

**December 5<sup>th</sup> 2023**

**RW&SD Board Meeting Minutes**

Meeting began at 7:09pm

Board members present: Blanche Clawson, Whitney River, Robert Montague

Board members absent: Sherrill Lambson and Shawna Grassie

Others present: Operator and Secretary

Opening Prayer offered by: Flint Tietjen

Pledge of Allegiance led by: Robert Montague

**Whitney River motioned to approve the minutes from November's 2023 board meeting, Blanche Clawson Seconded the motion, all approved said Aye. Motion carried unanimously.**

Operator's report: Operator got the snowplow mounted and going. Operator and other workers got Ramah Cemetery mowed and cleaned up. It will be ready for pictures. Once the weeds were cleaned up initially, it will be easier to mow it the next time. Operator estimates it probably took about 25 to 30 working hours to get the cemetery looking better. Board members suggest possibly cleaning or mowing quarterly or at least every 6 months when the weather permits. We cleaned up flowers that looked like they had been there for more than a year. If RW&SD could come up with a policy letting people know that we would clean off old flowers on a regular basis (every 6 months or at least once a year) that would make it easier to clean up the cemetery.

The operator installed a new water meter and it started leaking, they dug it back up and replaced a union fitting that had broken and got it working properly again. There was a fire hydrant over by Palin's that had broke last winter, they got it dug up and replaced. Flint's father had a used fire hydrant that they used to replace the old one with. Board members asked Flint to ask his father what he would consider a reasonable purchase price for the used fire hydrant and to let the board know so that we can bring that up at the next meeting.

Board discusses holding January's Board meeting on January 9<sup>th</sup> instead of the first Tuesday of the month because of the new year holiday.

Secretary's Report: Secretary reported that she is rebuilding all the bank transactions (deposits and expenditures) from the previous fiscal year in an excel spreadsheet format to give to the auditor that we hired so the auditor can complete the audit.

Board chairman brings to the attention of the Board that when the secretary gives them the previous month's summary at each meeting, that the board is supposed to approve that accounting summary.

Update on LGBMS access. We finally got our login credentials for the online reporting format that the state is using to require all counties and special districts to report to. We will be submitting and reporting our quarterly reports to and our preliminary budget to the state through LGBMS online. Board chairman asks secretary to discuss if RW&SD goes over on any budgeted amount with our budget analyst at the state, how we are to report that difference properly in the system.

The Secretary let the Board know that she had reconciled many old accounts in our billing software. There were accounts that had improper charges on them from incorrect meter readings or from maintenance fees that were entered incorrectly, all these accounts reconciled were prior to 2020. Because we reconciled old accounts, it was easier to see in the system who is behind on payments. The secretary did send out 7 shut of notices to customers who hadn't made a payment in over 60 days and those customers owed more than \$150 dollars on their accounts.

The secretary asked if we have a customer that only has sewage and they don't pay their bill, what would our response be. The board suggests that if the sewage customer does not pay past due, we will send out another notice letting the customer know if they do not pay the past due amount, we will dig up the sewage connection and cap it off. It would then cost the customer \$600 (new sewage connection fee) and their past due to get the sewage connection back.

Board Chairman discusses needing to know the population of people we serve along with the number of water meter connections for the asset management report.

Board discusses maintenance that needs to be done on the company truck that hadn't been done in the past...like maintenance that gets done at 36K/50K/75K miles, including a transmission flush and spark plugs being changed. None of those major regular maintenance tasks were performed on the truck. The truck currently has 86K miles on it and about 75 hundred hours, it has more hours than a truck at the same miles would because it idles a lot, while operator gets meter readings. The operator discusses how complicated it can be to change the spark plugs on the year of ford that we have, so it would be best to have it professionally done.

**Whitney River makes a motion to spend up to \$1,534.11 on the maintenance of the company truck (including changing spark plugs and a transmission flush) that should have been done in the past. Blanche Clawson seconds the motion. The motion passed unanimously.**

Board Chairman talked to a lawyer about getting a warranted deed for the property purchased to expand the cemetery. The lawyer wants to discuss the land with the surveyor to verify specifics.

**Whitney River makes a motion to get a warranted deed from Jay Mason, a lawyer in Gallup, at the cost of up to \$400 dollars. Blanche Clawson seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.**

Board discusses insurance for board members, but secretary isn't sure if we have the correct application, because the form says non-profit management insurance application. Secretary will verify with insurance agent if this is the correct application and board can look at it in the next board meeting in January.

Board chairman discusses how the new board member voted in, and the returning board members will need to be sworn in during January's meeting.

Board discusses which trees that are considered RW&SD's property that might need to be trimmed or cut back, ones that might be dying or dead from past drought conditions. Board members think it is necessary to check each tree by

trimming limbs back before cutting the whole tree down, to see if the tree is actually dead and which trees just need to have limbs trimmed.

The secretary asked board about filling out the forms needed for the online payment processing company. The board chairman and the secretary can complete those forms.

Everyone discusses the need for the operator to have access to a computer for work. We discuss that the extra computer can be cleared out and windows reinstalled again on it for the operator to be able to use it for lead line survey, inventory asset and getting testing reports. Secretary says she can work on getting the extra computer up and running again for the operator to use.

Asset inventory is discussed. Board chairman and operator say they will work on getting it done. Board Chairman says he will watch some videos on what needs to be printed out and submitted for the asset inventory.

Lead line survey discussed. After the lead line survey class was attended by the Board Chairman and the operator, they realized the lead line survey is going to be easier than they originally thought it would be. The board and operator plan to get the survey done before the deadline of October 2024 and the operator says there won't be that many lines that we will have to dig up to verify what material the lines are made up of.

Progress with All Funeral Services, the company we hired to help us organize and get a new map of the cemetery discussed. The person we suggested to hire to take pictures of the cemetery and upload and or scan in all the historical documents might not still be available for work. The board discusses another option for someone that AFS could hire to scan or upload documents. The secretary says she can email our contact at AFS again to verify the procedures for taking pics of the cemetery and the procedures for uploading the documents. Operator mentions that we had arial shots of the cemetery taken back in 2017 or 2018, those pictures might be useful.

Operator and Board discussed how there is an area in the cemetery that is marked off now because there are unmarked burial sites there, so it was best to assume there are remains there and not sell or dig anymore plots in that specific area of the cemetery.

The board was given copies of the past cemetery rules and regulations to look over and see what rules or regulations they would like to have put in place currently. Board members are asked to bring suggestions to the next meeting. One person suggests the possibility of smoothing out the grave mounds after a certain amount of time. The operator mentions that the mounds do help identify where there are grave sites. These are ideas that can be discussed at the next meeting.

ICIP is Infrastructure Capital Improvement Plan is what the Board Chairman has been working with Angelina, part of the Council of Governments. Board chairman says DePauli is coming up with the engineering plan for the wastewater plant. Board discusses that RW&SD will be asking the legislature for a certain amount of money and says that RW&SD will eventually be responsible for a percentage of the money we get for those projects. It is discussed that a neighboring water district didn't have enough money to replace their wastewater treatment plant, so the state came and took them over and they were forced to raise their rates to cover those costs.

Board discusses the possibility of raising rates to help pay for updating and replacing our wastewater treatment and/or our drinking water systems. Some members of the board state how raising rates would cause undo burdens on the customers. Board discusses if our sewage system needs the most attention that we need to focus on finding grants for our sewage treatment system. DePauli is currently working on what planning options we will have for improving our wastewater treatment system. Board discusses how important it is for RW&SD to apply for grants and how important it is that RW&SD is remaining compliant and reporting to the state, so that when a grant becomes available that we have everything to be able to receive those grants and monetary help we would need to make improvements.

Board Chairman says someone from RW&SD Board needs to talk to one of our representatives in our legislature and let them know that we need help from the state to make improvements to our water systems and wastewater treatment system. Blanche Clawson agreed to speak with the legislature during their next session.

**Whitney River made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:47pm. Motion seconded by Blanche Clawson. Motion to adjourn the meeting passed unanimously.**