
**JULY 15, 2025 - MINUTES OF THE
BOONE COUNTY REGIONAL SEWER DISTRICT
BOARD OF TRUSTEES REGULAR MEETING AND CLOSED SESSION
BOONE COUNTY GOVERNMENT CENTER
801 E WALNUT ST, COLUMBIA MO**

Trustees Present: Randy Chann, Chair
Brian Burks, Secretary
Bill Watkins, Trustee
Justin Aldred, Trustee (Virtual)

Trustees Absent: Dave Bennett, Vice Chair

Others Present: Jesse Stephens, Interim Executive Director
Wendy Wieggers, Finance Manager
Daniel Cunningham, Project Manager
Jason Horton, O&M Supervisor
Drew Perkins, Administrative Assistant
Jason Wolf, Administrative
Bill Florea, Boone County Resource Management
Chris Pieper, Blitz, Bardgett & Deutsch, General Counsel
Angela Burke, Blitz, Bardgett & Deutsch, General Counsel
Lindsey Schaffer, City of Columbia
Benjamin Ross, ESS

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

Randy Chann, Chair, called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m. He noted that the majority of members were present 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.

MOTION: On a motion by Watkins and a second by Burks, the Board moved to approve the agenda as presented. All trustees present voted in favor. Motion carried.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF JUNE 17, 2025 BOARD MEETING

The minutes of the June 17th Board Meeting were included in the packet. Chann asked if there were any questions or comments and there were none.

MOTION: On a motion by Watkins and a second by Burks, the Board moved to approve the minutes as presented. All trustees present voted in favor. Motion carried.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF JUNE 25, 2025 SPECIAL MEETING

The minutes of the June 25th Special Session Meeting were included in the packet. Chann asked if there were any questions or comments and there were none.

MOTION: On a motion by Watkins and a second by Burks, the Board moved to approve the minutes as presented. Watkins, Burks, Aldred voted in favor. Chann Abstained. Motion carried.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no Public Comment.

OLD BUSINESS

There was no Old Business.

PLANNING AND ZONING UPDATE

The Planning and Zoning report provided an overview of recent permit activity and rezoning initiatives. Three conditional use permits were under consideration, including one notably unusual request to operate a dog kennel within a single-family dwelling. Additionally, two permits were submitted for private Wind Energy Conversion Systems (WECS) intended for residential-scale electric generation.

Several rezoning items were discussed. A proposal from Twin Ventures aimed to rezone land just west of Arrowhead Lake; however, no development plans were submitted or known at the time. The intent appeared to be solely to increase resale value without actual construction or site changes.

Another rezoning application was submitted by Doug Wheeler for a development in the Clearview Subdivision. This project proposes the creation of 26 cottage lots and 4 two-family dwelling lots, totaling 34 units. The development spans approximately seven acres and is expected to bring three to four new customers to the sewer district.

The Clear Creek Estates rezoning item was pulled from the current agenda but may return next month. This proposal involves consolidating three lots into two, which would result in a net loss of one potential sewer district customer.

Wilcox Estates, located along Route Z, was reported to be on a private sewer system and will not generate any new lots. Similarly, the Higher Ground project involves a reconfiguration of two existing lots with no net change in lot count. Lastly, the Spring Hideaway subdivision in southern Boone County comprises two lots, both of which will utilize on-site wastewater systems.

INTERIM EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR UPDATE

State Appropriations Update

The Board was briefed on the outcome of the recent state appropriation request, which was ultimately vetoed. While the result was not in their favor, the effort was viewed as worthwhile. Important connections were established with members of the state delegation, positioning the organization for potential success in future funding cycles.

It was noted that numerous communities had submitted requests, particularly for water and wastewater infrastructure, yet very few received funding. According to the explanation given, the Governor's office had to navigate a significant budget shortfall—partly due to a capital gains tax cut and lower-than-expected revenue projections. Because of this, one-time appropriations, such as those for infrastructure, were among the first items

vetoed in favor of prioritizing recurring needs like law enforcement and public safety. It was emphasized that the veto was not a reflection of the merit or quality of the organization's request but rather a result of broader fiscal constraints.

Billing RFP Proposal Update

An update was provided on the Billing RFP process. A pre-proposal meeting was held earlier that afternoon and was well-attended, with six vendors participating. Staff present included Jesse, Drew, Jason, and James Floyd, who fielded numerous questions. The overall tone of the meeting was positive, and there was evident interest in the opportunity.

The proposal submission deadline is set for July 30th, with evaluations and scoring to follow. A recommendation is expected to be presented at the August board meeting. This process follows the IT RFP timeline by approximately one month.

Questions from vendors mainly focused on integration capabilities, such as potential connections between billing, payroll, and service call tracking. The anticipated system is envisioned as a comprehensive customer management solution with integrated billing, payment processing, and communications features — including options for text messaging and email notifications. Additional capabilities could include GIS compatibility, CRM control, and robust export tools to ensure continuity if a future vendor transition becomes necessary.

Staff expressed optimism that the new platform would enhance internal efficiency and customer service, while reducing reliance on disconnected systems and third-party vendors. The goal is to simplify operations, improve data accuracy, and allow for better management of collections and customer communication.

Surplus Property Disposal Update

The Board received an update on the ongoing surplus property disposal process, which is scheduled to close on July 22nd. While current bid numbers appeared low, it was expected that activity would increase significantly near the deadline, as is common with auction-style events.

Of particular note, the tractor had already drawn the highest bid — around \$4,000 — which surprised some, given expectations for other high-value items like the tractor. Staff acknowledged that final outcomes would reflect actual market demand, noting, “the market never lies.”

It was confirmed that the District is committed to accepting the final numbers provided through the auction process. The vendor managing the sale is expected to take a small percentage fee from the proceeds, although staff offered to review the contract to confirm the exact rate.

Once the auction concludes, the Board will receive an updated report summarizing the total revenue generated from the sale.

Sturgeon Update

The City of Sturgeon has taken steps toward self-sufficiency by rehiring former certified operator John Gingrich, who previously managed their wastewater operations. His return is seen as a positive move, given his experience and familiarity with the system. The District has worked amicably with Sturgeon staff to support a smooth transition, though the city is expected to continue needing limited assistance.

To support this, the District will coordinate a revised on-call services contract for tasks Sturgeon cannot perform internally, such as specific line flushing and equipment-intensive operations. Sturgeon uses a no-discharge spray irrigation system connected to a center-pivot unit, and their primary operational challenge has been maintaining adequate irrigation volume. Gingrich's personal connection with the farmer who manages the pivot system is expected to help address this issue.

While the District will no longer oversee day-to-day operations, it will continue to provide support as needed. For example, District staff will assist in submitting DMR (Discharge Monitoring Report) data through the end of June to ensure there is no gap in regulatory reporting during the transition. Most reporting focuses on irrigation volumes rather than detailed operational data.

From a financial standpoint, Sturgeon's full-service contract previously cost approximately \$40,000 annually. With the scaled-back scope, routine services will now fall in the \$6,000–\$8,000 range. The revised arrangement is expected to include occasional support such as pump repairs or specialized maintenance. Notably, two of the city's three lift station pumps have already been replaced in the past six months.

The Board discussed long-term possibilities for a more structured partnership, such as a management services arrangement, but acknowledged that Sturgeon appears focused on minimizing costs. Staff recognized that each engagement offers learning opportunities, even when communities ultimately pursue minimal service models.

AWMP and CIP Stakeholder Engagement Update

The Area-Wide Management Plan (AWMP) and Capital Improvements Plan (CIP) outreach efforts remain ongoing, with continued stakeholder engagement across a broad range of community groups and agencies. Meetings have recently been held with the Board of Realtors, Village of Hartsburg, Missouri American Water, Boone County Health Department, and the Greater Bonne Femme Watershed Initiative. An additional session with representatives in Harrisburg took place the same evening as the board meeting.

Feedback from stakeholders has been generally positive. While many attendees listened with limited pushback, there have been thoughtful questions raised during presentations. Staff noted they tailor content depending on the audience, ensuring each group receives relevant updates tied to their geographic or organizational interest.

The meeting with the Watershed Initiative group focused particularly on treatment plants within the watershed and water quality compliance, rather than customer expansion or system growth. However, there was some discussion around the density of existing on-site systems, especially in the northern portion of the watershed, and the broader need for public sewer infrastructure in those areas.

District staff emphasized that the Capital Improvements Plan includes the potential for plant rehabilitation and capacity expansion, though they acknowledged that not all stakeholders fully grasp the implications this may have on the watershed. The group expressed particular interest in developments such as Prairie Meadows and South Fork, which lie within or adjacent to the watershed.

While the cost of improvements and potential rate impacts were briefly discussed, most stakeholder groups were more concerned with environmental quality. Financing strategies, when mentioned, were met with little feedback. The District continues to welcome ideas and maintains an open invitation for input on funding and system development challenges.

RFQ for Financial Advisor

The District provided an update regarding its plans to issue a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) for financial advisory services. While the original timeline anticipated presenting the RFQ in the upcoming month, the urgency has diminished due to the loss of a previously anticipated \$10 million appropriation.

Despite the delay, staff emphasized the continued importance of securing financial advisory support to position the District for future funding needs, including potential bond issues. The RFQ will still move forward, albeit on a staggered timeline to align better with other planning and resource commitments.

Staff reiterated that while external financial support is no longer immediately required, laying the groundwork now ensures the District is prepared to respond quickly when future funding opportunities arise.

OPERATIONS UPDATE

The Operations and Maintenance report covered several key activities completed in June 2025. Crews completed 4,877 feet of line maintenance in the Water's Edge, Fairway and Sugar Tree subdivisions. A follow-up round of SL-RAT testing is being conducted to assess how well the lines are performing post-cleaning. Crews are experimenting with performing cleaning before and after testing to improve accuracy and confidence in their data. Advanced crews have completed roughly half of the area to date.

Camera inspections totaled 489 feet and revealed two blockages in Fairway and Sugar Tree subdivisions. While no pumps were pulled this month, there were a total of 42 service calls—an unusually high number attributed to the heavy rainfall during the month. Three private service calls were logged, and under contract work, the team removed rags from a pump at the Burke lift station in Sturgeon and cleaned lagoon inlets per the contract terms.

Mainline blockages were cleared without reports of sewer backups, except one notable incident in Sugar Tree where a backup occurred but the resident did not file a claim. In response, the entire subdivision was jetted while crews were on site. Staff noted the cleaning cycle for Sugar Tree was behind the normal three-year interval, prompting its inclusion in the maintenance round. With a full crew now dedicated to maintenance rather than splitting time with service calls, cleaning progress is expected to improve. However, one team member will resign on the 25th, and hiring efforts are underway to fill the vacancy. Two candidates are currently lined up for interviews, and the applicant pool includes individuals with Class C and D licenses.

Lift station alarms this month included three incidents: a power loss at SRK due to a squirrel tripping a breaker, and two power bumps at Rocheport. Missouri One Call requests remain high, with 609 total requests and 541 responses logged.

Sludge hauling included 69,000 gallons of liquid waste from Rocky Fork and 429 tons from the biosolids banking system. Three expired permits remain in process, and other ongoing plant activities continue as scheduled. CDL license training is underway for new hires using online modules conducted during office hours on iPads. While no specific time blocks are being scheduled, staff are encouraged to complete the training as time permits. A discussion was held regarding the incentive structure for completing training outside of work hours, clarifying the balance between paid work time and performance-based motivation.

An equipment issue involving rag blockages in a lift station was also reviewed. Despite having a large screen in place, the screen often fails under high flow conditions, allowing debris—such as baby wipes and small solid items—to pass through. These items later consolidate within the impeller, forming gaskets that clog the system. This issue was observed at the Sturgeon site, and while it falls under their jurisdiction, a better screen design may be worth considering.

Service call costs continue to be tracked closely. This month saw a particularly high total on the pressure system side, with a service cost of approximately \$17,000, well above the \$9,000 surcharge threshold. The average cost per call is stabilizing around \$550. Staff noted that more detailed analysis on this trend would be addressed in the engineering report, particularly concerning implications for Hill Creek and Cell Creek.

The June safety meeting focused on hot weather precautions, including a video training module. While no incidents were reported at the time of the meeting, it was later noted that one employee, Scott, experienced a calf pull that was handled through workers' compensation. Standard cybersecurity training was also conducted. Additionally, staff discussed active shooter training options and potential improvements to generator lead safety, based on recent employee feedback.

FINANCE AND HR UPDATE

The HR department remains focused on recruiting for two key positions. One is the third administrative assistant role, for which recent interviews have been unsuccessful—either due to cancellations or no-shows. However, the team remains hopeful with new candidates scheduled in the coming week. Additionally, two interviews are scheduled for the open wastewater equipment operator and senior operator positions. Approximately ten applicants are being considered between the two roles.

Performance goal setting is underway across departments. The finance and administration team is just now initiating this process for their staff, while operations and maintenance has already completed goal development under Jason and Jesse's guidance. These goals will be revisited later in the year for review and alignment.

Digitization of employee files is nearly complete. All files have been scanned and are now in the process of being organized into their respective folders. In parallel, staff have received and begun reviewing the new LAGERS evaluation, which came with a \$630 invoice. The team is still digesting the information, and a broader discussion is expected by August to determine potential implications and decisions moving forward.

An additional HR-related topic was training and certification. Staff discussed pursuing the SHRM senior certification. The training would be completed on the employee's own time, with testing planned for early next year. Costs would include \$520 for the exam and approximately \$1,300 for preparatory materials. Support was expressed by leadership for the initiative, noting the credibility it would lend to HR leadership and the organization's compliance. The training will be documented in performance reviews and included as part of ongoing professional development, pending an executive recommendation.

On the finance side, the annual audit has been completed, and the team is preparing to begin the budgeting process for the next fiscal year. The existing template from last year already includes notes for 2026, providing a head start. Financials for the current period are about halfway complete and are expected to be ready by the next board meeting.

An update on QuickBooks maintenance was shared, including general upkeep and a possible upgrade to keep pace with organizational needs. Once the current financial data is finalized, staff plan to present a mid-year breakdown of collections versus treatment costs. This analysis is expected to answer the long-standing question of what it costs the district to treat sewer, using six months of real data to produce a solid estimate.

The current auditing firm, Gerding, Korte & Chitwood, P.C., is in its first or second year under the current contract. There is still an option to renew, and no immediate need to solicit bids again. Staff noted it has become increasingly difficult for public entities to attract auditors, as seen during the last RFP process, though another firm has since expressed interest for future years.

Looking ahead, work is progressing slowly on the user rate model, which will tie directly into the wage and benefits study and the CIP. Although a target date has not been set, staff plan to have a functioning internal tool ready before any formal approval of the CIP or the Area-Wide Management Plan. The internal model will help staff simulate different financial scenarios to evaluate their impact on rates. This preparatory analysis will inform a future professional user rate study, which may be conducted before issuing a bond or implementing major infrastructure projects.

A philosophical discussion was held about whether every CIP project should be executed or whether a more selective "cafeteria-style" approach makes sense. The group agreed that certain essential projects must move forward, while others can be phased based on financial feasibility. Staff expressed a desire to avoid constant "nickel and diming" on maintenance and instead adopt a more consistent funding strategy. The internal modeling tool will allow the team to test multiple project sequences and determine their respective rate impacts, identifying cost spikes and smoothing out long-term rate increases.

The group also emphasized the importance of not overworking the model, instead aiming for a clear, functional tool to guide decision-making over a ten-year horizon, with a particular focus on the more accurate 0–5 year range.

PROJECTS UPDATE

The board received a project update report detailing key activities and developments for the month. Among the projects of note, the Foley Road Sanitary Sewer Improvements are nearing completion. Electrical connections have been finalized, and new grinder pump tanks have been installed. The contractor's next steps involve pumping out the septic tanks and tying in the new services. Final grading work remains, but overall the project is close to wrapping up.

A project that commenced after the update report was created is the Tommy and Rhonda Knight property. This involves a single-lot sewer extension located off Wagon Trail Road. The work has just begun in the past few days and is expected to progress steadily.

Several new projects have been added to the report since the previous month. One is the Bethel Baptist Church development, a single-lot subdivision near Bethel Church Road. The property is being split into two lots, currently serving as a holding tract for future single-family development. Staff indicated that higher density development may follow.

Also highlighted was the Tradewinds Car Condos project, previously discussed by the board. This involves a new town development at Lot C1, comprising 12 townhome units.

Lastly, the Highfield Acres development has submitted its design and construction plans (DCPs), which are currently under review by the Missouri Department of Natural Resources (DNR).

No questions were raised following the update.

ENGINEERING UPDATE

The Engineering portion provided a comprehensive update on active and upcoming projects, with a particular focus on time-sensitive developments and system performance improvements.

Progress continues on the Rocheport Trailside, and Hartsburg projects. These are considered high-priority due to tight timelines. Easement negotiations with Midwest Wildlands remain the final hurdle to finalize plans and proceed with bidding. While designs were previously at 30% completion, work has continued behind the scenes to move the projects closer to the bid stage.

For the Hartsburg project, the board had previously approved the contract and issued a notice to proceed on the first phase. Work is now underway. Staff anticipate requesting board approval to put the project out for bid at the August meeting. The facility plan for Hartsburg is still under review with the Missouri Department of Natural Resources (DNR), but the assigned project manager is reportedly pushing diligently to expedite the process. Topographic survey work began last week for the sewer portion of the project.

A significant portion of the update focused on the Hillcreek pump analysis. The pressure sewer system at Hill Creek has proven to be the most problematic in the District. While HDR previously developed a model of the system, it lacks the capability to simulate multiple pump configurations or predict outcomes under varied conditions. Staff recently met with Bartlett & West, who already handle consolidated hydraulic modeling for the District, and confirmed their ability to develop a fully interactive model softwares.

The new model will allow the District to analyze various pump types, configurations, and layouts. It will incorporate field-verified data such as real elevation measurements and actual water usage statistics. This approach improves

upon the assumption-based modeling used in earlier designs and will enable the District to identify cost-effective and operationally sound solutions.

Staff highlighted the chronic issues with Zoller progressive cavity pumps, which are prone to failure under certain flow conditions and sensitive to air in the lines. In contrast, Barnes Razor OGP pumps have demonstrated long-term success, with one in continuous operation for 6–8 years without problems. Four Barnes pumps are already installed in the system and have shown strong performance metrics.

To address persistent reliability and customer service concerns, the District plans to issue an RFP to secure a bulk purchase price for additional Barnes Razor/ODP pumps. Staff cited fatigue over repeated failures and emphasized that longevity, reliability, and cost-effectiveness must all factor into pump selection—not just flow capacity. The aim is to reduce service calls, improve customer experience, and minimize operational disruptions.

Engineers estimated that the District currently has 8–10 Zoller 815 pumps still in service and suggested now is the time to begin phasing them out. The new pumps are designed as drop-in replacements, requiring no major reconfiguration.

The new model from Bartlett & West is expected to further support these efforts. Staff plan to use the model to identify where high-head conditions exist—typically in peripheral service areas—and prioritize replacements accordingly. This modeling effort also aligns with broader discussions on the pressure sewer surcharge. The goal is to find a pricing strategy that reflects service costs without overwhelming customers. The model will allow the District to forecast service call reductions and rate trends to guide decision-making.

Lastly, it was confirmed that the District will retain ownership of the interactive model files, which will be archived in district records. Staff noted this as a positive shift toward retaining long-term value from consulting engagements, rather than relying solely on static paper reports.

CONSIDERATION ITEMS

Consider :: Authorizing the Interim Executive Director to Negotiate a contract with GFI Digital for Information Technology Professional Services

Staff requested authorization to negotiate with GFI Digital for IT professional services following an RFP process. GFI emerged as the strongest candidate, offering a fixed monthly rate structure and strong references, particularly from similar public entities.

MOTION: On a motion by Watkins and a second by Burks, the Board moved to accept ‘Authorizing the Interim Executive Director to Negotiate a contract with GFI Digital for Information Technology Professional Services’. All trustees present voted in favor. Motion carried.

Consider :: Resolution 2025-11 w/ Consider RFP for Building Renovation

The board was asked to approve the issuance of an RFP for design and renovation services related to the administrative building. The goal is to address layout inefficiencies, deferred maintenance, and staff space needs, using an architect-led design-bid approach.

MOTION: On a motion by Watkins and a second by Burks, the Board moved to accept ‘Resolution 2025-11 w/ Consider RFP for Building Renovation’. All trustees present voted in favor. Motion carried.

Consider :: Agreement for Willow Creek East PRD & PCD

An agreement was presented for the Willow Creek East development to formalize sewer service terms for a new planned residential and commercial district. The agreement aligns with prior board direction and allows the project to proceed while final design work continues.

MOTION: On a motion by Watkins and a second by Burks, the Board moved to accept the 'Agreement for Willow Creek East PRD & PCD. All trustees present voted in favor. Motion carried.

Consider :: Agreement for 7400 I-70 Drive

Staff presented a service agreement for a single commercial lot at 7400 I-70 Drive. The agreement covers the developer's obligations related to sewer extension and includes a cost-share arrangement for infrastructure that may benefit future connections.

MOTION: On a motion by Watkins and a second by Burks, the Board moved to approve the 'Agreement for 7400 I-70 Drive. All trustees present voted in favor. Motion carried.

Consider :: Amendments to Personnel Policy

Proposed changes to the personnel policy included updates to holiday leave language, clarification on comp time usage, and a revision to on-call pay structure. The board was asked to approve these updates for clearer, more equitable application of policies.

MOTION: On a motion by Chann and a second by Watkins, the Board moved to accept the 'Amendments to Personnel Policy. All trustees present voted in favor. Motion carried.

Consider :: RFP for Grinder Pump Purchases

The board considered issuing an RFP to secure bulk pricing for Barnes Razor grinder pumps based on positive long-term performance. This purchase aims to standardize equipment, reduce service call frequency, and improve customer satisfaction in pressure sewer areas.

MOTION: On a motion by Chann and a second by Watkins, the Board moved to accept the 'RFP for Grinder Pump Purchases'. All trustees present voted in favor. Motion carried.

NEW BUSINESS

There was no New Business.

VOTE TO HOLD CLOSED SESSION UNDER SECTION 610.021 (1) & 610.021 (3)

MOTION: On a motion by Watkins and a second by Burks, the Board moved to authorize a closed meeting at 6:35 PM, as authorized by RsMO Section 610.021 (1) 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 RsMO Section 610.021 (3) to discuss the hiring, firing, disciplining or promoting of particular employees by a public governmental body when personal information is discussed or recorded. All trustees present voted in favor. Motion carried.

CLOSED SESSION

The Board discussed potential legal actions or causes of action.

The Board discussed personnel matters including individually identifiable employee records.

RETURN TO OPEN SESSION

MOTION: On a motion by Watkins and a second by Chann, the Board moved to exit the closed meeting and return to the regular meeting at 7:02 PM. All trustees present voted in favor. Motion carried.

ADJOURNMENT

Meeting was adjourned at 7:03 PM.

Meeting Minutes Approved On : _____

Secretary: _____
Brian Burks, Secretary