

Minutes of Water Commission of Harpers Ferry April 21, 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, Tanner Haid

Call to order

Minutes

The minutes of the Feb. 17, 2021, and March 17, 2021, meetings were amended and approved.

Report from Tanner Haid, WV Rivers

WV Rivers would like to do two projects with Harpers Ferry Water Commission to help it obtain a designation of Safe Water Community. He says there are about \$7000 in funds from WV DEP for the projects. One possible project is the pumping of septic tanks in the watershed and another possible project would be making a video about care of the water in our watershed for showing at public events.

Part of the designation comes from engaging the community in promoting awareness of safe drinking water practices.

He mentioned that a template is available for declaring National Safe Drinking Water Week in our community. We could ask the mayor to make such a proclamation.

Christy made a motion to ask the mayor to make a proclamation of National Safe Drinking Water Week and it was seconded by Bill. It passed unanimously.

Water Clerk Report from Angie

The Consumer Confidence Report will be added to the bill as an insert to the May 1, 2021, billing. The bills and the insert will be sent to BCT for processing on April 27.

There were 8 shutoffs this month. All but one have been turned back on. One house is vacant and has a leak so it is still shut off.

Angie has suggested a Facebook page for the Water Works, or some other social media.

Bill made a motion to recommend to the TC (in his report at their meeting) that they permit the WaterWorks to use social media, including a Facebook page, to communicate news and events in the Water Works to the customer base. This was seconded by Christy. It passed unanimously.

The town was taking water and sewer deposits via a certain vendor but the cost of doing so has increased. They will search for another way to handle these deposits. Until another method is selected, the water and sewer deposits will have to be paid with cash or check.

Water Plant Superintendent Report from Chris Styer

The Water loss for April, 2021, was found to be 17%.

This month, the water main was extended onto Cambridge St. During the excavation, the water main broke and took 9 hours to fix until 11 pm when everyone was able to have water again.

Chris announced a new meeting schedule with staff: a morning “huddle” meeting, a mid-day report and a 3:30 wrap-up. With this level of organization, even staff who arrive late due to a doctor’s appointment can catch up to the day’s events quickly.

There were 20 applicants for the OIT position. 3 possible applicants look suitable.

Radio Reads Companies are being evaluated - Neptune, Master Meter, and Sensus. We would be buying equipment and installing it ourselves. Barbara asked if there is an RFP given to the vendors- no, this was not done. Laurel suggested that at the end of the fact-finding, a spreadsheet be developed that compares the three vendors and how they compare on the important points of the radio read meters.

The Plan of Action for Elk Run project relocating the pipe in the stream bed is being evaluated. If the location for the new pipe under the road is changed to a spot where there is less rock or no rock, much money would be saved. The land used for this new pipe will be on NPS property. Chris Eckenrode is donating his time to give advice to us about this project.

We are moving our water intake to another place so that the project can begin with our sedimentation basin. We are also beginning to move over to the membrane filter from our present filtering system.

Todd Grimstead of the WV Rural Water System met on Zoom with Chris Styer. The result is that Kenny Mitchell is now signed up for the apprenticeship program.

Financials given by Deb Kelly

The fiscal '22 budget has to be submitted to the USDA by the end of May, 2021.

New Bolivar representative on the Water Commission

Barbara plans to attend the next Bolivar Town Council meeting (May 4) and announce the new position on the Water Commission. She will advise anyone who wants to be on the Water Commission from Bolivar to submit their letter and resume to the Water Commission.

Executive Session

Christy made a motion for the Water Commission to go into Executive Session using 6-98-4(b)6, to discuss material related to a customer’s data. Bill seconded the motion which passed. At 8:55 pm, the Water Commission went into Executive Session.

End of Executive Session

At 9:52, the Water Commission returned from Executive Session. Christy made a motion to return to regular session and Bill seconded. Passed.

The NPS has written to Angie a letter that asked a review of the billing during the period of the pandemic since not all buildings were occupied during that time.

There was a discussion of the composition of a letter to NPS about the NPS meters. Bill is planning to write a letter and send it to the Water Commission and to Angie for review. The letter will be signed possibly by the Mayor.