

Hart County Water and Sewer Authority

Board of Directors Meeting August 19, 2024

The Hart County Water and Sewer Authority met on August 19, 2024, in the Hart County Cooperative Extension Service Building. Chairman Wade Carlton called the meeting to order at 6:01 pm. Present were Board Members Patti York, Larry Haley, Marvin Justice and Bennie Harper as well as Legal Counsel Kim Higginbotham, Director Pat Goran, Office Manager Karen Neal and a few members of the community.

Welcome

Approval of Agenda

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

Public Comments

Mr. Carlton invited the citizens to speak. Residents from the Reed Creek area reaffirmed their struggles for clean water and desire for Authority service. A few residents from Bowersville Highway west of the Airline Goldmine/Airline School intersection stated they are very interested in Authority water access for two taps at 5956 Bowersville Highway, one tap at 6242 Bowersville Highway and one tap at 69 Walton Patterson Lane. The residents asked the Board to act on their behalf. Mr. Goran suggested the residents reach out to their neighbors to determine how many others are interested in accessing HCWSA water. Ms. Rachelene Johnson spoke for several minutes about her home's proximity to the Mt. Olivet project and asked to be included in this project.

Approval of July 15, 2024 regular meeting minutes

Mr. Haley made a motion to accept the minutes. Mr. Justice seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Financial report

Mr. Goran stated a clerical error last month overstated the available SPLOST 6 dollars, but it has been corrected. Mr. Goran stated our account balance appears a little lower than normal this month due to a prior Lavonia billing error. Lavonia has remedied the error so our bills this month were essentially for two months usage. Mr. Goran shared that fewer gallons were flushed this month than in July. Mr. Justice requested a full financial report as soon as possible.

Old Business

Georgia Environmental Finance Authority loan for expansion into Reed Creek area

Mr. Goran asked the Board to decide where to proceed beyond the extension to Boleman Hill Road/Reed Creek School Road. Mr. Goran recommended extending to the end of Reed Creek Highway ending at the Raindrop/Dewdrop Circle area. Mr. Goran also recommended extending out Reed Creek School Road and Old Andersonville Road to the Friendship Drive/Lamb Road/Cliff Road area. He estimated these two projects would cost nearly three million dollars at today's prices. Following a lengthy discussion, Mr. Haley

made a motion to approve moving forward with the required engineering for what Mr. Goran described. Mr. Harper seconded the motion. The motion passed 4-1 with Mr. Justice opposed.

Will Bailey Road – Morris Road – Beacon Light Road – Mount Olivet Road Project

Mr. Goran shared the stretch of Beacon Light Road up to Eric Sanders' poultry operation is completed and the construction crew has moved to Will Bailey Road. The current planned path is Will Bailey Road to Highland Ridge Drive to Mary's Lane then across Morris Road to Beacon Light Road. Mr. Goran stated then a decision would have to be made which direction to first go on Beacon Light Road. Mr. Goran also requested the Board consider the side roads that were not in the final bid scope of the project (Holly Hills Drive, Pineview Drive, Oak Tree Lane, Cleveland Mill Road) for future discussion. The Board discussed pricing for materials and the dramatic increase over the last four years.

New Business

Damaged Fire Hydrants

Mr. Carlton stated that over the last month a few people have spoken to him regarding damaged fire hydrants across the county. Mr. Carlton suggested a plan should be put in place to repair the county hydrants. Mr. Goran stated he was aware of some hydrants needing repair and at least one hydrant upper half was stolen following an accident. Mr. Goran stated that parts can be difficult to obtain and are specific to the manufacturer. Mr. Carlton read off a list of addresses with hydrants that need repair. The Board discussed fire hydrants in general for several minutes. Mr. Goran stated that when a car hits a hydrant the Authority does file a claim with the owner's insurance company if we know who hit it. Mr. Goran stated that any plan for repairs would require the Authority and the Fire Department, and potentially the hydrant manufacturers or a hydrant repair contractor, to look at each hydrant to determine what is required. Mr. Goran also stated that hydrants in the older part of our system have no shut off valve which may complicate repairs. Mr. Goran stated that we do not have the staff or equipment to effect repairs. Mr. Carlton and Ms. Higginbotham suggested speaking with the County to form a plan for what needs to be done, who has the equipment to make repairs and how the repairs will be paid.

Director's Comments

Mr. Goran stated our Field Technician has requested relief due to the cost of gasoline. Mr. Goran recommended either on-call personnel drive an Authority vehicle home, or the Board approve a \$2.00 raise. Mr. Goran also recommended the same raise for Office Manager Ms. Neal who has been with the Authority six months. Mr. Carlton suggested that mileage should be paid at the current IRS recommended rate of \$0.67 per mile. After some discussion, Board members agreed the liability of an Authority vehicle being driven home was a concern. Mr. Justice inquired as to when compensation would be discussed, and Mr. Goran stated that would be in the September 16th meeting. A motion was made by Mr. Haley to approve mileage for on-call personnel at \$0.67 per mile to and from home after normal business hours. Marvin Justice second the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Goran shared that a palm tree nursery is interested in connecting to Authority water. He stated the nursery is about nine hundred feet past where the proposed Will Bailey line project will end at Highland Ridge Drive. Mr. Goran also stated there are a couple of poultry operations that are interested: one on Elberton Highway near Nancy Hart School Road and another on Shoal Creek Road off Highway 77. Mr. Goran asked if we wanted to continue to use a minimum annual usage of 525,000 gallons or use another method. Mr. Carlton and Mr. Justice agreed the current process should continue to be used.

Mr. Goran stated that the Authority has also been approached by a few people who claim to have high producing wells and are interested in selling their water to the Authority. Mr. Carlton stated he is not interested. This would require a Class III license which neither Mr. Goran nor our Field Technician possess. Mr. Justice inquired if a part-time technician would be sufficient to manage private wells. Further discussion revolved around the significant investment of a property owner to bring a compliant well online. Mr. Haley stated that he knows someone who possesses two high producing wells in Franklin County, and that once the wells came online, the owner was reimbursed for all monies spent to bring the wells into compliance. Mr. Goran stated that he understood that Franklin County purchases water from privately owned wells for \$0.75 per thousand gallons. Mr. Justice asked how many people have approached the Authority. Mr. Goran said at least three. Following a few minutes of discussion regarding requirements for such wells, the Board moved on without making any motions.

Members' Comments

Mr. Carlton asked for final comments. Mr. Haley mentioned a community well near Ms. York that supports fifty-nine houses. He also notes there is now a backup well available to those homes. Mr. Haley asked about the poultry operation on Bowman Highway. Mr. Goran stated we are in a holding pattern until we finish the project currently underway. Mr. Goran stated the owner of the poultry operation has been made aware of this. Mr. Goran stated there is a lack of properly licensed contractors in the area to complete such work, but if anyone knows of any to please send them our way. Mr. Justice asked for a priority to be replaced on providing a full financial report. Mr. Carlton inquired as to the waterline break on Bowersville Highway. Ms. Neal confirms the bill has been sent to the property owner.

Upcoming Meetings – September 16th, October 21st

Adjournment

Mr. Haley made a motion to adjourn. Mr. Justice seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Wade Carlton, Chairman