

Ramah Water and Sanitation District Board Meeting called to order by board chairman Robert Montague at 7:05pm on June 10th, 2025.

The board members present are Robert Montague, Blanche Clawson, Whitney River-Croley and Michael Croley.

Absent are Shawna Grassie

Blanche Clawson leads the opening prayer.

Michael Croley leads the pledge of allegiance.

The **first item on the agenda** is to approve the May 2025 meeting minutes.

Board Chairman asks if everyone had a chance to review the minutes and asks if there are any changes that need to be made. Board members say they looked over the minutes and no changes need to be made.

Whitney River-Croley makes a motion to approve the May 2025 minutes. Michael Croley seconded the motion. Board chairman calls for a vote. All in favor say, “Aye.” The motion carries unanimously.

Flint Tietjen offers the operators report. The cylinders were taken off the backhoe to get repaired and they are coming to pick them up tomorrow. At the time we do not have a back up backhoe if there is a grave that needs to be dug, during the time that our backhoe is being repaired. The operator will ask a community member if we could rent or borrow their backhoe if we need to dig a grave. It may take two weeks to repair the backhoe. The dollar general dirt work people purchased water in bulk from us. The operator did talk to the dollar

general people and told them our only water line is on the other side of the highway from where the dollar general is being built. We will charge dollar general for a new water hook up and if they tie into the manhole, then we will only need to charge a new hook up for the water and an activation fee for the sewage. The dollar general will have to run the water pipe under the highway and get those permits; we will put in a meter on the North side of the highway, and it will be dollar general's responsibility to run the pipe under the road to the water meter and to tie into the sewage line that is close to the build sight.

During the operator's report Shawna Grassie shows up to the board meeting.

The secretary offers her report. Each board member has a copy of the May 2025 monthly summary of deposits and expenses. The secretary mentions when they put in for property tax exemptions on several properties that were not yet exempt, McKinley County denied exempting those properties, but RW&SD has several other properties that we own that are exempt, so it doesn't make sense why those properties would be exempt and the ones we just recently applied for are not exempt. Board Chairman mentions he hasn't had a chance to go to Gallup to talk to someone at McKinley County about their most recent decision, he says he will contact a county commissioner if he needs to. The secretary asks the board if they were able to read over her email earlier that day concerning New Mexico sales tax (governmental gross receipt taxes). When we sold water in bulk to the dirt work people, it brought up the question for the secretary to get clarification on the state tax code and what

RW&SD is required to pay GGR taxes on and what customers should be exempt from paying GGR taxes. It took several phone calls to the state to get in touch with someone who had the knowledge to answer specific questions concerning the tax code. One auditor at the office of the New Mexico Tax and Revenue office said they refer people to read the tax code and interpret it themselves. The secretary was informed that RW&SD should collect and pay GGR taxes on water, water usage, sewage services, maintenance fees and refuse collection. Schools and government agencies should be exempt from paying GGR taxes on the water and water usage (those are considered tangible) but still required to pay GGR taxes on the sewage and maintenance fees and trash pickup. The secretary now has a way to add up all the RW&SD income that needs to be reported to pay GGR taxes each month and with the help of the Core software tech support, they will change several accounts in the billing software to reflect the proper tax charges for certain customers.

Beginning financial information has been sent to High Desert, the company is performing our audit for FY25, and communications are going well. Update on election for the two board positions opening up in January 2026 (those spots opening up, are currently filled by Robert Montague and Shawna Grassie). The secretary emailed the information to the election person with the county that emailed us. The secretary asked about when and where someone can register to get their name on the ballot and at this point, we haven't received a response to that question yet. The secretary asks what she might need to post in town or on the website concerning the two board member spots that are opening up, or should she wait until she gets

more information? The board explains that the secretary could post on the website that there are two positions coming open and that all arrangements for getting on the ballot will be made with McKinley County. The secretary says she submitted the 2024 CCR to NMED for review (consumer confidence report) a small change was made and the CCR was approved. The secretary has already posted it in the office, the post office and stagecoach and when bills are printed, there is a message on the bill informing customers where to go to see a digital copy and how to request a paper copy. Then after those bills are mailed out the secretary will submit the certification form that states how we informed our customers. The interim budget was submitted on time. We received an email concerning the NMDOT grant, but we just received the email yesterday and it wasn't time for us to put that resolution on the agenda for this meeting, so that resolution approving the NMDOT grant will need to go on July's meeting agenda.

The secretary also requests a full week off, to be able to take a vacation, and the secretary could plan the timing so that everything at the office would be caught up. The board members agree that it is fine as long as we post a sign that we will be closed from June 23rd through June 27th, everything in the office is caught up and the timing of the office being closed doesn't interfere with a payday, bills going out or other tasks required to be done by a certain time. Also, we would leave a voicemail message on the phone that we are closed that week. In the email when the secretary brought up wanting a week off, it was also mentioned that the operator should be allowed to take a week off. The operator and board members discuss when the operator would like to take time off and it would be several days

at the beginning of July and the current intern could be trained/told what needs to be done while the operator is off those days. The board agrees those days off should be fine with the intern being here to work those days. The operator informs the board while we have the intern, they will most likely try to move a section of the fence at the cemetery to its proper location.

A board member asks to put on the July or August meeting to consider purchasing nicer fencing for the cemetery.

Next item on the agenda is to discuss a solution for Linda Burson's driveway to her house/home parking lot that is getting washed away from drainage that comes from the road going to the lake. Linda states since RW&SD have agreed to maintain the right of way for that road, that is why she has brought this issue to the current board for a solution. When the road was paved is when drainage issues began happening for her driveway and parking lot, especially if there is a heavy rain, the drainage coming down that road washes parts of her parking lot away, and there is usually standing water at one of her gates. The board members and Linda discussed different possible solutions to direct the flow of the drainage from the road that goes to the lake. The operator says we do have a culvert available that we were able to clean and we could use for this drainage issue. The operator mentions needing to dig a ditch after the culvert to help the drainage flow past the community members property. The board and the community member agree that once the backhoe is repaired the operator and the intern can put the culvert in to help with proper drainage in that area. The board asks if we need to vote on this solution, the operator doesn't think so, since we

don't need to purchase a new culvert. The board members, the operator and the community member agree to a solution of putting a culvert in at the driveway and creating a ditch after the culvert (also digging up tree stumps, if possible, past the culvert) to help the water drainage flow without damaging the community member's driveway/parking lot/property. The community member also mentions that when the parking lot was put out at the lake, the big trucks driving over the curb damaged a part of the curb near the property. The board discusses that it may be possible to repair the curb, but the priority is the solution for the proper drainage near the driveway. Everyone discusses that before the drainage culvert gets put in that we need to call the number before we dig, to ensure that we don't dig up a phone line.

Next item on the agenda is to discuss and vote on town

beautification. One board member discusses that they are not sure about calling it a town beautification, when people still park their tractors, and broken down cars on the right of way. One board member brings up what it would take for us to incorporate. It is discussed that there needs to be enough businesses in the town. One board member says that the town doesn't necessarily need multiple businesses to incorporate. One board member says that in the state of New Mexico, you need a tax base. At this point, RW&SD has no jurisdiction to enforce resolutions concerning the town's roads and right of ways for the roads. If they incorporated, they would have jurisdiction to enforce some rules about the roads' right of way. After more discussion it is agreed that the secretary will make some phone calls to see what would be required for Ramah to incorporate.

Board members discuss getting an extra dumpster to have at the transfer station to take more than just household trash at the transfer station, like we did last year. It is discussed that we should do it before the pioneer day celebration, to give community members the opportunity to have a place locally to take excess trash and to encourage community members to beautify the town. The board discusses not allowing/not taking mattresses, no oil, no batteries, no tires etc. It seemed that mattresses filled up the extra dumpster too quickly last year. We could take appliances, because we could reasonably haul appliances to the dumpster. The board discusses the limb mulching days. Since RW&SD now owns a mulcher, and since there has been a burn ban, we could charge community members an amount to bring their limbs to us, and we could mulch them and leave the mulch in our “park” area or allow the community member that paid and brought their limbs to take the mulch from the limbs they brought. It is discussed that a truck bed full of less than 6 inch circumference branches could probably be mulched in about 20 minutes and we could charge \$20 for a truck bed of limbs and \$30 for a 12ft trailer of 6 inch limbs to get mulched. The operator says as long as we plan it on days when the intern is here to help, we could do that. It is brought up that there are people in town who are dumping limbs down a road that crosses private property, and the road is supposed to have limited public access, and people are not supposed to be dumping limbs or trash down that road. Possible options to alleviate the illegal dumping are calling the sheriff’s department to report it and looking through the trash to see who is dumping it. Another option is posting signs that say “private property no dumping” or “not a public road” sign on that

road. The board discusses what is a perceived easement in the state of New Mexico. The board suggests bringing the extra dumpster in at the beginning of July, and the limb mulching idea is good as long as it doesn't put too much demand on the operator's time, as long as we have the intern on the days that we will be mulching. The operator says that if bigger limbs are brought, we could cut those up for firewood size wood.

Whitney River-Croley makes a motion to have an extra dumpster delivered by July 2nd for beautification of Ramah, using same pricing as last year for the extra dumpster and we will also have limb mulch days, the operator and secretary will coordinate what days the intern is here to schedule mulching limbs up to 6 inches or smaller in diameter, charging \$20 dollar truck load or \$30 dollar a trailer load. Shawna Grassie seconded the motion. The board chairman calls for a vote. All in favor say, "Aye." The motion carries unanimously.

The next item on the agenda is to discuss the price for booth rental for the pioneer day celebration. The board members agree to keep the booth rental at \$10 per booth, to keep the cost affordable and as long as we receive enough to pay for renting the port o potties and take care of trash bins and pick up that day. The operator says he will repaint the lines marking and numbering the booth spots when we get closer to the day. It is discussed that it is difficult for any board member to walk around Saturday morning, most board members have other duties to attend to that day, it is necessary for someone to ensure those who paid for a booth are in the correct spot and those that didn't pay and are setting up, that the money is collected

from those individuals. The secretary says she is willing to work that day to ensure everything is in order. It is suggested to put allowing the secretary to work that extra day on July's agenda. The map we are using for booth rentals is the same map that was used for last year's pioneer day. The secretary can start allowing people to pay for and rent the booths the next day and start posting an advertisement or posting online that booths are available to rent in early July. Everyone discusses reserving the port o potties. The secretary states that she called the company that day to make sure there are port o potties available for July 19th. The company will drop the two port o pots off on the Wednesday before July 19th and pick them up on the Wednesday after July 19th. It's the same company that we used last year, and they are only charging \$287.55 total for two.

Whitney River Croley makes a motion to keep the booth rental price at \$10 per booth and allow people to start purchasing booth rentals tomorrow (June 11th), but we will advertise that booths are available for rent the first week of July, and keep renting the port-o-potties with the same company we used last year and we will rent two of them for \$287.55. Shawna Grassie seconded the motion. The board chairman calls for a vote. All in favor say, "Aye." The motion carries unanimously.

The board chairman wants cones put up in front of the Ramah Museum on that day so that no one parks there or has booths there, everyone looks at the map as to which spots the chairman is talking about and we mark those 3 spots not available for booth rental and on that Saturday morning those spots will be marked with cones so no one can park there or set up booths there. A board member asks

what we will do concerning the folks that have the farmers' market in Ramah on Saturdays during the summer. The farmers' market doesn't pay RW&SD anything to set up in our right of way during the summer. The board wants to make sure when the farmers market is over that they have the port o potty that they rent during the summer removed when they are done with it, so there is not a port o potty there all year long. The secretary says she will call the person in charge of the farmers market that is held in Ramah on Saturdays during the summer, so that they are aware that if they want a booth on pioneer day they need to come into the office and pay for their booth rental like everyone else.

Next item on the agenda is hiring a part time person to work the transfer station and picking up customers trash on Wednesdays. The board and operator discuss that the current part time employee is moving and won't be available after the end of July. It is also discussed that the reason we have a part time employee pick up trash on Wednesdays instead of the operator is because of the high price of liability insurance on trash collection. The price of liability insurance is based on the hourly rate paid to the employee that does the task and the rate for the task of trash collection is much higher than the liability rate for the water and sewage coverage. It is also discussed that we need to hire an honest and reputable part time employee, because they will be dealing with cash payments. One board member suggests using a locked cash box and the customers just put their payments in the locked cash box. One person brings up that if we had a locked cash box, we would need to be able to make change for customers at the transfer station on Saturdays. We could guarantee 10 hrs. a week and possibly offer more hours if the

operator needs help with certain tasks and the new hire is available. The board discusses whether we might be able to take card payments at the transfer station. The secretary asked the current company that manages/processes our online payments for our water bills and there would be a charge for each transaction. It is discussed if other online payment companies might offer better services. Usually square (charges a higher percentage fee for transactions under \$5) and clover charges for each transaction and it is up to the company to pay that fee or decide if the customer pays those fees. At the transfer station customers are usually paying less than \$5, or \$6, \$7 or \$8 dollars, so it may not be reasonable to use a company that charges a fee for each transaction, because of the nature of the business, it would be a lot of small amount transactions. We would also need to pay for internet to be set up at the transfer station, if we took card payments.

Shawna Grassie makes a motion to put up a posting for hiring a part time employee to work transfer station (open Saturdays 9am-5pm) and garbage pickup (Wednesdays takes about 2 hours) for 30 days, posting by June 11th until 30 days from posting, posting to also include extra duties/part time laborer as needed. Whitney River-Croley seconded the motion. All in favor say, "Aye." The motion passed unanimously.

Board chairman asks if there is any thing else that needs to be addressed.

Shawna Grassie makes a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:05pm. Whitney River- Croley seconded the motion. All in favor say, "aye." The motion carries. The meeting is adjourned.