

Hart County Water & Sewer Authority

Board of Directors Meeting December 18, 2017

The Hart County Water and Sewer Authority met on December 18th, 2017 in the Hart County Cooperative Extension Service Building. Chairman Wade Carlton called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm. Present were Vice Chairman Hugh Holland; Board Members Jerry Cannady, Larry Haley and Mike MacNabb; Director Pat Goran; Legal Counsel Kim Higginbotham; Board Secretary/Treasurer Holly McBrayer; Mayor of Bowersville Jim Jordan; The Hartwell Sun reporter Michael Isom; and Hart County resident Ashley Poole.

Welcome

Approval of Agenda

Mr. MacNabb motioned to approve the agenda. Mr. Holland seconded the motion which passed 5 – 0.

Public Comments; remarks by invited guests

None

Approval of November 27th regular meeting minutes

Mr. Haley motioned to approve the November 27th called meeting minutes. Mr. MacNabb seconded the motion which passed 5 – 0.

Financial report

Mr. Goran presented the financial report. He noted that late fees will be applied on Thursday, December 21st and past-due customers would be locked off beginning Tuesday, December 26th.

Old Business

Cokesbury Highway Addition (2015 CDBG amendment)

Mr. Goran informed the Board of the progress being made on Cokesbury Highway and the estimated completion by late February 2018.

2018 Community Development Block Grant application

Mr. Goran stated that he will contact Allen – Smith Consulting to discuss obtaining remaining surveys to meet the required surveyed percentage.

Hydrant usage and payment for water withdrawn

Mr. Goran stated that HCWSA had received two of the three hydrant meter users' deposits, signed new agreements and amnesty letter responses. He asked for direction on how to proceed with the remaining user. The Board instructed Mr. Goran to send a certified letter with an option to either return the meter or submit the new application with the required \$1600 deposit by January 1, 2018.

Financial / Billing Software Update

Mr. Goran informed the Board that the software conversion was complete and debit and credit cards were now being accepted in office and online.

Discussion of water service delivery territory near the City of Bowersville

Mayor Jordan informed the Board that the City of Bowersville was working with EMI to apply for a USDA loan. Mayor Jordan stated that the intent was to use the funds to first upgrade their water system to fire hydrant quality within the city limits and secondly to extend their lines per resident requests. The proposed water line extensions as shown on the map would be in HCWSA's currently-agreed-to service delivery territory. Mayor Jordan asked approval from the HCWSA Board to proceed if the loan was approved. He also said that the Bowersville City Council would be agreeable to HCWSA purchasing the expanded system in the future at the cost of installation. HCWSA's Board seemed amenable to Mayor Jordan's proposal.

Mr. Goran clarified that the consensus of the Board was to allow Bowersville to extend its system into HCWSA's current territory should they want to include that area in their USDA loan application provided: HCWSA would have the option to purchase the system in the future at fair market value; the new extensions must meet HCWSA standards, and; HCWSA must approve the line sizes. It was understood that a change in the service delivery map would require approval by the Hart County Board of Commissioners.

After some discussion, the Board agreed to work with the City of Bowersville if the loan was approved and would revisit this topic at that time.

Review and discussion of Authority rates and policies

Mr. Goran reviewed the fee and rate comparison. Mr. Goran stated that the last HCWSA rate increase was over 9 years ago on October 1, 2008. Mr. Goran stated the Board should consider operational costs and system expansion goals to determine rates. Mr. Goran said there are several ways to increase revenues, such as lowering the number of gallons included in the base fees, increasing the base fees, and/or increasing the overage rates.

Mr. Cannady suggested seeking outside assistance for a rate study.

Mr. Carlton noted that HCWSA had completed several CDBG projects and that it has become more difficult to find qualifying areas. He also stated that HCWSA rates were generally lower than surrounding providers.

After some discussion, the Board agreed that the information provided was very helpful and would review a fee increase proposal at the next meeting.

Mr. Holland reiterated his stance on not increasing rates soon after the recent SPLOST vote.

New Business

Request for water service – Mewborn Road poultry farmer

Mr. Goran provided a cost estimate of \$182,938.30 for the water service request on Mewborn Road. After some discussion, the resident agreed to speak to the owners of nearby poultry farms to gauge their interest in public water, and the Board will revisit this topic at the next meeting.

Director's Comments

None

Members' Comments

Mr. Cannady stated he will not be in attendance at the January meeting.

Mr. Haley stated that Hart County has recently increased the permit fee for wells.

Upcoming Meetings – January 18th

The next two Board meetings will be held on Thursday, January 18, 2018 and Monday, February 19th, 2018.

Adjournment

Mr. Holland motioned to adjourn and Mr. MacNabb seconded it. The motion passed 5 – 0.

Wade Carlton, Chairman

Holly McBrayer, Secretary