

Hart County Water and Sewer Authority Board of Directors Meeting April 21, 2025

The Hart County Water and Sewer Authority met on April 21, 2025, in the Hart County Cooperative Extension Service Building. Chairman Wade Carlton called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm. Present were Vice Chair Patti York, Board Members Larry Haley, Bennie Harper, Marvin Justice and as well as Legal Counsel Kim Higginbotham, Director Pat Goran, Office Manager Karen Neal, Hartwell Sun Editor Rose Scoggins and residents George Beck, Shannon Teasley and John Marion.

Welcome

Approval of Agenda

Ms. York made a motion to approve the agenda. Mr. Haley seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Approval of March 17, 2025 Regular Meeting Minutes

Mr. Haley made a motion to approve the minutes of the March 17, 2025 meeting. Ms. York seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Public Comments

John Marion requested the Authority to expand its system down Cherry Rose Lane from Old Beacon Light Road. He stated he had spoken with the neighbors, and they expressed interest as well. He also stated that it is his intent to sell the home after it is built.

Financial Report

Mr. Goran presented the financial report. Mr. Goran recommended moving \$725,000 from HCWSA committed funds to SPLOST 6 committed funds. Mr. Justice made a motion to do so. Mr. Harper seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Haley inquired as to how materials are purchased for construction projects. Mr. Goran explained the Authority buys materials tax exempt which allows the Authority to put those additional funds back into expanding HCWSA's system.

Old Business

Discussion of Pursuing Groundwater

Mr. Goran recommended the Board approve the pursuit of groundwater resources. Mr. Goran explained a small investment in a groundwater consultant could result in additional reliable sources of water for HCWSA customers. Mr. Justice inquired as to how close an additional source would need to be to HCWSA waterlines to pursue. Mr. Goran stated the current goal is to

secure an additional source within one-half mile of HCWSA waterlines. Mr. Carlton suggested that the Board consider how best to acquire a site if a significant source of water is located. Ms. Higginbotham stated that if a significant source of water is located, the Authority would either need to buy the land or discuss other financial arrangements. Mr. Justice inquired as to what expenses the Authority would be responsible for if water is found. Mr. Goran stated that was negotiable but the Authority would typically pay for the monthly power and chemicals at a minimum. Ms. Higginbotham said in the case of Franklin County, if the landowner pays the cost of developing the well the County would pay a higher cost per thousand gallons, but if the Authority develops the well the Authority should pay a lower rate per thousand gallons.

Ms. York made a motion that HCWSA hire the recommended groundwater consultant to search for good sites to pursue. Mr. Harper seconded the motion. The motion passed 4-1 with Mr. Justice against.

Request for Water Service – Tree Farm Road

Mr. Beck again asked the Board to consider construction of a line on his property which has five rental properties. The Board previously stated if Mr. Beck would pay for construction the project could move forward, but Mr. Beck asked for the Authority to contribute funding also. Ms. York asked if we could put one meter on Airline School Road and let Mr. Beck install his own service lines to each home. Mr. Goran stated he believes that the EPD requires individual meters for each dwelling, but he would confirm before the next meeting. After some discussion, Mr. Carlton told Mr. Beck that more research needed to be done before deciding on his request.

Georgia Environmental Finance Authority Loan for Expansion into Reed Creek Area

Mr. Goran updated the Board on the upcoming Reed Creek Highway expansion. Mr. Goran stated he spoke with a couple of property owners to request easements to allow the line to be installed on their properties to avoid dealing with very large trees in the GDOT right of way and shared that and other cost-saving recommendations with EMI and said he should have updated drawings suitable for bidding in four to six weeks.

Will Bailey Road – Morris Road – Beacon Light Road – Mount Olivet Road Project including consideration of extending onto side roads

Mr. Goran noted that Morris Road and most of Beacon Light Road are complete except for a small area which still requires testing and flushing of lines. Mr. Goran stated that commitment letters have been mailed to at least ten side streets to gauge interest in Authority water. Mr. Goran asked the Board to give him authority to move forward if a road meets the \$10,000 per customer threshold but the Board consensus was not to do that.

Discussion of Authority's Wholesale Water Agreements

The Board discussed the recent proposals from the City of Hartwell for a new wholesale water agreement with the Authority. Ms. Higginbotham noted that the Authority is currently paying Hartwell's inside the City retail price for wholesale water. Ms. Higginbotham also noted that we

do not know what will happen when Lavonia receives its larger Hartwell Lake allotment from the Corps of Engineers. The Board members discussed counterproposals at length, but Mr. Carlton stated the matter was too important to be decided without further reflection. The Board discussed dates for a future work session and agreed to 6:00pm on Tuesday, April 29 to discuss a counter proposal to send to the City of Hartwell.

Consideration of Customer Retail Rate Increase

No action was taken following a brief discussion.

Damaged fire hydrant repair discussion

No action was taken following a brief discussion.

New Business

Request for water service – Bio Church Road / McCurry Road

Shannon Teasley spoke about his concern for the future of his well and the cost of drilling a new well. He stated there were an additional six to eight homes that may be interested in Authority water as well. He requested the Board consider expanding the Authority system to include McCurry Road. It was explained that the Authority would have to extend its Clay Brown Road line to Bowman Highway and then install a line on Bio Church Road between Bowman Highway and McCurry Road to reach Mr. Teasley's property. Mr. Carlton stated the Authority would send out commitment letters and Mr. Teasley offered to deliver the letters to some of his neighbors.

Request for water service – Tahoe Drive / Tahoe Court

Commitment letters have been sent to residents of Tahoe Drive and Tahoe Court. The Board will revisit next month.

Request for water service – Cherry Rose Lane (private shared gravel driveway off Old Beacon Light Road)

After consideration, Mr. Haley made a motion to deny Mr. Marion's request made earlier under Public Comments. Mr. Justice seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Director's Comments

Mr. Goran had no additional comments.

Members' Comments

Mr. Haley again expressed concern about the placement of fire hydrants in certain areas and stated he had recently spoken with firefighters who told Mr. Haley they have safety concerns about hydrants placed in curves of roads.

Upcoming Meetings

Mr. Carlton announced the next meeting dates would be the work session on April 29th with regular Board meetings on May 19th and June 16th.

Adjournment

Ms. York made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Harper seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Wade Carlton, Chairman