

JANUARY 9TH 2024 RW&SD BOARD MEETING MINUTES

January the 9th 2024 RW&SD Board meeting

Robert Montague called to order the RW&SD Board meeting at 7:06pm January 9th 2024.

Blanche Clawson offered opening prayer.

Pledge of Allegiance led by Michele Macias.

Election for RW&SD Board members was held this past November.

Robert Montague swore in Board members: Blanche Clawson, Whitney River, and Michael Croley

Other Board members present are Robert Montague and Shawna Grassie

Board members discuss when newly elected board members commission will expire, on December 31st, 2027.

Robert Montague states the Chairman only serves for one year and calls for nominations/motions for RW&SD Board chairman.

Shawna Grassie makes a motion to elect Robert Montague as board chairman for the year 2024. Blanche Clawson seconds the motion.

Robert Montague calls for any other motions or nominations for chairman of the board. No others are presented. Motions for chairman closed.

Robert Montague calls for a vote. Motion to elect Robert Montague as chairman of the board for the year 2024 carries unanimously.

Shawna Grassie made a motion to approve last month's minutes from the December 2023 meeting. Blanche Clawson seconded the motion. All in favor said Aye. Motion to approve minutes passed unanimously.

Secretary gave a summary of all the documents that have been requested up to this point by the auditor. Secretary explained that the auditor says there are purchase orders required by the state. Secretary says she will contact the auditor to get clarity on which purchases or expenditures require a purchase order, and the best way to type up or construct those purchase orders.

Secretary says in place of an accounting ledger, she will keep a check/deposit register to meet auditing requirements.

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Secretary explained that before she started working here RW&SD had made out a check for multiple quarters of past due payroll taxes and mailed it into the IRS. The IRS did not know which quarter/quarters of RW&SD's past due payroll taxes to apply that check to, so they sent us a letter in December 2023 asking which quarter we wanted that check applied to. Since the IRS hadn't applied that check to any of RW&SD past payroll taxes, when we paid all the past due amounts in October of 2023, in the amounts the IRS said we owed, that check was not included and had not been credited to our past payroll taxes. So, the check was an "overpayment" and needed to be refunded to RW&SD. The secretary called the IRS to speak with an IRS agent to explain the situation. The IRS agent said they will refund the amount of the check to RW&SD minus a small amount we had miscalculated on one quarter.

Board chairman asked secretary if she had submitted RW&SD's FY 24 budget to the state and if it had been approved. The secretary explained that she emailed the budget analyst a copy of the approved budget. Also, since we finally got our login credentials that she would get onto LGBMS and try to upload the budget into LGBMS, but mentioned she is not sure if it would get approved by the state that soon.

Secretary mentions that there are customers that are more than 3 months behind on paying their bill, so she sent out shut off notices to those customers, asking those customers to catch up on their past due amount to prevent their services from get shut off.

Board members discuss RW&SD possibly coming up with a policy for customers who are 3 months or more behind on paying their bills, providing a contract with a specific payment plan to catch up and if those customers don't make those payments according to the contract, then their service will be shut off.

Open meetings act for 2024 is discussed, only wording changed in paperwork was to include RW&SD's website as place meeting announcements and meeting agenda's will be posted. Already stated in open meetings act, posting the announcement and agenda at Stagecoach Cafe and the Ramah Post Office.

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Blanche Clawson makes a motion to accept the resolution for the opens meeting act of 2024. Shawna Grassie seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

The board chairman asks for a vice-president of the RW&SD. Whitney River is appointed Vice President of the RW&SD Board.

The board discusses needing to vote to approve to purchase the used fire hydrant from Jerry Tietjen.

Board members discuss who is responsible for testing the fire hydrants? Board members state it is the fire department who is responsible for testing the city's fire hydrants. The board also says that the people who test those fire hydrants need to be trained on how to properly test and use fire hydrants. Board is assured that our operator tested that specific hydrant after it was installed. The fire hydrant that was there previously was leaking, that is why it needed to be replaced.

Board discusses if town has enough water pressure to fight fires. One board member suggests coming up with ways to improve water pressure in town. Board Chairman says that is part of what the preliminary engineering report from DePauli is to help suggest improvements and how much those improvements might cost (such as installing 6-inch water lines in town) and hopefully eventually with that PER, RW&SD can get funding to help make those improvements.

Whitney River makes a motion to purchase the used fire hydrant from Jerry Tietjen for \$200. Blanche Clawson seconded the motion. Board chairman calls for a vote. Motion passes unanimously.

Board discusses what fee to charge customers for a returned check. Board discusses where to post the returned check fee to notify customers. The secretary can post policy on RW&SD website and put a note on the monthly bill that goes out to the customers.

Shawna Grassie makes a motion to approve a returned check fee of \$50 dollars to be charged to customers for all returned checks from January 9th, 2024 moving forward. Whitney River seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

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Update on DePauli information. Board chairman reads over the preliminary engineering report from DePauli. There are 5 different cost estimates for the wastewater system improvements. Wastewater treatment system: pollution control systems EA total estimate is \$2,207,820 dollars.

Wastewater treatment system: AeroMod EA total estimate is \$2,574,550 dollars.

Wastewater treatment system: total retention lagoon total estimate is \$2,623,569 dollars.

Wastewater treatment system: emergency lagoon v.1 estimate is \$1,767,339 dollars.

Wastewater treatment system: emergency lagoon v.2 estimate is \$1,715,656.

There is an estimate of costs for improving the water system as well. The current estimate for improving the water system is 3,000,000 dollars. These PER reports from DePauli are available to our customers and community members if they request copies.

Board members encouraged to search for grant applications that RW&SD can possibly apply for.

Board discusses Blanche Clawson will talk to our legislature to let them know our district needs funding for making improvements. Blanche asked us to find out when the legislature is meeting with water districts, so she can plan for those meetings.

Board members discuss the current well fee that is being charged each month on customers' bills to each customer, even if that customer is using their own well. The board discusses a scenario, if for some reason those specific customers privately owned well dries up or stops working for some reason, those customers would need to hook up to city water. So, the board feels the well fee of \$2.25 per month is necessary for RW&SD to fully prepare for the residents' demands for water and provide for the community needs.

RW&SD has purchased the Tietjen well, but that well hasn't been certified yet and it will cost money to connect into RW&SD's water system.

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Board Chairman got the warranted deed for the property that extended/increased RW&SD's cemetery property. In exchange for that property RW&SD is giving 2 cemetery plots to Eugene Merrill and Laverne Merrill. Board chairman asks secretary to make out the cemetery certificates for them.

Board discusses getting the operator to mark which parts/plots of the cemetery are not actually available, which areas on the current cemetery map that shows plots available, but the area is part of the road around the cemetery.

Board discusses filling out the application for Board member liability insurance coverage. RW&SD needs to fill out the application and submit it before getting a quote on the possible cost of coverage.

Update on All Funeral Services progress. AFS hired a local person to start taking pictures of the cemetery once that is complete, that person will start taking pictures/uploading the necessary documents for AFS to create a new map and organize all the cemetery information.

Board member discusses the company that is renting the property next door and the possibility of raising the rent we require and creating a contract with the company to ensure RW&SD is not liable for certain things. That will be discussed further in the next board meeting.

Board members discuss coming up with a policy concerning private residents doing any kind of work on RW&SD roads/property/digging up water lines etc. So, the parameters for what private residents who aren't employed by RW&SD can and can not do on easements/right of ways/trees on RW&SD owned property etc. Also, the policy can include that if there is specific work a community member wants to do on RW&SD property, that community member can make a request to the Board. The board discusses the possibility of posting signs that say "end of town maintenance" on specific roads or areas to ensure residents/community members know where RW&SD's responsibilities end for road maintenance.

The secretary asks Treasurer/Board if they can go over the typed-up bank reconciliation and see if it is enough for the Board to look over, approve and sign monthly, to meet the necessary audit requirements. The auditor did suggest that it is best to have the bank reconciliations signed by 2 board members. The secretary will complete the previous month's bank reconciliation and have that

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ready for the monthly board meetings so board members can compare it to the bank statements and the check register to ensure transparency and accountability in managing RW&SD's finances.

Whitney River makes a motion to adjourn the regular board meeting to go into an executive board meeting. Shawna Grassie seconds the motion. Motion passes unanimously.

Shawna Grassie makes a motion to come out of the executive meeting and back into the regular meeting at 8:52pm. Blanche Clawson seconded the motion. All in favor said aye. Motion passed unanimously.

Board chairman states that personnel issues were discussed in the executive meeting. Cost of living raise of 3.2% to full time employees and part time employees will receive \$1 dollar per hour more.

Shawna Grassie made a motion to approve 3.2% cost of living increase for full time employees and \$1 increase per hour for part time employees for the year 2024. Blanche Clawson seconded the motion. All in favor said aye. The motion passed unanimously.

Shawna Grassie made a motion to adjourn the regular meeting held on January 9th at 8:53pm. Whitney River seconded the motion. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned.