

**BOONE COUNTY REGIONAL SEWER DISTRICT
BOARD OF TRUSTEES REGULAR MEETING
OCTOBER 17, 2023 - 5:30 PM
BOONE COUNTY GOVERNMENT CENTER
CONFERENCE ROOM 301, 801 WALNUT STREET**

Trustees Present: Randy Chann, Chair
John Massey, Vice Chair
Debbie Schnedler, Secretary
John L Whiteside, Trustee
Justin Aldred, Trustee

Trustees Absent:

Others Present: Tom Ratermann, General Manager
Wendy Wieggers, Board Treasurer & Finance Manager
Sandi Clark, Assistant Board Secretary & Office Administrator
Daniel Cunningham, Project Manager
Meg Petrillose, Administrative Assistant

Chris Pieper, Blitz, Bardgett & Deutsch, General Counsel
Angela Burke, Blitz, Bardgett & Deutsch, General Counsel

The meeting was held in person and as a GoToMeeting virtual meeting.

Randy Chann, Chair, called the October 17, 2023 Board of Trustees meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. Chann noted there was a quorum.

ADOPTION OF REVISED AGENDA

The Agenda was not revised.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes for the September 2023 Board of Trustees Meeting were included in the packet. The Board tabled the minutes to allow each Trustee to review.

On a motion by Debbie Schnedler and a second by John Massey, the Board moved to table the approval of the minutes for the September 2023 Board of Trustees meeting. Randy Chann, John Massey, Debbie Schnedler, John Whiteside and Justin Aldred voted in favor. Motion carried.

APPROVAL OF CLOSED SESSION MINUTES

The Closed Session Minutes for the September 2023 Board of Trustees Meeting were included in the packet.

On a motion by Debbie Schnedler and a second by Randy Chann, the Board moved to approve the minutes for the September 2023 Closed Session as written. Motion carried.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no Public Comment.

OLD BUSINESS – Operations Excellence Committee (OEC)

Ratermann proposed meeting dates of November 27th, December 4th, and November 14th, 2023 from 1:30-3:30pm. Trustees agreed to respond by email to advise of their availability for scheduling.

CONSENT AGENDA

Easement Acquisition Report

Permit Status Report

Status Report (Work in Progress)

Planning and Zoning Update

Operations & Maintenance (O&M) Reports

Safety Minutes

Quarterly Lien & Litigation Reports

Quarterly Utility Assistance Report

The reports listed on the Consent Agenda were included in the packet. Ratermann reviewed the Utility Assistance Report and advised the Low-Income Household Water & Wastewater Assistance Program (LIHWAP) was being extended through March 31st, 2024.

Chann expressed interest in how much manpower it would take to administer a program on the District's end. Clark advised the Central Missouri Community Action Center administered the LIHWAP, and that it required approximately one hour per week from BCRSD staff to log and track the customer data needed for program participants.

Ratermann reviewed the Lien and Litigation reports included in the packet.

On a motion by Randy Chann and a second by John Massey, the Board moved to approve the reports included on the Consent Agenda as presented. Motion carried.

CONSIDER ACCEPTING 3RD QUARTER 2023 FINANCIALS

Wendy Wieggers advised that budget vs actual was on target for the 2023 budget. She stated the

Request for Proposals for financial audit services was sent out, and she had not yet received any responses. She reported the Chart of Accounts was being updated, which is needed for efficient deployment of QuickBooks Time Keeping. She noted some challenges have been encountered during the reconciliation process with iVue billing software. Wiegiers noted that the Wage and Benefits study was complete, and the report will be updated periodically going forward. She stated the ACH processes were being updated to ensure efficiency.

Chann asked what percentage of completion the District was at for QuickBooks Time Keeping. Wiegiers and Clark reported the process needed for Time Keeping relies on other tasks that are underway (overhaul of the Chart of Accounts for class tracking between treatment and costs, piloting processes in place). Wiegiers estimated the project without geofencing is approximately 75% complete.

Chann inquired about the AP process and if Meg Petrillose would be taking over that role permanently. Wiegiers stated Petrillose would be taking on the role permanently and discussed the process. Schnedler stated that it would also help with separation of duties. Chann noted that the Responsible/ Accountable/ Consulted/ Informed (RACI) chart would need to be updated to complete the Administrative Assistant's roles.

Chann inquired about the Henderson Branch project listed on the balance sheet. Ratermann explained the agreement was still in place, but was ready to be terminated by both the BCRSD and the City of Columbia.

Chann inquired about who the new staff members in 2023 were, and administrative staff advised it included one equipment and wastewater treatment operator and one Administrative Assistant. Overtime accruals were due to administrative staffing transitions, and due to field crew working more hours while a long-time crew member had to cut hours for health reasons. Ratermann explained that the District has been running short-staffed for the past year.

Chann noted that treatment costs, mostly sludge disposal, were down. Ratermann explained sludge removal costs were down due to sludge dewatering at Rocky Fork and due to cleaning the Trails West facility. Chann said he wanted the cost savings at Rocky Fork to be reflected in communications to the customer. Clark advised the results in cost savings was communicated in the Newsletter after the first full year of the dewatering was completed around 2018.

Chann inquired about Ashland being noted on the income statement. Ratermann responded that the District's contract with Ashland was intact and was renewable each year at the term of April 30th.

Chann inquired about a policy for "Work from Home", and Ratermann noted the District did not have a formal policy regarding details of remote working. Schnedler asked staff to return to updating the personnel policy in the near future.

Chann inquired about the increase in expense devoted to pump purchases. Schnedler asked for clarity on how they are reflected in reports. Wiegiers advised multiple pumps ordered for inventory are listed under pre-paid accounts, and single-purchase pumps under \$2,500.00 are not on the pre-paid accounts.

On a motion by John Massey and a second by Debbie Schnedler, the Board moved to accept the 3rd Quarter Financial Reports as presented. Motion carried.

MANAGER'S REPORT

MDNR Inspections/ Letters of Warning (LOW)/

Notices of Violation (NOV)/ Unsatisfactory Features/ Return to Compliance

The report was included in the packet. There were no new warnings or violations to report.

Customer Count Report

Ratermann reviewed the report included in the packet. Clark explained treatment costs at \$8.50 per 1,000 gallons of water reported for an individual location on average. Ratermann reviewed scenarios in which customers would receive a routine or requested update to their average water usage for sewer billing.

The group discussed difficulty with receiving water readings for the BonGor subdivision after the Public Service Commission (PSC) assumed oversight of the abandoned water district. Chann said he expects manual efforts to be reduced if the six separate water districts can submit data in the same format using the same process.

Boone County Master Plan

Justin Aldred explained public hearings on the Master Plan were held from April to September, and the survey for the Master Plan was now closed. The next phase is moving data to analytics, and Aldred advised there would be a recommendation to the County Commission by winter of 2024. Information about the Master Plan can be found online at www.ourboone.com.

Area-Wide Management Plan – Interviews September 24, 2023

Ratermann explained that interviews had been completed, the committee made its selection, a contract was in place, and the scope and fee will be presented at the next Board meeting.

RFP for Audit, Due November 5, 2023

Ratermann stated that Wiegers previously reported that no submissions had been received. He explained that the legal notice ran on October 4th, and proposals are due November 5th.

Wage & Benefit Survey

Ratermann reviewed the documents included in the packet. Wiegers advised that private sector data would be solicited from other Districts involved in the MO Association of Sewer Districts. Schnedler, Massey and Chris Pieper suggested seeking private sector information or leads from the PSC, the Chamber of Commerce, and the Associated General Contractors of America.

Chann advised he would like to see a working example of retirement benefits. Schnedler noted that importance of reviewing wages and benefits an aggregate, which makes comparison of benefits packages more difficult. She reminded staff and Trustees that employer contributions combined with employee contributions determines what retirement benefits pay out upon retirement. Chann requested a mock-up of what BCRSD's current employer contributions for retirement amount to upon retirement. Schnedler advised that assumptions will need to be made about investments, length of employment, and earnings.

Chann asked if there was a policy for flexible work hours, Ratermann responded that there was not. Wiegers advised the benefit was listed in the report because other employers were utilizing flexible work hours.

Chann noted that the Organizational Chart included should reference Accountability instead of Responsibility, as he felt only the Accountability of managers had been hashed out. He suggested using box and whisker charts for the individual roles, and emphasized focusing on job scopes for management.

Schnedler explained that the District's insurance policy was higher than the average, and wondered what made the District's policy more expensive. She suggested Wiegers inquire why the health benefits package for dependents is as expensive as it is. She noted that regarding retirement, defined contribution plans typically require a match from the employee, and with LAGERS that will be an important factor to consider. Schnedler wanted to know if the vacation benefits that the District offers is in line with other companies.

Wiegers stated she will send a detailed report that addresses many of the Board's concerns about which companies have each type of retirement plan. She noted that the companies researched were implementing a 3% to 8% Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA). Wiegers advised that she had received a report from LAGERS that will be presented at the November Board Meeting.

Wiegers noted that the District's annual increase on premiums was 9%, compared to an industry standard of 11%. She stated that from her research, other companies seemed to be offering both a Preferred Provider Organization (PPO) plan along with a high-deductible Health Standards Organization (HSO) plan for employees to select from.

Budget Parameters

Wiegers stated that she had noted COLA ranges from 3% to 7%. The Board had a discussion on which rate to use to set COLA going forward; Chann requested a standard be defined for annual COLA increases.

Schnedler advised that while reviewing the parameters, it would be prudent to budget for repairing or replacing (parts of) assets in the District's collection and treatment systems.

Water's Edge

Ratermann reviewed the documents included in the packet. He advised property owner Hagan had a survey performed, and the District's pipe was within five (5) feet of the edge of the lake. Ratermann proposed that the District complete the section of pipe along the toe of the dam. He stated it will satisfy Hagan, and it will complete the section of the project that has urgency to it.

Ratermann advised that he planned on directing HDR to rewrite the bid form. He explained there was a manhole on Lake of the Woods Road that was paved over multiple times and it needs to be raised as part of this project. He explained the easement would need to be revised in order to complete the form and complete the project before winter of 2024.

On a motion by Debbie Schnedler and a second by John Massey, the Board moved to accept the Manager's Report as presented. Motion carried.

(Agenda Items)

CONSIDER ACCEPTING STAFF ASSESSMENT

The document that was in the September Manager's Report, but was not included for the October packet.

Ratermann explained the staff assessment was a one-page table with the employee number, years of service, percentage accomplished of the maximum salary, and certifications and licenses achieved. Chann noted that the assessment should include employee performance and career goals.

Schnedler recommended that the staff assessment include a certification that employees are performing according to goals, salary expectations, and the General Manager's expectations. If employees are not performing according to these expectations, there should be a remediation or training plan in effect with a timeline.

Wiegers suggested using a performance form for staff evaluations. Schnedler stated that while the District does not have a full-time Human Resources (HR) staff member, she was confident Wiegers could handle keeping the District up-to-date with HR.

On a motion by Debbie Schnedler and a second by John Whiteside, the Board moved to table the acceptance of the staff assessment.

Randy Chann, John Massey, Debbie Schnedler, John Whiteside and Justin Aldred voted in favor to table the Staff Assessment. Motion carried.

ACCEPT BILL OF SALE FOR KAHN SUBDIVISION

Ratermann recommended approval of the bill of sale included in the packet.

On a motion by Debbie Schnedler and a second by Justin Aldred, the Board moved to accept the bill of sale for Kahn Subdivision. Motion carried.

VOTE TO HOLD CLOSED SESSION UNDER SECTION 610.021 (1) & (13)

On a motion by Debbie Schnedler and a second by Justin Aldred, the Board moved that the Boone County Regional Sewer District Board of Trustees authorize a closed meeting at 6:49 PM on October 17, 2023, as authorized by: 610.021(1) RSMo. to discuss legal actions, causes of action or litigation involving a public governmental body and any confidential or privileged communications between a public governmental body or its representatives and its attorneys and as authorized by section 610.021; and (13) RSMo. to discuss individually identifiable personnel records, performance ratings or records pertaining to employees or applicants for employment, except that exemption shall not apply to names, positions, salaries and lengths of service of officers and employees of public agencies once they were employed as such, and the names of private sources donating or contributing money to the salary of a chancellor or president at all public colleges and universities in the state of Missouri and the amount of money contributed by the source.

Randy Chann, Debbie Schnedler, John Massey, John Whiteside and Justin Aldred voted in favor. Motion carried.

On a motion by Justin Aldred and a second by John Whiteside, the Board moved to re-open the regular meeting at 7:56 PM on Tuesday, October 17, 2023.

Randy Chann, Debbie Schnedler, John Whiteside, John Massey and Justin Aldred voted in favor. Motion carried.

NEW BUSINESS

Consider Long-Term Staffing and Organizational Needs

Chann explained the Board reflected on requests made of senior staff and management, and the Board agreed to include an Executive Director position for the BCRSD. Chann noted that there would be a Special Session of the Board for further discussion of this topic, and a date with time needed to be scheduled in the near future.

On a motion by John Massey and a second by Debbie Schnedler, the Board moved to proceed with the creation of the Executive Director position.

Randy Chann, John Massey, Debbie Schnedler, John Whiteside and Justin Aldred voted in favor. Motion carried.

ADJOURNMENT

Randy Chann, Debbie Schnedler, John Massey, John Whiteside and Justin Aldred voted in favor. Motion carried.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:00 PM.

Approved by:

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