapped” placard (to verify their disabled status) with removing contained household trash from their vehicle or “payment received” trash subject to a charge, to the best of the employee’s ability. The Member will be required to complete the trash sign-in sheet before trash is removed.

Big Mesa is focused on continuing to efficiently upgrade and improve our water system and its water quality. Big Mesa’s water quality exceeds all state and federal water quality requirements. Big Mesa does not determine “safe” levels of any possible contaminates, the government does. Big Mesa continually strives to ensure the best quality of the water it provides.

Again, as required by your By-Laws, every Member is required to have a separate water shut-off valve between Big Mesa’s water meter and Member’s house which will safely allow member to fully control any water entering the property. A Member operated shut-off valve also eliminates the liability of broken pipes by water leaking through a meter, which all meters may do. Any Member turning on/off Big Mesa’s meter, is strictly prohibited. Member operation of meters causes meter damage and is considered tampering which is subject to at least a fine. To avoid the possible fine, please call Big Mesa to arrange for a Big Mesa employee to properly operate Big Mesa’s meter during normal business hours. There will be a service charge for after-hours service calls.

Your next monthly Water Board Open Meeting will be held on February 9<sup>th</sup>, 2019, at 9:00am at the Water Building. Your Water Board urges you to attend to learn what it takes to provide safe and reliable water to your home. Without water service, no Conchas Dam property would have any value! Thanks for your patience, understanding and support!

Sincerely,

Your Water Board and Staff