

# FLATHEAD COUNTY WATER DISTRICT #101

## POB 1141, Columbia Falls, MT 59912

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\*\*\* Meeting Minutes November 5, 2019 \*\*\*

### **General Meeting:**

- I. Called to order at 7:00pm.

Directors present include: Harold Herman, President, Russ Barnett, Vice President, Brian Rohletter, Patricia Martinez.

Also present: District Customers Shannon Henson and Linda Bosworth, Shane Pierson, Certified Water Operator / General Manager, Robert Smith, A2Z Engineering, and Tina Bondy, Board Secretary (by telephone).

- II. Minutes: Reading and approval of the October 1, 2019 minutes.

Secretary reviewed the Minutes from the October 1, 2019 meeting. Harold Herman made a Motion to accept the Minutes as presented; Russ Barnett seconded the Motion and all voted in favor.

- III. Time for Public Comment and Discussions

- IV. New business:

- a. Rob Smith, A2Z Engineering - Engineering Update on System Improvement Project / ETA on Bid Process

Rob provided a bid update; plans were sent out and published on Plan Exchange making them available across the state as well as to the 5 or 6 local contractors that are able to bid on jobs this size.

November 12, 2019 there will be a pre-bid conference at 3pm. This is not mandatory for the bidders, but may be useful. Anyone who is interested may be present for this, meeting at Outfitters Supply and walking / looking at the buildings and system.

2 weeks later, November 25, at 4pm, all the bids will be collected, officially opened and bidders will be announced. It will be important to have Randy Snyder the Board Attorney present, as well as two board members. Following that, all bids will be vetted and the lowest bidder will generally be the District's recommended choice. Although there will be evaluation of other jobs, reference checks, etc. Rural Development will review the Montana State records and taxes, etc. Following all of this, the team plans to bring their recommendation to the Board at the December meeting.

Would be helpful, given the timing of the bid collection, to push the December meeting for the FCWD Board back a week.

Once the costs are more concrete, will be an opportunity to vote on the contractor choice and also discuss any rate increase. This will also be a time to discuss the size of the mains, and compare and contrast the information received during the bid process.

Discussion with the Board about curb stops and meters, and decision to \*not\* add meters to vacant lots at this time. Later, when the lots need water service, the owner can pay for the meter and installation if it's not already there.

Vacant lots are one thing; if there's structure, if they want to pay the monthly fee, the District will put the meter and curb stop in. If the meter goes in, they will be billed monthly.

Discussion about the deli building, and the need to send a bill for the arrears. This should be done with a form that they can elect to disconnect. If so, then no meter will go in at this point.

b. Discussion of Open Seat for New Board Member and Board Vote

Two District Customers that are interested in serving as a Board Member for the open position.

1. Linda Bosworth. Owner/Operator of the Glacier Travel Inn  
Previously served as one of the initial board members for the district when getting it up and running in 2015-2016. She has a background as a paralegal for over 25 years, accounting experience and is a business owner. Her current workload has decreased and she is interested in re joining the Board.
2. Shannon Henson. Homeowner and Member of the Sherriff's Posse. Lives here and is interested in serving on the Board. Has a background in construction and his talents could help in the District.

Further discussion with the Board and the two candidates, then the candidates were excused so the Board could contemplate and vote.

c. Scheduling of upcoming Public Meeting

Board anticipates having a Public Meeting in January, if so, will need to Notice this 30 days in advance. This will be to discuss rates. Getting toward the end of the timeline where the Board must decide how to format the rates. Matt had previously talked with the Board and the approximate set amount that the District needs per month is \$53 ERU. Discussion and questions as to whether the ERU is the best method for establishing the rates, or if instead, there's a set monthly rate with gallon allowance, and then any use above that gets added to the monthly invoice.

Rural Development needs to know the District has the money coming in to pay the loan.

Board needs to figure something equitable and explainable, that will pay the bills. Leaning towards a flat rate and then overage billed using the meters. Basing usage off of 500k gallons a month, looking at the lowest, worst month of the year, at that rate, the rates may be able to be left close to where they currently are. Board reminded that they will also need the required money going into the Reserves account.

Further Board Discussion on the need for a healthy reserve account. This is a 40-year loan, if times get tough, will need to have a healthy reserve account.

V. Old business:

a. Discussion of Eclipse billings

- i. Eclipse had been asked to add property addresses by District Customer. This is not an unreasonable request.

Board also discussing the service provided by Eclipse and concerns with the information being provided and the look/feel of the invoices. Now may be a good time to fix this; review the contract that is currently in place and see what can be done.

If the Board chooses to move the work, it must be to not just a bookkeeper, but also a CPA.

Board asked Tina to provide a copy of the current contract to the Board for their review.

b. Customers in arrears:

- i. Bruce Bungay died in April, and his son moved in, but hasn't paid. Now he's moving out. Board discussion about what recourse may be available?
- ii. Board asked Tina to contact the Board Attorney to understand options.

VI. Operator's report

Shane Pierson provided the Operator's Report, having taken the meter readings on November 5, 2019.

Water reading: 17,473

Well 1 - 481,900

Well 2 - 250,000\* estimate based on time running

Total: 731,900 gallons for the month of October.

Water tests for the month were satisfactory.

During October, there was a water line that needed replaced near Board Member Patty Martinez' house. Shane received many calls during that work.

Discussion about the gas station that was sold; Shane dropped off an application form for water service to the manager who stayed on to help the new owners. Shane expects the form to be back in the next couple of weeks.

Shane also advised the Board that the State of Montana, there is a new system for Dig Notices, in order to protect the new system, will need to set up a YouDig account. They will then notify the District if anyone is digging in the area. If we don't do this, and our lines get dug up, it will be our problem to fix. The Board took this information under advisement, and will consult with the Board attorney.

Discussion with the Board about liability for mains, meter pits and service lines, including service lines that go under roads. Need to let property owners know about who holds what liability for which parts of the system. Also discussion about whether meter pits should be on the side of the road where the house is located. Discussion about the lines which will be 6' under the roads, but still a concern.

## VII. Financial report

*Secretary provided financial reports as of November 3, 2019 as follows:*

Revenue to date this fiscal year: \$18,717.66

Expenses to date this fiscal year: \$5384.86

Checking account balance: \$5868.20

Reserve bank balance: \$27,304.79

*Checks written / Payments Issued During October, 2019:*

Check # 372 to Pierson Services for monthly service: \$769.75

Check # 373 to Eclipse Tax & Accounting - monthly accounts and billing: \$381.35

Check # 374 to Tina Bondy for monthly service: \$118.75

Check # 375 to Libby Landscaping for services provided: \$375.00

Check # 376 to DEQ for \$152.00

Payment to Flathead Electric: \$418.69

Shane has a copy of the Aged Accounts in order to provide shut off notices. Discussion with the Board about liens where customers have refused to pay. October's electric bill from Flathead Electric was \$295.20.

## VIII. Correspondence

a. Discussion of any correspondence received by the FCWD Board.

Junction Gas called to ask if someone could shut off the water to the RV Dump system. Harold did this.

## IX. Additional items for discussion

- a. Board had a further discussion about the available Board position. The Board agreed that both would be great assets to the Board for different reasons.

Following the discussion, the Board held a vote for the New Board Member. The Board members voted on paper and Shane tallied the votes.

Linda received 3 votes and Shannon received 1 vote for the current Board position.

The Board asked Tina to email Linda to let her know and Harold would call Shannon to let him know.

- b. Next month's Board meeting – proposed to move this to December 10. Board discussion about this and agreement to this move.

X. Adjournment at 8:30pm.

Next General Meeting of the Board is scheduled on December 10, 2019, 7pm, at the Badrock Fire Department.