

**MINUTES OF THE
BOONE COUNTY REGIONAL SEWER DISTRICT
OPERATIONAL EXCELLENCE COMMITTEE MEETING
FEBRUARY 6, 2025
BCRSD CONFERENCE ROOM
1314 N. 7TH STREET, COLUMBIA, MO**

Trustees Present: Randy Chann, Chair
Dave Bennett, Vice Chair
Debbie Schnedler, Secretary
Bill Watkins, Assistant Secretary

Trustees Absent: Justin Aldred, Trustee

Others Present: Wendy Wiegers, Finance Manager
Daniel Cunningham, Project Manager
Jesse Stephens, Facilities Engineer
Chris Pieper, Blitz, Bardgett & Deutsch, General Counsel

The meeting was held in person and as a GoToMeeting video with telephone conference.

Randy Chann, Chair, called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. He noted that Bennett, Watkins and Schnedler were also in attendance and that there was a quorum.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

Chann asked if there was a revised agenda and was informed that the agenda had not been revised.

On a motion by Schnedler and a second by Bennett, the Board moved to approve the Agenda as presented. Trustees present voted in favor. Motion carried.

OLD BUSINESS

There was no old business.

SURCHARGE RATES

The scope of the work session was to discuss charges for the different types of pressurized systems. Stephens called attention to a report on pressure sewer data, which described the services District provides for each of the surcharge classes, as well as those items for which the customer is responsible. The report listed the current monthly surcharge for each class, as well as base service fee and volume charge and number of customers in each class.

One of the significant components of maintenance is periodic pumping of tanks. Stephens stated he had obtained data about the general market cost of tank pumping, as well as estimating the District cost to provide this service based on personnel and equipment time. He arrived at an average fee of \$500 to pump a tank, and an assumed pumping every five years on average. There are approximately 280 septic tanks associated with the various STEP systems in the District. The remaining amount of surcharge

revenue (after pumping costs) would be needed to pay for all on-going maintenance and service of the pressure systems. Based on the monthly service call report, Stephens indicated it appeared the surcharges were not adequate to cover the total cost to service pressure systems.

Schnedler stated that comparing revenues from surcharges to only costs associated with service calls did not factor in any routine maintenance that was not service call related. There was further discussion about utilizing historical operation and maintenance reports to arrive at a proxy for the total time and expense necessary to service pressure systems. Discussion included language in the information posted on the District website, such as the meaning of “on a periodic basis as required” or “as required by District”.

There was also significant discussion of the District’s current user rate regulation, including the description of the three components of user fees: base rate, volume charge and pressurized system charge. The regulation dates from 2015, and trustees and counsel agreed that the user rate regulation should be reviewed in concert with the on-going review of district user rates. Schnedler stated that from her investigation it appeared the District initially adopted a user rate regulation which complied with the DNR model ordinance for determination of rates. There was also discussion of the Hancock amendment.

If further analysis shows that pressure sewer surcharges do not adequately cover District costs to service and maintain pressurized systems, in effect gravity sewer customers are subsidizing costs of pressurized systems. Discussion included potential options to clarify responsibility for various service functions, including the possibility of allowing some customers to service their own systems. Chann asked about liability to the District in such an event. Cunningham stated that appropriate inspections are completed for new pressure system customers that include having appropriate elevations to avoid backups and most of the current customer systems have alarms. Trustees discussed the importance and timing of communications to pressure system customers as these analyses move forward.

The working group discussed various expense components of the base rate vs. the volume charge. Watkins asked about the costs associated with drip irrigation and related customer charges. There was also discussion of methodology for new customers to understand their service rate, any application process, how information is provided to BEC for billings, etc.

Stephens suggested amending pressure system regulations to provide that grinder pumps would be required and give the homeowner the option to maintain and pay no surcharge. Watkins inquired about future revenue opportunities to maintain grinder pumps. Further analysis is required, including evaluating potential liability for the District.

There was also discussion of water shutoffs, how they are handled, who does them, and related notifications.

Based on the overall discussion, staff next steps include: defining what the district is responsible for, developing recommendations for communication with customers, confirming maintenance schedules and costs, and researching costs and charges associated with drip irrigation systems.

NEW BUSINESS

Chann asked staff if there were any questions on accountabilities for various on-going operational initiatives until the executive director replacement is found. Stephens and Cunningham both replied that the work on development of the AWMP and CIP are moving forward. Chann provided a brief update on the status of the job search. Wiegers stated she is reviewing additional opportunities for posting the position.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 11:55 AM.

Meeting Minutes approved on _____

Secretary: _____