

**BOONE COUNTY REGIONAL SEWER DISTRICT
SPECIAL MEETING OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES
NOVEMBER 14, 2023
1314 NORTH SEVENTH STREET
MINUTES**

Board Attendees: Randy Chann, Chairman
John Massey, Vice Chairman
Debbie Schnedler, Secretary
Justin Aldred, Trustee

Others Present: Tom Ratermann, General Manager
Wendy Wieggers, Board Treasurer & Finance Manager
Daniel Cunningham, Project Manager
Virgil Farnen, Operations Manager
Sandi Clark, Assistant Board Secretary & Manager of Administration

The meeting was called to order by the Chair at 1:33 p.m. Chann performed a roll call of the members of the Board present, and declared there was a quorum.

Agenda Item D: Old Business

Chair asked if there was any old business to discuss, and there was none.

Agenda Item E: Executive Director Position

Chann began this discussion item by clarifying that the objective for the meeting is high-level discussion and development of a job description for this new position, to be able to present a substantially final document for approval at the November Regular Meeting of the Board.

Chann referred to a memorandum prepared and sent by Ratermann on November 13 (see Attached Exhibit A) regarding this topic, and containing comments, questions and concerns from staff. He asked if everyone in attendance had had a chance to review the memo. Chann stated that one purpose of this meeting is that management has an opportunity to offer comments on how this new role can help each achieve those essential functions for which he/she is responsible.

Clark's first question was: How will the executive director as proposed help us meet our goals? Chann referred to his reply to Ratermann's memo (see Attached Exhibit B) to start discussion. He referred back to critical functions and gaps in current state, and that there are three main areas that need to be addressed for the future, which the Board has asked for. The first is business strategy, which includes such things as how do we service the county under our Tier 2 authority, defining cost effectiveness, how do we evaluate/utilize economy of scale and cost share some of the district's core competencies. The second is people management, importantly how do we embrace a continuous improvement mentality, develop core competencies, how do we recruit, reward, etc. Third is financial

management, which is not financial accounting. It is management through measurement in order to understand true costs of services. This top level of management is missing and needs to be developed. Aldred indicated he sees this position as providing a level of relief to Ratermann.

Chann proposed looking at some sample job descriptions he had included with his above referenced memo, some of which reflect some of his thinking about the future state of the district, such as that the district can be much more proactive county wide; that the industry will be more than “collect, treat, dispose”, regulation will be more strict and complex and that the days of just building a plant and running it are short. He reiterated that these were to help identify job functions that are forward looking, that the intent is not to get into the weeds with looking at each line of each sample, but to help staff with this process and understand the proposed structure. Schnedler agreed that district has not been future focused because of time constraints.

Aldred indicated that this was an opportunity for staff to indicate what they would like to see or want in this position. Wiegers indicated that she would like to know what her goals were when she is performing a task. Schnedler said that, in her view, all the managers’ goals should be developed individually with the executive director. The board does not assign, or want to assign, specific goals to managers.

Clark brought up a concern that adding a new executive director position would automatically mean that a short-staffing situation in operations would not be addressed and how the new position would be paid for. Schnedler pointed to her reply to Ratermann’s memo, indicating that the board had not received any requests for additional staffing in operations in past years’ budget requests. Farnen briefly discussed the history of staffing in operations, and stated operations had needed additional staff for some time, but budget requests apparently were not made in order to hold down costs. There was further discussion about cost vs. cost-effectiveness. Chann opined that some operational functions take being there and some don’t, and that analysis of what operations staff is needed and what they will be doing is needed and justified.

Wiegers asked about the 2024 budget, which currently proposes funding two additional people in operations, and whether she should delete those for the new position. Schnedler replied that the proposed budget should be based on what staff is requesting. Schnedler commented that the district’s cash position is the best it has been in some time, especially due to refunding much of the outstanding debt portfolio, and now is a good time to consider costs to move the district forward.

Chann stated that management needs to consider issues in the context of possible future changes, such as smart growth, furthering utilization of reliability centered maintenance, using data to help pace maintenance, etc. The executive director needs to have top line accountability for these types of initiatives. Chann moved to a thumb-nail discussion of an initial draft (Exhibit C) of the executive director job description, and asked that while reviewing, staff should consider such things as examples of long-term planning, what types of contract work the district can do, what adds value, and how do we incorporate all residents of the county into our planning/actions. Chann called on Schnedler to discuss the draft.

Schnedler stated that she had worked on this within time constraints and had generally started by looking at current general manager description and pulling out the essential functions and

responsibilities of an engineering or technical nature to use this as a starting point. The resulting accountabilities were then organized into major areas of long-term planning, strategic planning, personnel management and oversight of operations/project management. Chann had added some comments in red. Request was made that staff review this document along with the other samples and provide questions and comments by close of business next day.

Chann asked if there were further questions. Cunningham asked about space considerations and there was discussion about architectural plan from 2016 or 2017 considering expansion plans. Schnedler indicated this was another area for defining various options and evaluating associated costs, pros and cons. Cunningham asked about the interview process and who would be involved. Schnedler replied that this would be a topic for discussion by the Board, and that the process for advertising, etc., would also need to be developed. Discussion was held about the various trade organizations which might be utilized to advertise the position.

Item F – New Business

Chann mentioned to Aldred that perhaps a conversation about the future based on the area-wide management plan and how it informs/is informed by the county master plan might be timely. Aldred replied that much of this will depend on the City and whether it maintains current borders by growing upward or expanding. More discussion will be held on this topic at a later date.

Schnedler asked Wiegers for a brief update on the status of budget and benefit portion of wage analysis; Wiegers indicated much will be presented at the November meeting. Schnedler asked whether a full report had been received from LAGERS, and requested that the full report be made to Board members this will to allow time for full review in advance of the meeting.

Chair adjourned the meeting at 2:58 p.m.