

## **Minutes of Water Commission of Harpers Ferry February 17, 2021 7 pm**

**Water Commission members present:** Laurel Drake (recording), Bill Robinson (chair), Christy Huddle.

**Others present:** Barbara Humes (Town Council), Chris Styer (water plant superintendent), Angie Cummings (water clerk), Colin Stine, Mr. Tom Farndon (resident of Bolivar), Charles Dye (from Neptune meters), Tanner Haid (left before any presentation was made).

### **Call to order**

### **Minutes**

The minutes of the Jan. 20, 2021, meeting were amended and then accepted by a motion to accept, made by Christy.

### **Bolivar Town Council meeting**

Chris Styer and Bill Robinson attended the Bolivar Town Council meeting and spoke to them about the Water Project, about the cost overruns and the high bids. They also discussed the creation of a Bolivar representative to the Water Commission that is currently being put into the Town ordinances.

### **Water Clerk report**

There were 5 terminations of water service due to nonpayment. Three were turned on after payment. One address is vacant. For the fifth termination, the residents are moving and will not restart service. They were informed that the final bill will be sent to their forwarding address with their deposit applied to the bill.

The next billing insert will be informational, about the water project and its status. Bill and Chris will work on that one-page document. Angie needs this insert by Monday Feb. 22.

Jay Premack on the Town Council had requested some data from Angie about the average water usage for different classes (residential, commercial, public), for one year, and for 5 years, which she sent to him.

### **Water Plant Superintendent report**

Water loss for January 2021 was 16%. This is attributed to fixing a major leak on W. Ridge St. Since then, another leak was fixed on Henry Clay & York and on Putnam & Putnam Court.

Explanation of the water loss figure: The amount of processed water that is estimated from a meter reading at the water plant is compared to the amount of water that is actually sold (from the CUSI software monthly report) to calculate both the percentage of processed water sold and the remainder which it attributed to water loss. If the figure of 84% of the water processed by the plant was either sold to our customers or used at the plant for their daily operations is calculated using the plant meter reading and the CUSI monthly report, then the remainder of the processed water not used at the plant or sold to customers is 16% and is attributed to water loss that occurs in our distribution system.

Sean Veney, Operator-in-Training, attended training and took the Water Operator I exam.

### **Visit from Neptune Meters representative, Charles Dye**

The Neptune headquarters is in Alabama. Mr. Dye described the change a utility company goes through when they switch from regular to radio read meters. He says they have a dedicated team to help with that transition. The AMR system is a drive-by system. The radio is part of the meter and will transmit for 20 years. The person driving by has a "reading" computer that picks up the readings. The radio is always on and transmits every 14 seconds as well as a flag if there is a suspected leak, zero usage, and other anomalies. The radio meters have a 20 year guarantee. The battery on the radio is supposed to last for 20 years as well.

The meter has a 96 day data logging capability. We could provide customer portal online to look at usage although that would have a fee. The data is cloud-based.

This presentation was given for informational purposes only as we have not committed to any vendor of radio meters.

### **Unfinished Business**

Proposed Fountain on High Street

Christy and Laura Clark continue to work on the idea of having a fountain for town visitors at the top of the stairs on High Street.

Last month we had the request from customer Tom Fardon for a water meter for water only for his shed. Chris Styer reported that Mr. Fardon has decided to withdraw his request for this service.

### **Water System Improvement Project Update**

Bill Robinson presented the spreadsheet of a 10-year plan to complete the work needed in our water system that is not being paid for by the USDA loan. This spreadsheet was the work of Bill, Chris Styer and Chuck Young and was presented to the Town Council at a recent meeting. Bill suggested that the team who created the document should meet on a regular basis to update the plan.

### **New Business**

Barbara reports that we have been given the WV grant to obtain new sensors on petroleum distillates.

The annual bill for Xylem will be paid this month - this is the annual fee for hosting the website where the data from the sensors is sent and displayed.

Barbara wrote a letter of support for the Groundwater Survey Project. The letter was approved and will be sent to Jane Tabb, County Commissioner, and Josh Compton, head of the County Commission.

### **Water System Project**

Charlotte Wales of the USGA has told Christy that she has received all of the paper work for the bidding and contracts. Charlotte puts out a checklist from time to time for things that need to be done for the next deadline.

Laurel suggested creating a folder on Google Drive that would be accessible to the Water Commission and the Town Council, and anyone else who needed access, where correspondence related to the

project would be kept. Bill suggested that we work with Pam Knight, Town Clerk, who is currently pulling together paperwork from the start of the water project in 2015, as requested by the Town Council. Deb Kelly suggested that a folder on One Drive could be made available for this purpose and that we would need to check with Kevin Carden about access.

Chris Styer discussed the upcoming Pre-Construction meeting that will happen on March 9.

Bill made a motion for the Water Commission to go into executive session due to 6-9A-4(b)(2)(A) - matters arising from employment.

After resuming the meeting from executive session, Bill made a motion to recommend to the Town Council to hire Kenneth Mitchell as a part-time temporary employee of the Water Works, subject to Section B of the employee handbook, at the hourly rate of \$16 per hour, for a period of no more than 90 days.