**COLORADO CITY HAPPENINGS**

 December 2023

**The First Thing**…

In the quiet of December our minds might be far from baseballs flying and warm walks on a sunny morning, or for the more mobile, a brisk run at the track. But those thoughts are never far from the heart of Misty Sprague and the dedicated staff of volunteers at Valley First. Good news is coming with spring. Greenhorn Park will be revitalized!

Valley First has just announced that it has secured a $1,000,000 grant from the Colorado Department of Local Affairs (DOLA). According to the Valley First Facebook page, “With just a small amount left to reach our goal, we're on track to realize our vision in 2024, including completing the multi-use field, revamping the walking track, introducing a little league field, and installing an ADA accessible asphalt trail around the park!” So keep an eye on Greenhorn Park this summer.

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Not enough praise can be given to the efforts of this volunteer organization. Long-time Valley residents will recognize the quality crew working on the vision of Valley First. It includes: Jeff Menegatti, Jay Nielson, Tammy Van Oort, Linda Reifschneider, Kourtny Wolak-Quillen, Gina Lopez Ferguson, and Austin Clennin.

To get a grasp of the great strides made by Valley First, readers should visit <https://www.valley-first.org/> and also take a look at their Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/valley1st>.

Valley First is also thankful to all the grantors and for the donations from all. Much more information, again, is available at the website. The Colorado City Metro District is deeply thankful for The efforts of Valley First.

**Dam**

As many know, Colorado City water is primarily supplied from our reservoir, Lake Beckwith. Beckwith is fed from Greenhorn Mountain. And as many know, the dam is old. The State of Colorado has taken note of Beckwith, and with an eye on safety, has mandated upgrades. Where Colorado City gets the funds to accomplish that is a challenge. Repairs costs to Beckwith reveal some eye-popping numbers - numbers that are impossible for our ratepayers and new tap purchases. Manager Jim is slogging through the process of working for funds with FEMA, and the USDA. (3.8 Million dollars) Until CCMD rehabs the dam at Beckwith, The reservoir will have a mandatory reduction of storage capacity, again with safety in mind. So far, the regularly scheduled safety checks by the Metro crews indicate the dam is stable and safely doing its job.

**While We are on The Subject**,

Some of the gardeners reading this newsletter are paying attention to the newly published USDA Hardiness Zone maps. Turns out, warmer winter and summer temps mean that different plants are growing in different places. Unfortunately, that creates concerns for our water source. No specific data are available for Lake Beckwith, but in 2022 the District invested $36,290.89 to eliminate a surprise bumper crop of Mynophyllum algae. The district is on the hook to spend another $38,368 (for 2023 and 2024) to eliminate the Mynophyllum. That total of $74,658.89 was a surprise budget item. CCMD water customers have seen the effects of the algae in the stained water coming from the taps. The water tests safe. But it can look and smell funky for a couple of months in the heat of the summer. CCMD has a vision to remedy this situation, and when funds become available, we will.

**Water Rates**...

Increases in water rates are likely coming. As of this writing, the numbers are still being debated by the Board and management, but with inflation, infrastructure repairs, new staffing, and treatment challenges (algae), CCMD cannot provide water at a loss. Increases are painful for all of us, for sure, but not avoidable.

**Being Thankful**…

We have to be thankful that we get to live in this beautiful valley. The Colorado City Metro District, the Board, and all the dedicated CCMD employees hope everyone has a Merry Christmas and will have a Happy Next Year. Be safe, savor the season, and keep fingers crossed for an abundance of snow this new year.

Respectfully,

Ray Davis

Sworn in May 24, 2023