



# Consortium Technical Committee Meeting Summary

SEPTEMBER 3, 2025 CALLED TO ORDER: 1:30 PM

ADJOURNED: 3:05 PM

QUORUM PRESENT – YES – 13 MEMBERS

MEETING HELD IN THE PORTLAND BUILDING, ROOM 216 & VIA ZOOM/VIDEOCONFERENCE

## Approval of May 28, 2025 Meeting Summary

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Kari Duncan made a motion to approve the Consortium Technical Committee (CTC) May 28, 2025 meeting summary. Mike Grimm seconded the motion. The CTC unanimously approved the May 28, 2025 CTC meeting summary as presented (13:0:0).

## Election of Officers

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Rebecca Geisen, Consortium Managing Director mentioned that Jessica Dorsey and Mike Grimm have completed their first year as Consortium Technical Committee (CTC) Chair and Vice-Chair respectively. Each is eligible to serve for an additional year. CTC By-laws state that the CTC Chair and Vice-Chair shall be elected for a period of one year with a possible one-year succession.

Nominations for CTC Chair were opened. Mike Grimm made a motion to nominate Jessica Dorsey for CTC Chair. Pete Boone seconded the motion. There were no other nominations. The CTC unanimously approved Jessica Dorsey as CTC Chair. (13:0:0)

Nominations for CTC Vice-Chair were open. Rachel Sykes nominated Mike Grimm for CTC Vice-Chair. Sarah Santner seconded the motion. There were no other nominations. The CTC unanimously approved Mike Grimm as CTC Vice-Chair. (13:0:0)

## Director's Report

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Rebecca Geisen, Consortium Managing Director shared the following updates:

Staffing Update – The Consortium Manager Position recruitment is scheduled to open on Monday, September 8. The recruitment will be open for approximately two weeks. Sarah Santner will share the recruitment link with Consortium members and asked that they share it with their colleagues and networks.

Emergency Drinking Water Framework (Framework) Tabletop Exercises: Tabletop exercises for Clark and Columbia County have been completed. Planning for the Multnomah County exercise is underway. That exercise is scheduled for Thursday, October 16. Save the date invites will be sent out soon.

Portland State University Population & Household Forecast Estimates IGA – The current intergovernmental agreement (IGA) with Portland State University (PSU) to provide population and household forecast estimates expires at the end of the current fiscal year, June 30, 2026. It was the consensus of the CTC to continue the agreement with PSU to provide this data. Consortium staff will begin working with PSU to renew the IGA. Rebecca will invite Ethan Sharygin to attend a future CTC meeting to talk about the project and potential updates or changes that can be incorporated into the data and how it is collected and presented.

Oregon Water Utility Council – It was the consensus of the CTC that the new Consortium Manager stay involved with the Oregon Water Utility Council as part of their position with the Consortium. It was noted that there is value in maintaining that connection and having that regional perspective.

Consortium Annual Report – Consortium staff is working on the FY 2024-25 Annual Report and hopes to have it ready to send out next month.

## Program Updates

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Bonny Cushman, Consortium Program Manager shared the following updates:

Youth Education– Since the CTC’s discussion in late May, staff developed recommendations for Consortium youth education programming. These recommendations were shared with the Consortium Conservation Committee (CCC) and Water Communicators Network (WCN) who were supportive of moving forward with the programming options that were presented. Bonny shared a memo on program and budget recommendations with the CTC.

### Program Options:

1. Forego in-school programming options altogether.
2. Complete update of the “What Do You Know About H2O?” (WDYK) activity booklet project and provide members with a start-up supply. Staff will create a member toolkit to help members promote the booklet to their customers and local teachers.  
Budget: \$15k toward design, teacher beta testing, and printing costs.
3. Provide technical support to onboard a new Children’s Clean Water Festival event planner contractor.  
Budget: \$3k for sponsoring event. Event planner work is budget neutral.

Bonny noted that there were several considerations for the above recommendations including educator input and CCC and WCN feedback. Staff will likely be at capacity with onboarding new staff and continuing existing projects; and setting the Consortium's youth education program up for additional options in the future – using a measured approach sets the Consortium up to consider other options that build on our current successes.

CTC members were asked to respond to a poll to accept the recommendations outlined above. There was overwhelming support for the recommendations as presented. Members also were interested in potentially revisiting building a youth education program in the future.

Bonny advised that the Consortium currently has \$30,000 allocated to fund Youth Education Programming this fiscal year. She noted that under the recommended proposal, \$18,000 would be spent implementing the recommendations outlined above leaving \$12,000 unallocated. Bonny outlined some ideas for how to potentially use this funding including offsetting the printing costs of WDYK booklet; adding to the 2026 media campaign buy; and/or returning the funds to members as carryover. CTC members were supportive of offsetting the printing cost of the WDYK booklet or adding to the 2026 media campaign or splitting the funds between the two options.

Trust Your Tap Project – Staff developed and distributed a one-pager about the project prior to the meeting. This project was proposed by the Water Communicators Network and is part of the Consortium's workplan for FY 25/26. The project goal is to gather regional information on the public's perception of the quality of their drinking water, potential barriers to using local tap water for daily activities (e.g. drinking, cooking, bathing), what types of water quality information the public would like to receive from their water provider, and how they would prefer to receive it (e.g. consumer confidence reports (CCRs), email, social media).

Bonny noted that she is looking for committee volunteers to join a short-term work group that will help develop the scope of work, select the contractor, and create the survey. It is anticipated that this project will kick off in October with the survey launching sometime next spring.

#### Other Project Updates –

- Media campaign running and going well; transitioning from conservation messaging to emergency preparedness messaging. Staff worked with media partners to produce a more than 20 radio and television ads as part of their partnership which resulted in cost savings due to the Consortium not having to pay for production costs..
- Public Relations work is completed for now. A story ran in the SE Examiner on storing emergency water in small spaces and three Washington County Pamplin papers on checking irrigation systems for leaks.
- Staff will be focusing on updating the Spanish content on the website this year. This will bring the content in line with the English content that was updated last year.
- DOJ accessibility projects – Continue to work to update Consortium website to meet April deadline. Will also be working on print pieces to ensure they are contrasted accurately and pdfs are accessible.

- WA Park Project Tour – A tour of Washington Park is in the works. Date to be determined.

## FY 2026-27 Consortium Budget and Work Plan Concepts Discussion

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Rebecca advised that it is time to start preparing the FY 2026-27 budget and workplan ideas for the Executive Committee and Board to consider at their upcoming meetings. FY 2026-27 will be the first full year under a new staffing model and new Consortium Manager. The proposed projects are a menu of options brainstormed by staff for discussion and consideration. The CTC and Board will need to identify priorities for the final workplan and budget.

### **Staffing**

Consortium staff is currently comprised of two part-time staff: Managing Director (.3-.5 FTE) and Management Assistant (.9 FTE), and two full-time staff: Outreach Program Manager and Program Specialist. Starting FY 2026-27, the Consortium will transition to 3 FTE with the potential for a temporary, part-time staff position to be added as needed. This new staffing arrangement will provide the Consortium with consistent staffing that is solely focused on the work of the Consortium. It will also allow staff to operate as a more cohesive unit within the evolving City of Portland/Portland Water Bureau structure.

Staffing costs may shift but should not increase overall. Here's why:

- New Managing Director position is a different job classification with a lower pay range charged as FTE vs hourly.
- Management Assistant position will be filled spring 2026 before Patty Burk fully retires on June 30, 2026. Job duties and classification will be determined after the new Consortium Manager is hired. New position will likely have lower starting salary.
- Work assignments may change for existing staff and result in positions being reclassified.
- Remaining staffing budget could be used to hire a part-time position for special projects or administrative work

### **Proposed Projects by Consortium Focus Area:**

Unless specified, projects are budget neutral and will require staff time to complete. Note: These proposed projects are in addition to implementing our annual public outreach campaign.

### **Meeting Water Needs**

#### **Youth Education**

- Develop marketing materials and member messaging toolkit for updated "What Do You Know About H2O?" kids' activity book and other collateral material
- Develop activity kit for teachers to use in their classrooms

#### **Spanish language video ad development**

- With the loss of our long-time television partner (KUNP) there is a need to recreate video ads for the Consortium's annual multimedia campaign. Ads will be produced using existing audio content and donated b-roll

video content from media partners. Production will be completed with funding from the existing multilingual media campaign budget.

#### Workforce Development

- Assemble working committee to develop recommendations. Potential options include:
  - More collaboration with Baywork, Special Districts Association of Oregon, Oregon Association of Water Utilities, Joint Water Commission's Hired to Operate, etc.
  - Website content updates/additions
  - Develop career fair materials and provide coordination to streamline participation and materials
  - Other?
- Updated population and household estimates and forecasts 2026-2056
  - Project may require one-time increase to support the longer-term forecasting work utilizing updated data and mapping.

#### Emergency Preparedness and Resilience

##### Equipment Drill

- As part of its strategic plan, the Consortium is committed to conducting a large-scale water treatment and distribution equipment drill every 3-5 years. The last drill was held fall 2023.

##### Interconnections TTX Follow-up Projects

- Plan follow-up event from recent Interconnections TTX (e.g. field-testing day.)
- Reconvene GIS work group with the goal of updating the Interconnections Geodatabase.

##### Implement Emergency Drinking Water Framework TTX Follow-up Recommendations

- Staff will have better idea after Clackamas, Multnomah, and Washington Counties' TTXs. Recommendations will be included in final project report which will be completed and shared with members spring 2026.

##### Seed Money for Group Emergency Water Bag Order (\$10,000+/-)

#### Strengthening Regional Partnerships

##### Plan one to two Consortium-sponsored workshops or panel discussions

Possible topics could include:

- Affordability
- Micro-hydro
- BMPs on engaging community partners to deliver Consortium materials and programming
- Member panel on new supply sources coming online in the next couple years and customer outreach

Rebecca advised that she anticipates a somewhat neutral budget with no anticipated dues increase. There is a potential that funds may be available for a part-time temporary position if needed. The carryover for next year is \$182,884 - \$113,469 in staffing and \$69,415 in materials and services. Since the carryover is much larger than usual, Consortium staff has considered exploring the use of some of the carryover funds to purchase regional assets or pay for part-time staff in FY 2026-27. Rebecca noted that she would not propose considering this option until the Consortium receives staffing costs from the City of Portland which is typically available in December.

CTC members were given a poll that asked give limited staff time and resources to rank the proposed projects for FY 2026-27 from most important to least important. Poll results were somewhat evenly split with workforce development rising to the top, closely followed by workshop/panel discussion, equipment drills, and youth education.

Consortium staff will share the proposed projects with the Executive Committee at their meeting next week.

### October Consortium Board Draft Agenda

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Rebecca reviewed the October Consortium Board meeting draft agenda. Agenda items include approval of Board meeting minutes, director and program update reports, FY 2026-27 budget and work plan concepts discussion and a placeholder discussion/presentation opportunity.

Rebecca mentioned that this will be an in-person/hybrid meeting. Rebecca noted that Consortium staff had the idea of giving an overview of the Children's Clean Water Festival and then having the Board participate in a hands-on activity from the festival.

CTC members supported the idea of the Clean Water Festival overview and hands-on activity and to present it to the Executive Committee for their thoughts.

**Meeting Attendees:**

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| Todd Heidgerken – Clackamas River Water  | Justin Poyser – City of Gladstone  | Greg Robertson – City of Forest Grove    |
| Jessica Dorsey – City of Hillsboro       | Dave Trotter – City of Lake Oswego   | Sarah Murphy Santner – City of Portland  |
| Janine Casey – Rivergrove Water District | Kari Duncan – Rockwood Water PUD   | Jamey Pietzoid – Sunrise Water Authority |
| Rachel Sykes – City of Tualatin          | Pete Boone – Tualatin Valley Water District                                    | Mike Grimm – West Slope Water District   |
| Martin Montalvo – City of Wilsonville    | Rebecca Geisen, Bonny Cushman, Riley Berger, and Patty Burk – Consortium Staff |  |

**Next CTC Meeting: January 7, 2026 via Zoom/videoconference.**