

## RW&SD Board Meeting Minutes

February 6<sup>th</sup>, 2024

RW&SD meeting called to order at 7:07pm on February 6<sup>th</sup>, 2024, by board chairman.

Board members present at the meeting: Robert Montague, Whitney River, Blanche Clawson, and Michael Croley. Absent board member Shawna Grassie.

Opening prayer given by Flint Tietjen.

Pledge of Allegiance led by Blanch Clawson.

Board Chairman asks if all board members had a chance to look over the minutes from January's meeting.

**Whitney River made a motion to accept the minutes from the January 9<sup>th</sup>, 2024, meeting. Blanche Clawson seconded the motion. All in favor said "Aye". The motion to accept the January 9<sup>th</sup> meeting minutes passed unanimously.**

The operator gave his report. Since the board held an emergency meeting on Jan 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2024, to approve a new pump and electrical box for the highway well, the operator was able to purchase the new pump and electrical box. The new pump was installed into the highway well. We didn't need to replace the electrical box in the HWY well, so we have that on hand for future use. The highway well is in working order. The operator mentioned needing to approve at a future meeting a pump for the Coffee well, for if/when the Coffee well pump goes out. Operator thinks that pump in the coffee well was replaced back in 2015. RW&SD would need to replace that pump as quickly as possible, if that pump went out, it is not possible for the HWY well alone to keep up with the community's water demands. So, the operator thought it would be best to find out how much a new pump for the coffee well would cost and purchase it and have it ready to install if/when the coffee well pump goes out. The operator will get a quote for that pump and the vote to approve funds will be on the next month's meeting agenda. The snowplow purchased and attached to the company truck has been working well. The operator mentioned the road, Weight Dr., needs some patch work to keep it from getting too bad and asked if he is allowed to repair that road. Board members discuss that RW&SD should have a right of way or an easement on that road to be

able to make repairs to the road. The operator explains he can use pavement patch if the road is dry. It is agreed that approving funds for pothole patch and other supplies necessary for repairs on Weight Dr. will be voted on in the next board meeting. Board Chairman mentions there are some dirt/gravel roads that need some potholes filled in as well. The board and operator discuss how there are a few water meters in town that are not near the road and farther into the customer's property. It would be much more convenient if those water meters were moved for easier access for the operator to read the meter each month. Board Chairman mentions there are areas on Lambson St. that may need repairs, but RW&SD doesn't currently have an easement agreement to be able to make repairs to that road. The board would need to discuss that issue with the property owner of that road.

The secretary gave an update on the audit process. The auditor asked for some of the quarterly reports from that fiscal year and asked for more bank reconciliations done during that fiscal year, the auditor also asked for board member information such as when they were elected to their current term. The secretary feels we are nearly complete with what we need to provide the auditor for them to be able to complete the audit.

The secretary gave an update that customers can pay their bills online now and have the option to pay their bill in the office with a card. The secretary tells the board the process is going smoothly now that Pay Star and Core billing worked out the format of the files and about 5 customers have already paid their bills online.

The secretary gave an update on the interim budget that has been submitted to the state (LGBMS) but the interim budget is still in analyst mode (meaning we are waiting on them). The secretary emailed the budget analyst last week and this week asking if they can complete their part of overseeing the interim budget, so that we can move forward to the next step. The Secretary was told by our budget analyst at the Department of Finance Administration that RW&SD would be made a priority on their end to do their best to process our budget as quickly as possible, but things seem to be moving very slowly on their end.

The secretary shared with the board the water usage for 6 months from July 2023 to Dec 31<sup>st</sup>, 2023. This information is gathered and used to calculate and pay the water conservation fee biannually.

The secretary gave an update on the general liability insurance applications and the Directors and officers liability insurance quote. The board discussed that we either need our own insurance coverage concerning the land we rent to Rutherford diversified or have a contract with that company agreeing that RW&SD would not be liable for Rutherford's equipment. Board discusses options of board member liability coverage. It is suggested that the board ask for a quote of 3-million-dollar officer's coverage from the insurance provider. The secretary is instructed to put on the next meeting's agenda a vote on directors' and officers' liability insurance coverage.

The secretary showed the board a rough draft of the flyer for taking sealed bids for the truck. On the agenda for the March meeting needs to be opening sealed bids and awarding the winning bid. Community members suggest payment must be paid within 48 hrs. of notification of winning bid and stating on flyer that the truck must be picked up within 7 days of payment.

Board discusses needing to register the dump trailer in RW&SD's name. It is discussed that when we purchased the dump trailer from a community member that we didn't change the registration yet. Board chairman says he will register the dump trailer in RW&SD's name. The board suggests putting on the next meeting's agenda a vote to reimburse the registration fee of the dump trailer to the community member who recently paid it. The operator says he will get the exact amount that would need to be reimbursed.

Board chairman gives an update on water trust board application. He says we submitted the water trust board application. Explains that we are waiting for the audit to be completed and waiting on the budget to be approved by the state.

Update on progress for all funeral services. The secretary explained AFS had someone take all the pictures they required. AFS sent us questions based on some of the excel spreadsheets containing cemetery information that had been compiled in the past that we sent AFS. The secretary has printed off those questions and will schedule a time with the operator to help her answer those questions and then send that information to AFS.

Update on bylaws. Blanche gave secretary rough draft copy to make paper copies to distribute to each board member to be ready to discuss any adaptations and corrections needing to be made to the bylaws in March's board meeting.

Discussion if RW&SD needs a survey of the land purchased that increased the lagoon/sewage treatment area. A survey of that land purchased would probably cost around 6 or 7 thousand dollars. The reason we would need a survey of the land is to know exactly how much land we purchased, but it is a cost that is not necessarily a priority for the district at this time. The board discusses should we save money to get that survey done. Board Chairman says he will get together a list of what the district needs as far as funding and the board can discuss which of those projects needing funding are priorities. Board chairman reminds the board they will need a portion of money to get DOT grant funding on the 2 DOT projects that we are working to get funding for.

The board discusses the availability of red bolt internet services in our area now and that we might want to get a quote and consider getting Red Bolt for the office's internet services. Board discusses possibly get internet services for where we have the plant as well. Board Chairman will talk to Red Bolt about what they offer for commercial internet services. Board Chairman and operator would like video monitoring available for security reasons and for monitoring the sewage treatment plant.

Board Chairman states we do get emails about free trainings and webinars for board members, those meetings are usually scheduled on the same evenings we have the board meetings. But it may be that some of these training courses are in a format where board members can access and watch them afterwards. We can investigate if those are available.

Board members discuss the best way to ensure the current fire chief can properly train volunteers on testing and using the town's fire hydrants. There is discussion that the fire department is in the process of becoming better organized. It is discussed that if a fire hydrant isn't properly connected, that can lead to collapsing a water line or losing thousands of gallons of water. The board agrees that it is important to have properly trained volunteer fire department crew members. At next month's meeting Whitney and Michael could have a letter ready for Board members to look over from RW&SD to Ramah Volunteer fire department,

requesting our two entities work together to ensure proper training on using and testing of fire hydrants. We can have on the agenda to vote to approve sending the letter to the fire chief in March's meeting.

Discussion considering RW&SD's policy on what we will do when customers are 2 or 3 months' behind on their bill. It is discussed that we should shut off customers service before they are 3 months behind. Discussion that if a customer is 3 months behind that we could have them come in and sign an agreement to pay a percentage of the past due including their current due and give them 3 months to catch up on the amount they owe. As a part of that past due agreement, if they missed one of those agreed upon payments their services would be shut off. The board members suggest we should send customers a shut-off notice when they are 2 months behind on their payments. Then those customers can come in and pay the full amount due to catch up or arrange to pay the past due amount in partial payments in a signed agreement at that time. If a customer does get shut off, then that customer would also have to pay a reconnect fee of \$80 plus the total of their past due amount to get their water services restored. The board would need to vote to approve a policy to allow customers 2- or 3-months' time to pay past due amount. So, the current customer that is 3 months behind will get a shut-off notice saying they need to pay all the past due amounts in their account. Community member suggests that when customer is sent shut off notification that we also let them know we have the ability for customers to pay online now.

Board members discuss needing to vote at the next meeting to adjust rent on the property/land we own that we are renting next door and getting a contract in place with that company to ensure RW&SD is not liable if anything happens to their equipment. We could come up with a rough draft of a contract to send to them and present that at the next meeting. That is an issue that would need to be voted on in March's meeting.

Discussion to clarify cemetery fees and digging fees. The current cost to purchase a cemetery plot in the Ramah Cemetery is \$550, which includes the digging fee. Clarification is needed for customers who purchased a plot at the price of \$500, was the digging fee "included" in that \$500 amount? A board member remembers the board meeting when cemetery fees were voted on and discussed and it was understood that customers who purchased plots at the price of \$500, (get

grandfathered in) and their digging fee was included in that purchase price. It was clarified that if someone had purchased a cemetery plot for \$100 (such as when the church was selling plots many years ago), that those customers would need to pay a digging fee of \$150 when they have someone buried at Ramah Cemetery. It was discussed that a past board had wanted to plan on creating an area specifically for cremation plots in the cemetery, but that was never established. We have allowed customers who own plots in Ramah Cemetery, if they desire to, use one cemetery plot to lay to rest two internments of cremated remains. We have told customers in the past that the first cremated remains they bury in their plot, we will dig for them, (considering a one-time digging fee was included in their purchase of the cemetery plot). It is suggested to put into the policy rules and regulations, If a customer owns a plot and already has cremated remains laid to rest in that plot, the customer will need to pay us a digging fee or make arrangements with us to authorize the digging for the interment of the second set of cremated remains. Community members suggest putting into the cemetery policies that customers can not dig gravesites by hand or at least have that digging authorized or overseen by RW&SD to ensure no one else's gravesites are disturbed. Board discusses in the past there was a steady state analysis of the cemetery done in either 2008 or 2009 which contains a lot of detailed information, but we do not have computer access to that information. The secretary and the Board chairman tried to find the company and they are no longer in business. The board discusses needing to establish Ramah Cemetery rules and regulations for the future to be able to give customers when they purchase a new plot. One board member suggests taking down burial mounds after a certain amount of time. The operator explains that there are graves that are not clearly marked, and the mounds are the main way to identify those plots.

Board chairman asks if anything else needs to be discussed in this meeting. Everyone agrees nothing else needs to be discussed in this meeting.

**Whitney River makes a motion to adjourn the February 6<sup>th</sup> board meeting at 8:38pm. Blanche Clawson seconded the motion. All in favor said "aye". Motion passed unanimously.**