

WELLS COUNTY REGIONAL SEWER DISTRICT BOARD MEETING MINUTES

January 13, 2020

Board members present:

Leon Berning
Mike Mossburg
L.A. Brown
Bruce Stinson

Nate Rumschlag, County Engineer
Lana Beregszazi, BCS Management
Mark Burry, Miller Burry & Brown

Call to Order

Mike called the meeting to order with a prayer and pledge.

Board Organization

After some discussion the board determined to maintain its positions from 2019 into 2020.

Mike Mossburg – President
Leon Burning – Treasurer
Mark Burry – Board Attorney
Nate Rumschlag – Secretary

Mike made a motion for the following individuals to remain in their roles for the board: Mike, Mark and Nate. Motion was seconded by LA Brown. Board approved 4-0

Motion was then made for Leon to remain as board treasurer by LA Brown. Motion was seconded by Bruce. Motion was approved 4-0.

Approval of Minutes

Bruce motioned that the board approve the minutes. Motion was seconded by Leon. Board approved motion 4-0.

Payment of Claims / Reconciliation of Claims

Nate had no claims to present for the month. No vote was taken by the board. Ledger balance is \$6,182.

Board Comments

Mike mentioned to the board that county council is aware of the needs of the district from presentations by both Lana and Nate during the December 23rd and January 7th council meetings. At this point no action was taken by the council on the loan.

BCS Management

Mike opened the floor to Lana Beregszazi.

Lana presented her proposal for the additional service areas and her firms detailed scope of work. Lana also updated the board on her work with council and recent presentations. Lana reiterated that the council has not taken action, but that the RSD will need to take action to move forward.

Mike asked what the timeline is on closing on a BAN? Mark responded that you can optimistically expect this to be 60-days from signing a treatment agreement.

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Mike asked that Mark Burry, Nate, LA Brown and Bruce attempt to meet with the Bluffton Board of Works. Mayor Whicker, who was in the audience, responded that they plan to meet on January 20th at 3:30pm. Mike asked Nate to confirm with the Mayor's office and get on the agenda with the City.

SRF needs the bond ordinance and rate study to proceed. Mark commented that the special meetings could be held to move the project and notices forward.

Mike mentioned that he was planning to put the RSD loan up for a vote in February. Mike also mentioned that we are still working on discussions with Ossian, but there is a lot of work to be done. Lana mentioned that she felt the discussion of the system and town's needs went better, but that pushing Ossian may not be possible.

LA Brown asked if Josh Barkley was at the meeting? Lana responded that Josh did attend the meeting.

Lana recommended that the board hold a community meeting with the areas north of Ossian. Mike wants to proceed with a similar meeting with Murray.

Lana - I need to figure out the acquisition of the River Terrace infrastructure into the operational plan.

Lana also asked that the future connections in the 2021+ study be included in treatment agreements for open capacity and future development work. With that Lana asked the board for contact information for Uniondale and Poneto. LA Brown offered to provide her the information after the meeting.

Lana mentioned that she does not have a second meeting scheduled with Ossian yet.

Lana then continued to review her scope of work and the submitted agreement. Her work is primarily administration services. She focuses on work within RSDs that do not have full time assistance and management.

Mike - What is the duration of the contract?

Lana – This would be for the duration of the planning phase. It is not billing services or ongoing management of the system.

Board Comments (continued)

Leon asked if Poneto or Uniondale are feasible to connect to Bluffton? Lana responded that we aren't considering that at this time.

During this discussion the availability of the City of Bluffton's north sewer was reviewed. According to Mayor Whicker the sewer is expected to be released for construction within the next 30 days.

Commonwealth Engineering Inc.

Mike introduced Ben Adams of Commonwealth Engineering Inc. (CEI).

Ben passed out information about himself and Commonwealth Engineers.

Ben then reviewed his work history in municipal and RSD projects. Ben encouraged the board that formation of a district takes time and you are close to moving forward. The RSD is the financing source to affect the failed septic elimination program for the County.

Ben also mentioned that CEI is the engineer of record for both Uniondale and Poneto.

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LA Brown mentioned that he had never had a problem with Ben, but that questioned some of CEI's past decisions in the Paxson McKinney project.

Leon – Sometimes it is good to look at the past. He felt that some of what appears bad on the surface in the end results in good changes.

Ben – All of the areas an RSD looks to sewer are hard to resolve. Your position as the board is good for funding and can proceed understanding you sit in a favorable position for grants. Ben commented that districts that can grow their network can make the system better.

Mike – The board has not been the post child of good communication.

Ben – The bill is the obvious negative, but the results are broader than that and are not always obvious.

Mike – the request by Andy that the BCS proposal be broken down into its elements is helpful.

Mark – The agreement BCS has presented is part of your communication plan and moving forward.

Chuck King, county council, asked Mark Burry what did Adams County loan their sewer district?

Mark – Adams County loaned its district \$500k. The RSD is about to develop a promissory note to cover the repayment terms.

Mike then asked Mark Burry if he would be able to attend the next county council meeting to explain the RSD's available options and the cost savings. Meeting is scheduled for February 4th at 7pm.

Mark – the elimination of public health issues is why SRF can offer such rates and grants from the state budget. The benefits Decatur and Adams County have received will be mirrored here. You need to see the next project results to help convince people.

Board Comments (continued)

Mike then asked Ryan to present.

Ryan updated the board that he had received detailed updates and SRF comments. Some of SRF's comments are almost at the design level and need to hold until the project progresses.

Mike – Ben, Why is your fee so different on this project? Both on construction and on design the fees are lower for CEI.

Ben – Some of the costs are conservative, as is standard practice, but CEI has enough recent experience to trust that our fees are more representative of the project. One of those items is the cleanup and restoration seem high for this type of work.

LA Brown – You mentioned cleanup is part of your cost savings. I want our customers happy. I felt the McKinney Paxson left residents unhappy with the poor contractor performance on restoration.

Ben – We are doing a sewer project, but can't do the new complete streets. The contractor that was awarded that job may have cost us our work in Bluffton due to some of that.

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LA Brown – If we work with you, and we get complaints, I will be the first to pass them along to you.

Nate gave the board a general update on engineer selection practices and why you want to move forward on design.

Leon – What is the impact on the rates due to the fee difference?

Lana – whatever the fee is will have to be financed.

LA Brown commented on the recent Health Department meeting and felt that the HD was not supporting of the RSD's project.

Lana – You need an environmental health specialist in the county.

Leon noted that neither the board president or the board doctor were in attendance at the HD meeting.

Lana - The previous request for record information and tracking was accepted by the HD. The data provides the basis of much of the tracking files BCS prepares.

Attorney Comments

No further comments. Mark has the county council meeting on his schedule.

Public Comments

Mayor Whicker commented that you appear to be on track and nobody likes to be the bad guy.

Bruce – educating the public is clearly necessary to avoid public outrage.

Lana – BCS has FAQ sheet prepared and they will help in this area.

LA Brown – How soon will we have a public meeting?

Lana – minimum of 4 weeks

Motion to adjourn – Bruce, motion 2nd by Leon. Meeting adjourned. 4-0

Next meeting is scheduled for January 13th at the regular time.

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