

Hart County Water and Sewer Authority Board of Directors Meeting May 20, 2024

The Hart County Water and Sewer Authority met on May 20, 2024, in the Hart County Cooperative Extension Service Building. Chairman Wade Carlton called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm. Present were Board Members Larry Haley, Bennie Harper, Marvin Justice and Patti York, Director Pat Goran, Office Manager Karen Neal, Legal Counsel Kim Higginbotham and several members of the community.

Welcome

Approval of Agenda

Mr. Carlton suggested moving agenda item 7e to before approval of the previous meeting minutes. Mrs. York motioned to approve the agenda as amended. Mr. Justice seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

Public Comments

Many residents in attendance requested water service in multiple areas of Reed Creek and on Beacon Light Road. Lengthy discussion involving potential costs for completing specific areas ensued. Residents were encouraged to continue to provide public comment to the Board as they determine where its available funds will do the most good.

Approval of April 15th, 2024 regular meeting minutes

Mr. Haley motioned to approve the minutes. Mr. Justice seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

Financial report

Mr. Goran presented the financial report. He indicated that Hart County would begin collecting the SPLOST 6 revenue in late May and in light of that committed funds had been shifted between HCWSA and SPLOST 6. He added funds for the previously agreed upon Bowman Highway extension have been added to the report. Mr. Haley inquired about the Milford Road project. Mr. Goran stated that the Board had voted some time ago to set aside funds for this project, but no further action has been taken.

Old Business

Request for water service – Dolphin Lane (off Old Mount Olivet Road)

Julie Mouchet was emailed the agenda but was not in attendance. It was agreed that discussion should be tabled until a future meeting.

Will Bailey Road – Mount Olivet Road connector project

Mr. Goran stated that the Arrowood General Contracting is completing a project in Westminster, SC and he is hopeful they can begin this project sometime in June. Mr. Goran added that we must do a change order as the Authority will be buying the materials sales tax exempt to save money, while the contract as written has the contractor buying the materials.

Request for water service – Beacon Light Road southeast of Morris Road

Mr. Carlton inquired as to the cost, and Mr. Goran stated approximately \$340,000 assuming Arrowood would honor their unit prices from the Will Bailey - Mt. Olivet project. Mr. Carlton asked what this would do to the hydraulics of our system, and Mr. Goran said it would have little effect. Mr. Justice raised the question of whether commitment letters should be distributed in this area. It was agreed that Mrs. Neal will ask Kevin Vickery if he will speak with neighbors and pass out commitment letters.

Request for water service – Bowman Highway Poultry Operations

Mr. Carlton asked if any discussion is needed. Mr. Goran said not at this time.

Five-year Georgia Environmental Finance Authority Loan with 50% principal forgiveness

Mr. Goran said the loan has been approved by GEFA's Board and loan documents have been received. He also stated this loan requires a guarantee from the Hart County Board of Commissioners so that if the HCWSA cannot repay the loan the HCBOC will. Loan documents need to be signed within the next five to six months. Mr. Justice asked if a motion was required to sign documents. Attorney Higginbotham stated that time was needed to review the loan documents, and a vote to sign could be discussed at another meeting.

Discussion of Tap Payment Plan or ¾" Meters

Mr. Goran discussed various financial options for reinstating the payment plan. After much discussion, Mr. Justice made a motion to reinstate the ¾" tap payment plan with a total cost of \$2,000, an initial \$200 down payment and payments of \$100 per month for eighteen months for properties with existing wells only effective June 1. It was agreed that the installment plan does not apply to new homes being built or to properties involving a change of ownership. Mr. Justice seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

New Business

Director's Comments

Mr. Goran briefly updated the board on the EPD Lead Service Line Inventory project. He stated that not only are we required to check our service line between our main line and the meter, but those on the customer's side of the meter as well. He stated that EMI is assisting us on this labor-intensive project. He suggested that we send out inserts with our bills asking residents to scratch their lines with a coin, take a photograph and submit it for confirmation. EMI suggested we might want to offer a \$5 or \$10 bill credit for completing this process in a timely manner. Mr. Carlton suggested we send a questionnaire asking residents what year their home was built to eliminate a portion of homes from this audit immediately. Ms. York questioned whether we could trust that. Mr. Goran replied that a picture or some kind of documentation would be required to fulfill the EPD requirements.

Mr. Goran said that on the evening of Sunday, May 5th a property owner decided to dig without notifying GA811, resulting in a major break of our 12" Bowersville Highway line. In addition to Field Technician Scott Kibbey and Director Goran, a contractor had to be brought in to assist with repairs. The break required several hours of work to repair. The sudden drop in the Airline tank allowed Mr. Goran to estimate approximately 250,000 gallons of water was lost to this event. The propertyowner was not present when repair personnel arrived. Mr. Goran stated that due to this violation of Georgia state law, the violator should pay for the entire cost of repairs. The Board agreed.

Mr. Goran mentioned that he was approached by a local resident claiming he had two wells producing over 100 gallons per minute each and is interested in selling water to the Authority. Mr. Goran said he had been approached by others in the past. Discussion involved the requirements the property owner would need to fulfill to make the water eligible including the upfront cost. Interest was expressed in Mr. Goran pursuing further discussions with the property owner.

Members' Comments

Mr. Haley had additional questions and comments about the Reed Creek area expansion project.

Upcoming Meetings – July 15th, August 19th

Adjournment

Mr. Justice motioned to adjourn, and Mr. Haley seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Wade Carlton, Chairman

sharedfiles/minutes/FY24/minutes052024Final