

Minutes for Water Commission - May 19, 2021

Members: Bill Robinson (chair), Christy Huddle, Laurel Drake (recording)

Others Present: Barbara Humes (Town Council liaison), Chris Styer, Tanner Haid (WV Rivers Coalition), Angie Cummings, Deb Kelly

Approval of Minutes:

The minutes for meetings: 1/15/20, 1/19/20, 7/15/20, 8/19/20, 9/16/20, 4/21/21, were approved. Laurel made a motion to accept the amended minutes and Christy seconded the motion. It passed unanimously.

Source Water Protection

Guest Speaker Tanner Haid, West Virginia Rivers Coalition, spoke about some of the projects that Harpers Ferry can do for the Safe Water Designation - for which we must do 2 projects. One possibility is a visit to schools where water plant workers demonstrate what testing they do on the water. Another project possibility is tree-planting at Gap View Farm, at the headwaters of Elk Run. A third possibility is helping landowners monetarily for their septic tank pumping in the zone of critical concern in the Elk Run watershed (Tanner said he has a GIS map that would show which land and landowners are in the area of critical concern).

Tanner mentioned that WV Rivers has about \$7000 in funding available to help fund projects. The project must be a community-based effort.

Tanner asked that Barbara share his thanks to the mayor of Harpers Ferry for his proclamation of May as Safe Drinking Water Month.

Going forward, Barbara will work with Tanner about the septic tank project and Chris Styer and Tanner will work together on the project of visits to schools showing water testing.

Water Clerk Report

Notifications and cutoffs

Two customers' water was shutoff for not paying their bill. One customer has paid and her water is back on. The other customer has not responded back about her water turnoff.

The billing insert for the next bill cycle is from the PSD. For the following bill insert, there will be an announcement about the new position on the Water Commission for a representative from Bolivar.

Update on NPS meter/billing issue: Eight of the 12 NPS accounts that need adjustments have been completed. There are still 4 NPS accounts that will be adjusted before the next billing cycle. The next step will be to verify meter size in the CUSI software system for different meters and correct, if needed.

Establishing a Facebook account for the Water Works: there was some discussion about having a Facebook page for the water utility for the purpose of disseminating public information. There will be a continuing discussion as we decide how the page will be maintained.

Water Superintendent Report

Water loss report - a 13% water loss is reported for May, 2021.

Leaks and repairs - 2 small leaks were found and fixed.

On May 12, 2021, the chlorine system at the plant went offline and the plant had to stop processing water. Chris Spanos, Water Operator II, worked with Dennis Chlorination to get the system back online the same day.

OLD BUSINESS: Update on radio read meter options/status

We are looking at the radio read equipment for three manufacturers. A demonstration for the third of these manufacturers will be given on June 10.

NEW BUSINESS: Discussion and action on laptop purchase request

We are looking at buying a laptop for the plant superintendent to use when the water works superintendent will be unable to use the treatment plant computer because of work underway there. A decision was postponed for another month.

NEW BUSINESS: Funding request for employee attendance at WVRWA Annual Conference
Laurel made a motion to ask the Town Council to approve registration and hotel expenses and travel expenses not to exceed \$700 to fund the attendance of Chris Styer at the WVRWA Annual Conference (WV Rural Water Association) on August 14-18, 2021. This motion was seconded by Christy and the motion passed unanimously.

Financials

FY 22 Budget review, discussion and action as needed

Some of the soft costs of the water infrastructure project were paid by our water utility budget before the USDA loan actually closed. Once the loan closed, the USDA paid the water utility for those soft costs. This amount combined with savings from the lower than anticipated monthly USDA loan payments (due to a lower interest rate) is to be used to pay for parts of the infrastructure project that are not paid for by the USDA loan.

Starting with fiscal year 2022 (July 1, 2021), the budget is including \$2500 per month expenditure for the planned upgrade to radio read meters. This is a ballpark estimate to those expenses which have not been incurred yet.

Christy made a motion to ask the Town Council to approve the FY'22 budget for the water utility. Bill seconded and the motion was unanimously approved. This budget, when approved by the Town Council, will be forwarded to the USDA, as part of the requirements of the loan.

Staffing and Commission

OLD BUSINESS: Discussion and action regarding committee for developing a job description for administrator position

Laurel and Barbara will work on the job description for the administrative position.

Public Comment Adjournment