

Waterworks District No. 2, Parish of Beauregard

MINUTES

The Board of Commissioners, governing authority of Waterworks District No. Two (2) of the Parish of Beauregard, Louisiana, met in an open and public session at 6:00 p.m. on Monday, January 8, 2024 at the regular meeting place of said Board, 9252 Hwy 27, Singer, LA.

*Mr. Jerry Cooley, of the Board of Commissioners called the meeting to order and on roll call, the following members being present: **Jerry Cooley, Bill White, Richelle Bowman, Lisa Gearen, and Carroll Johnson.***

Absent: 0

Others Present: *Mathieu Rose, Mark McCarty, Attorney Joseph Delafield, Tony O'Banion, Delores Fruge, Todd Barks, James Gibson, Bill Turner, Denise Smith, and George (PC) Miller.*

Public Participation: *There was no public participation.*

Approval of Minutes:

Richelle Bowman, 2nd by Lisa Gearen, moved to adopt the Minutes of the meeting held on December 9, 2023, and to forego the reading thereof, motion carried without opposition.

Approval of Financial reports:

Richelle Bowman, 2nd by Lisa Gearen, moved to adopt the financial reports as written for December 2023, the motion carried without opposition.

Payment authorization:

Richelle Bowman, 2nd by Lisa Gearen, moved to pay monthly invoices for February 2024, the motion carried without opposition.

Reports:

Mr. Tony Cooley (not in attendance) of McGregor Road sent a request asking the Board of Commissioners to review his usage, and to adjust his bill for the past few months.

After reviewing the work order, photos of the leak and repair, the Board of Commissioners were in agreement that once the repair was completed that the water usage returned to normal confirming that the leak as shown was the accurate, and the billing usage and amount would stand as read.

Agenda Item: Theft of Utilities:

The Office Manager, Paula Rose reported that a Theft of Utilities was discovered at 269 Ernest Clark Rd. During a routine work schedule for Lead and Copper, the Maintenance crew was sent to the address in question to locate an existing meter. During the search it was discovered that the Location Meter's lock had been cut, and water was being used to water livestock. The report with documentation was turned into the office for further investigation. (Documentation was provided as evidence)

It was discovered that a usage of 1,068,920 gallons of water had been stolen over a period of time in the amount of \$4,641.86. The land owner Mrs. Delores Fruge, informed the office that Mr. Tony O'Banion (both of Starks) had been using her property to care for his livestock. Mr. O'Banion denied the

allegations, stating that he was using the pond to water the cows. The investigation proved that the theft of utilities was indeed active at the time of discovery.

Mr. Todd Starks stated that he had called Mr. O'Banion numerous times to let him know his cows were getting out. He said that he saw the water hose just lying on the ground running in order to saturate the land so the cows had water. The ponds here not being used, because they had dried up from the drought.

Mrs. Fruge and Mr. O'Banion both agreed that neither a written, nor verbal agreement concerning the use of the property or the water utilities. Mr. O'Banion said he had not paid Mrs. Fruge for the use of the water.

Mr. Bill White, and Mrs. Richelle Bowman questioned Mr. Starks, as to why he failed to turn the water hose off when he saw it running freely on the ground. They also questioned Mr. O'Banion as to how he could sit there and deny the proven facts that he was the one using the water to take care of his livestock.

Mr. Starks stated that for all he knew Mr. Tony O'Banion had paid to have water at the property. Mr. O'Banion had no response.

Mr. Joseph Delafield, Legal Counsel for the Board said that unfortunately the property belongs to Mrs. Fruge, and ultimately it is her responsibility according to law for the theft of utilities (misappropriation of funds), and will need to pay the cost, or face charges. He also explained that Mrs. Fruge would have to file charges against Mr. O'Banion if he refused to what is right and pay for the water services, he misappropriated by using the water meter without authorization.

Mr. Bill White said that he had no pleasure in the final ruling, because the responsible party will not step up and do what is right and pay for the theft of utilities, and is placing his criminal actions upon the landowner.

Lisa Gearen, 2nd by Mr. Caroll Johnson, moved for Delores Fruge, Land Owner to pay the \$4,641.85 in full, and to be setup on an installment plan, the motion carried without opposition.

Consolidate Business:

Mr. James Gibson, and Mr. Bill Turner gave a presentation of the new Ground Penetrating Radar the QB5 with a GSP software that locates water lines, and leaks. It comes with a free maintenance upgrade for the life of the machine, with a 3-year replacement and repair warrant.

- a) Consolidated Pipe and Supply: \$14,700.00
- b) Green Equipment: \$17,540.42

Mr. Bill White, 2nd by Mrs. Lisa Gearen, moved to purchase the GP Radar QB5 in the amount of \$14,700.00. The motion carried without opposition.

Unfinished Business:

Griner Drilling:

Mr. Joseph Delafield, on behalf of the Board of Commissioners, and the Waterworks District, executed the final Joint Receipt, Release of Claim, and Indemnity Agreement between Griner Drilling Service, Inc, and Waterworks District No. 2, Parish of Beauregard.

PFAS Agreement:

Mr. Joseph Delafield discussed that he was having to review and make changes to the PFAS Resolution because the Attorney General had made amendments that wasn't in conjunction to the PFAS Settlement. He was needing further clarification. The issue was table until further information and directions could be obtained.

Maintenance Report: Mathieu Rose-Operations Supervisor

1. *An overview summary was given for the month of December 2023 as follows:
a.) 63 Workorders were completed, 2- new services were installed
Repaired 7 leaks, and 2 leaks pending.*
2. *Mathieu discussed that he has been working on ways to conserve on cost of materials, and he would like to try purchasing pipe material for the year, instead of buying periodically to see if this would save on our cost per year. He is not sure if this will work, but he would like the opportunity to try it this year.*

Mrs. Richelle Bowman, 2nd by Mr. Caroll Johnson, moved to approve advertising for pipe materials and supplies. The motion carried without opposition.

A discussion returned to the meters that are being locked out, and a theft of utilities transpiring. A request for a policy to be put in place effective today for meters that are a permanent disconnect to be pulled, tagged, and stored. This excludes rental property, or disconnects for non-payment that are completed on the 20th of each month.

3. *Tools and Supplies
a) Core and Main—100 meters--\$35,598.00.*

Mathieu discussed all meters can only be purchased by Core and Main because they are the only suppliers in our area for Neptune meters. He is also working on creating a meter asset plan over the next five (5) years.

Mrs. Richelle Bowman, 2nd by Mrs. Lisa Gearen, moved to purchase the 100 meters from Core and Main. The motion carried without opposition.

4. *Stanley Smith Road: The Parish cannot dig out the ditches to help improve the drainage at the shop, because it would cause flooding for the residence on this road. A discussion on various options to help with the drainage. The issue was tabled until a more feasible plan can be developed.*
5. *Temporary Hire for Maintenance: The Board of Commissioner rejected the hire of a temporary employee to help with the Lead and Copper requirements, instead approved overtime work for current employees to complete it.*
6. *Preventive Maintenance on the Pumps and Motors for Fields, Singer, and Phelps. Mathieu and the Board discussed the cost of repairing a motor at \$4,570.00 versus the cost a new*

motor. Purchase a new one, and have the old ones repaired to have for spares in the event of an emergency, or ones breaks down.

Mr. Bill White, 2nd by Mrs. Lisa Gearen, moved to purchase the new motor and repair the ones to have for spares in the case of an emergency or one breaks down. The motion carried without opposition.

Secretary Report: Paula Rose

1. *Annual Maintenance renewal for Neptune Meter reading software-\$5,490.00.*

Mrs. Richelle Bowman, 2nd by Mr. Bill White, moved to purchase the annual maintenance for the Neptune software in the amount of \$5,490.00. The motion carried without opposition.

Adjournment:

There being no further business, upon a motion by Mrs. Lisa Gearen, 2nd by Mr. Carroll Johnson, the meeting was adjourned, the motion carried without opposition.

I DO HEREBY CERTIFY that the above and foregoing is a true and correct copy of the minutes of the business meeting held on January 8, 2024 @ 6:00 p.m. at the regular public meeting place of said Board at 9252 Hwy 27, Singer, Louisiana.



Paula Rose-District Secretary/Treasurer



Jerry Cooley, President