

**BOONE COUNTY REGIONAL SEWER DISTRICT
BOARD OF TRUSTEES REGULAR MEETING
FEBRUARY 20, 2024 - 5:30 PM
BOONE COUNTY COMMISSION CHAMBERS
801 E WALNUT STREET**

Trustees Present: Randy Chann, Chair
John Massey, Vice Chair
Debbie Schnedler, Secretary
David Bennett, 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
Bill Florea, Boone County Resource Management Director
Chris Pieper, Blitz, Bardgett & Deutsch, General Counsel
Angela Burke, Blitz, Bardgett & Deutsch, General Counsel
Lynne Hooper, Boone County Resource Management

The meeting was held in person and as a GoToMeeting conference call.

Randy Chann, Chair, called the February 20, 2024 Board of Trustees meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. Chann noted there was a quorum.

ADOPTION OF AGENDA

The Agenda was not revised.

On a motion by Debbie Schnedler and a second by Randy Chann, the Board moved to approve the Agenda. Motion carried.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes for the January 2024 Board of Trustees Regular Meeting were included in the packet.
On a motion by Randy Chann and a second by John Massey, the Board moved to approve the minutes for the January 2024 Board of Trustees Regular Meeting as presented.
Motion carried.

APPROVAL OF CLOSED SESSION MINUTES

The Closed Session Minutes for the January 16, 2024 (sessions at 6:35 PM, and at 7:00 PM) were included in the packet.

On a motion by Randy Chann and a second by John Massey, the Board moved to approve two sets of Closed Session minutes for January 16, 2024, as written. Motion carried.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Lynne Hooper, Urban Hydrologist for Boone County Resource Management, was present to discuss the Agenda Item L.10. - Greater Bonne Femme Watershed Initiative. A fact sheet regarding the Initiative was included in the packet. Ratermann advised the initiative includes five streams for a total of 6 stream segments that are on the 303d list for impaired waters for *E.coli*. He explained one goal of the Initiative was to develop a plan for the watershed to be adopted by Boone County, the BCRSD, the City of Columbia, and the City of Ashland.

Hooper reviewed the slides included in the packet, explaining that the plan will review water, wastewater and best management practices at minimum. She advised the BCRSD has facilities in the Bonne Femme watershed and has participated in County Resource's watershed planning in the past. Hooper stated the primary goal is to restore and protect streams in the watershed through plan implementation, and will also look at wildlife habitat restoration and the One Health Integration.

Ratermann added that the implication to having these streams listed on the 303d list is that the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and/or Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) could issue a Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) requirement. Hooper advised Resource Management does have an EPA-approved 9-element watershed base plan which provides for reducing *E.coli* loading into the streams through agricultural best management practices, which has a 21-year timeline and requires a review and update process every five years. This was put in place as a voluntary effort to reduce *E.coli*, rather than receiving a TMDL requirement from EPA or DNR.

REVIEW OF BYLAWS REVISIONS

Angela Burke reviewed the BCRSD Bylaws revisions included in the packet.

Chann and Aldred reviewed that part of the process for the County Commission's appointment of any BCRSD Trustee is to inform the existing Trustees in writing of the new appointment. Aldred explained the appointment was posted on the County Commission's website.

On a motion by Randy Chann and a second by Debbie Schnedler, the Board moved to approved the amended Bylaws as presented.

Randy Chann, John Massey, Debbie Schnedler, Dave Bennet and Justin Aldred voted in favor. None were absent. Motion carried.

OLD BUSINESS

There was no old business.

CONSENT AGENDA Easement Acquisition Report Permit Status Report Status Report (Work in Progress) Planning and Zoning Update Operations & Maintenance (O&M) Reports Invoices of Note Utility Assistance 2023 Annual Report

The reports listed on the Consent Agenda were included in the packet.

Chann asked for verbal update in each meeting regarding changes made to the Easement Acquisition and Permit Status reports. Schnedler asked for an update on the Midway Arms permit deadline. Ratermann advised that he received an email back from Crockett Engineering stating that Crockett had entered agreement with Potterfield, *et al.*, to develop a solution for Midway Arms. He reminded Trustees that they approved Amendment 9 of the General Cooperative agreement with the City of Columbia, which rescinded the Henderson Branch agreement in the Midway area, and the amendment has been fully signed. This alleviated the BCRSD's financial obligation and any territorial arrangements that had been made. He explained if the City extended service outside of the corporate boundaries, they would need BCRSD's consent or a new connection agreement. Ratermann stated the BCRSD has an agreement with Potterfield, *et al.*, which outlines they are responsible for the plant and any penalty fees.

Chann stated he was hoping for a year-by-year overview on the O&M reports, particularly year-end performance comparisons. He asked for a comparison report on sludge handling and cost savings provided by dewatering; he advised this information on savings should be communicated to customers.

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.

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

The Customer Count reports were included in the packet.

Boone County Master Plan

Ratermann advised there is a discovery report regarding the Master Plan available on the OurBoone.com webpage which estimates the need for 21,000 – 37,000 additional residential housing units in Boone County by the year 2050.

Personnel Policy

Personnel Policy

Schnedler called attention to the memo included in the packet. In the on-going review of the current Personnel Policy, a few issues had been identified which warranted discussion and direction by the Board prior to amendment. Overall, the current document combines Board policy and procedures for management of personnel issues. After conferring with Wendy Wieggers and Angela Burke, reviewers recommended a focus on policy, including procedures on critical issues which may have a legal impact for the District. Any procedures necessary to comply with Board policy would reside with management. Schnedler volunteered to review the current draft from this viewpoint, and would solicit assistance as needed from legal counsel.

A further global issue in the current document is delegation, in that the current policy generally delegates literally every function to the General Manager, including such things as being late for work. Reviewers felt that for time management and efficiency, the best approach is to delegate functions to the lowest level of supervision first, usually the immediate supervisor. Complex, legal, or inter-departmental issue resolution or decisions are delegated to a higher level of management, up to Executive Director. There being no dissension, this approach will be used in continued review

The current policy also has a disparity between the definition of a part-time employee with benefits and legal requirements under the Family Medical Leave Act. After discussion, it was agreed that the resolution which would result in the least confusion for part-time benefits, was to require part-time employees to work 1,250 hours per year in order to qualify for benefits.

A further item of discussion related to Cost of Living Adjustments (COLA). The current policy proscribes a process to obtain a certain cost of living index which has historically not been used. For the past several years, the Board has approved a COLA that generally mirrors the CPI-U, which is the index generally used for Social Security increases. A question is whether to include this method in the document as policy, adopt a separate policy by resolution of the Board, or leave to be determined each year. After further discussion it was determined not to set a policy for determination of annual COLA in the personnel policy.

With regard to performance evaluations, the current document requires probationary evaluations for new hires and transferring employees, states that an employee is eligible for merit increases only if their performance is documented, but specifies no process for further evaluations after a probationary period. Discussion ensued as to whether to require annual performance evaluations in the personnel policy. Burke advised that a policy that employees “shall” receive an annual evaluation decreases flexibility for the district, but leaving the evaluation process discretionary could create an expectation of receiving an evaluation each year, though it is not required. Aldred suggested using language that does not bind future Board members. Determination was made to leave discussion on performance evaluations flexible (not mandated annually), but Schnedler suggested a clarification that the Human Resources Manager should certify a current evaluation for any employee receiving a merit increase.

Schnedler advised that though the current policy provides financial incentives for licensing and certification requirements, it does not provide incentives for professional development. Her recommendation is that a policy should be developed for reimbursement of costs for professional development, taking into consideration how such applies to current job functions, increases needed skill sets, results in cost efficiencies, etc. Chann emphasized that the Board wants to help employees develop skills that are beneficial to the competencies of the BCRSD. Schnedler will draft language accordingly.

Schnedler called attention to the current policy which allows the General Manager to grant leaves of absence without pay up to 30 days. After discussion it was determined to leave this provision.

Current policy permits, upon the rehire of any employee for any reason, return to work with an accrual schedule for certain benefits in effect at the time he/she left employment. Asked if there was any legal requirement for this, Pieper advised that policy for wage and benefits for rehires are typically left up to the organization. Massey commented he could understand returning to work at their leaving wage and benefit range if the reason for leaving was not the fault of the employee. Schnedler will amend language accordingly.

Executive Director Position

Chann advised there is a Special Meeting scheduled for February 21st to discuss this item.

Missouri Association of Sewer Districts (MASD) Report

A memo from Ratermann reporting the activities of the MASD was included in the packet. Schnedler inquired how the bills are followed through the process of hearings and changes. Ratermann advised the BCRSD receives three reports regarding the tracking of the bills discussed for Chapter 204 for sewer utility and what takes place during the legislative hearings.

BCRSD Staff Training Plans

The training plans were included in the packet. Schnedler advised that some of the certifications for field crew should be referenced in the job descriptions. She questioned why NASSCO training was requested for 4 crew members. Virgil Farnen explained that he would expect the dual-job roles for the Equipment/ Wastewater Operators to need the training just as the Equipment Operator role needs the training. He advised that the constraints on staff time would not allow for all crew members to acquire the training in the same fiscal year. Chann requested managers to categorize the trainings by training and professional development, certification, and training that adds skill sets for a different or next-level job role.

Ratermann requested a conditional approval of the trainings required to maintain certification and licensure for job roles that have continuing education requirements.

On a motion by Debbie Schnedler and a second by Justin Aldred, the Board moved to authorize the expenditures for the time-sensitive certification items listed for Operations staff and the General Manager not to exceed \$10,000.00. Motion carried.

ARPA Update

The application requested \$812,000.00 for a flood protection wall to protect the BCRSD facilities in Rocheport along the Katy Trail. Daniel Cunningham described the wall proposed to protect the BCRSD pump station and collection lines. Aldred recused himself from the conversation.

March 2024 Board Meeting at Boone Electric Cooperative Headquarters

Ratermann advised the next Board meeting will be held at Boone Electric Headquarters. Chann requested clear directions on how to get to the meeting room.

Greater Bonne Femme Watershed Initiative

See also *Public Comment*.

Resolution Regarding the Hominy Branch Watershed

The resolution and the hydraulic analysis report were included in the packet. Ratermann advised it will return as an Agenda item for approval.

Lead Operator

Ratermann reviewed the memo included in the packet regarding the impact of the Lead Operator's part-time work and the void created by his resignation. Chann requested more clarification on stand by time and operator overtime. Farnen advised he intended to hire a new crew member and promote from within for the Lead Operator role. He explained that the Lead Wastewater Operator has the same tasks as the Senior Wastewater Treatment Plant Operator (SWWTPO), but the Lead will serve as next in command when the Operations Manager is absent, and also performs lab tasks. This position is comparable to a foreman role.

Schnedler commented she does not see much difference between the SWWTPO and the Lead, except that a Lead is required to have a certain number of years of employment with BCRSD. Farnen advised the skill sets of the operations staff have the industry and institutional knowledge, along with real-time experience with existing BCRSD facilities, making it difficult to fill the Lead operator position with a new hire. He explained the Lead role has versatility to work with both treatment plant operations and maintenance of facilities, including collection systems. He advised there are three existing employees who could be moved into the Lead role.

Schnedler advised that higher level job roles that require more certification and increased pay cost more to the BCRSD, and cost efficiencies and staff certification needs of the BCRSD should be analyzed. Schnedler requested information on what percentage of facilities require crew to have a higher-level certification. She requested the rationale for requiring an A-level certification rather than keeping crew at a lower certification. Farnen responded that a higher certification is evidence of excellence for the BCRSD. He advised that working independently in the field and making immediate decisions for a solution also requires more confidence and knowledge that is imparted by achieving a level-A certification.

Farnen advised he's requesting to promote an employee to the Lead role, which will leave the BCRSD with a vacant position. He will later request authorization for two entry-level new hires for Equipment and Wastewater Operator positions. Farnen explained that acquiring new staff at the entry level is more important than promoting staff to Lead, but the proposal for the new hires has not been written yet.

Chann asked the Board consider a motion to authorize the hiring of an entry-level position, and advised the Board will consider the promotion of existing staff to the Lead role after continued discussion. Chann and Schnedler asked staff to consider how the service contract with Ashland (or the termination of the contract) could impact the number of staff needed.

Schnedler proposed the BCRSD could provide temporary responsibility pay for someone to assume the Lead position temporarily while the other staffing needs are being considered. She asked if staff assuming the role temporarily could foster the selection of who would best fill the Lead role.

Ratermann summarized that Operations will hire an entry-level position, and staff will return with a recommendation to promote someone to Lead.

On a motion by Debbie Schnedler and a second by John Massey, the Board moved to approve the hiring of an Equipment and Wastewater Operator. Motion carried.

Enterprise Drive Truck Terminal

Ratermann reviewed the email from Crockett Engineering included in the packet, advising the truck terminal would have to connect to a system that includes City wholesale treatment. Ratermann advised this item will return as an Agenda item.

Prairie Meadows Sanitary Sewer Evaluation Survey (SSES)

The evaluation survey was included in the packet. Ratermann advised a meeting with the Lemone Family Trust has been proposed for early March.

Accounting for the Area-Wide Management Plan

Ratermann reviewed the email from Gerding, Korte and Chitwood regarding the AWMP, noting that it is a plan, not an asset, and it should be expensed.

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)

FINANCIAL REPORTS

There was no financial report needed for the February 2024 meeting.

CONSIDER RESOLUTION REGARDING BCRSD POLICY REQUIRING LEGAL FEE COST SHARE

The resolution included in the packet. Pieper advised a proposed estimate for legal fees reimbursable to the BCRSD would be presented to the developer before an agreement is signed.

On a motion by Debbie Schnedler and a second by Randy Chann, the Board moved to adopt the resolution for a legal fee cost share for future projects. Motion carried.

CONSIDER PROPOSAL FROM BARTLETT & WEST FOR GIS AND MAPPING SCOPE OF SERVICES IN 2024 IN THE NOT-TO-EXCEED AMOUNT OF \$28,178.00

Ratermann reviewed the proposal included in the packet, advising the BCRSD will request an addition of area connection agreements to the mapping, along with additional service areas added to mapping. He advised the mapping engineer was selected through an RFP and interview process up to 10 years ago. Cunningham advised Bartlett & West houses the experience, skill sets and software needed to carry out these mapping tasks.

On a motion by Debbie Schnedler and a second by Randy Chann, the Board moved to accept the proposal from Bartlett & West for GIS and mapping scope of service in 2024 in the amount not to exceed \$28,178.00. Motion carried.

CONSIDER AMENDMENT TO THE AGREEMENT WITH HDR ENGINEERING FOR THE WATER'S EDGE PROJECT IN THE NOT-TO-EXCEED AMOUNT OF \$4,737.50

Ratermann reviewed the amendment included in the packet.

On a motion by Randy Chann and a second by John Massey, the Board moved to approve the amendment to the agreement with HDR Engineering for the Water's Edge Project in the not-to exceed amount of \$4,767.50.

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

**CONSIDER RESOLUTION TO APPROPRIATE MONEY TOWARD
THE SEWER JET LEASE PURCHASE PAYMENTS**

Ratermann reviewed the resolution included in the packet, advising this is to be completed annually.

On a motion by Debbie Schnedler and a second by Randy Chann, the Board moved to approve the resolution to appropriate money toward the sewer jet lease purchase payments for 2024 in the amount of \$54,770.34.

**CONSIDER RESOLUTION TO APPROPRIATE MONEY TOWARD
THE DUMP TRUCK LEASE PURCHASE PAYMENTS**

The resolution was included in the packet.

On a motion by Debbie Schnedler and a second by Randy Chann, the Board moved to approve the resolution to appropriate money toward the dump truck lease purchase payments for 2024 in the amount of \$20,593.51.

CONSIDER A CONSENT TO SERVE LETTER FOR 20600 NORTH ROUTE Z

Ratermann reviewed the consent to serve letter included in the packet.

On a motion by Randy Chann and a second by John Massey, the Board moved to approve the consent to serve letter for 20600 North Route Z. Motion carried.

**NEW BUSINESS
ARPA Update**

Aldred advised the Commission should have ARPA announcements this spring.

ADJOURNMENT

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

Meeting was adjourned at 7:45 PM.

Approved by: _____
