

WELLS COUNTY REGIONAL SEWER DISTRICT BOARD MEETING MINUTES  
November 7, 2022

**Board members present:**

Mike Mossburg  
Leon Berning  
Jon Oman  
Andy Stoller - absent  
Bruce Stinson

Lewis Brown, RSD Superintendent  
Nate Rumschlag, County Engineer  
Ryan Lefeld, Choice One Engineering - absent  
Mark Burry, Attorney  
Penny Parish, Baker Tilly (virtually)

**Call to Order**

Mike called the meeting to order with the pledge and prayer by Lewis.

**Customer Questions/Comments**

Roger Cash – concerned that the rate is more than Fort Wayne or Ossian and is a multiple of Bluffton’s sewer rate. The design is faulty. To use the law to take land would make King George proud. The neighbors on my road are retirees and can’t afford this. You need to stop and look back over this project.

Richard Jackson – The notice of the hearing was confusing and wanted clarification on the monthly rate. Language about customers, employees, equivalent dwelling units did not make sense to him. Mark responded to answer his questions about how a business would be included in the rate. He then asked about paragraph D2 and the \$50 interim rate. Mark responded that this was advertised at a higher number and as you will see in a few minutes the interim rate is being lowered to the \$35/month.

Dan Gernum – asking about the alley for the lift station and how big it was. He was asking for his son Justin who could not be at the meeting. Mark discussed with him and was going to talk to him after the meeting as this is one of the parcels the district will need an easement from.

**Introduction of the Rate Study**

Penny Parish reviewed the rate study dated November 4<sup>th</sup> and made a matter of record.

Penny then reviewed the project cost and funding report and locations of the funds available, and the grant funds committed to the project. This is a \$4 million project and will have a \$76,000 bond.

The phase 3 project will have 56 EDUs, but for conservative purposes they used 53 EDUs for the analysis.

Penny then covered the operating expenses and debt reserve. The district is required to maintain a 125% bond coverage. The \$95 rate keeps the rates the same across the board.

Mark then reviewed the history of the projects and how Wells County RSD had to negotiate to get the \$3 million in funding. The timing is forcing Kingsland as a stand-alone project and the district only has the ability to fund one service area.

The goal was to keep the rates as is. You will have to see where you are with Tocsin next year. As we move forward we need to balance the size of projects.

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New districts don't have rates under \$100. The board will need to approve and make the rate report a matter of record.

Leon asked why \$15,000 for land acquisition? The land is different than easement acquisition, but this covers the cost to acquire mainline and pump station ground which is not covered by SRF.

Motion to approve the November 4<sup>th</sup> rate study and make it a matter of record by Bruce, motion was 2<sup>nd</sup> by Jon. Motion carried 4-0.

**Closing of Meeting and Opening of Public Hearing**

The public hearing is next and since it is past 7pm the board will need to make a motion to suspend the special meeting and open the hearing.

Jon made a motion to suspend the special meeting and open the public hearing. Motion was seconded by Bruce. Motion carried 4-0.

Nate will make the proofs of publication a matter of record.

Opened to the public comments

AJ Springer – On the rate ordinance publication the area of Kingsfield was listed.

Mark commented that it was a typo.

Nate – the description identifying the service area was clearly Kingsland.

Mark – your point is well taken and errors like that are regrettable.

Larry Foreman – they bid it for only 300 ft off the line, but I would be interested if you could bring it back to my house at 600 ft away.

Mark described the process and why those were by default cut from the project. Larry asked for more information and why this seemed unfair to him.

Nate commented that the costs for the long connections are significantly more and put a burden on the grant funds that homes closer to the road do not require of the project. There is some parity by limiting the length of the connections to share the grant funds.

Mark – the change happened when SRF gave the district less.

Nate – recommended that Larry request a voluntary connection form and see what funds are available to allow the connection in the future.

Following no more comments Leon made a motion to close the public hearing. Motion was seconded by Bruce. Motion carried 4-0.



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**Close the public hearing**

Bond Ordinance 2022-06 was introduced at the last meeting. No bond anticipation notes are part of the funding. Funding is through SRF and the Indiana finance authority. Closing will be in mid-December. Mark asked for a motion to adopt the ordinance.

**Jon motion to adopt ordinance 2022-06. Motion was seconded by Bruce. Motion carried 4-0.**

Mark then covered the amendatory rate ordinance 2022-07 updating rate ordinance 2022-03. The rate ordinance was updated since introduction to lower the interim rate to \$35/month and would go into effect once construction begins.

**Motion to adopt ordinance 2022-07 by Bruce and 2<sup>nd</sup> by Leon. Motion carried 4-0.**

Mark then commented that you will have claims and contracts for next Monday's meeting to settle prior to the closing in December.

Mark then commented that Lewis Brown has gone above and beyond for the district, but you should realize that without his effort to keep you afloat the district will owe more money.

Mark - Your procedure to process claims and turn them in needs cleared up. You also need the support of the local community and county. A formal budget for 2023 will need to be finalized. The overhead costs in this rate report are more reasonable and helps cover the operation of the district.

Mark then covered the history and needs of the district.

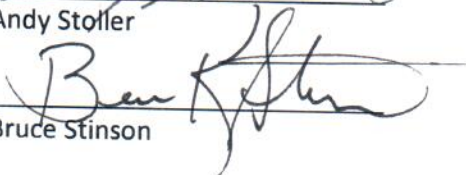
Motion to adjourn – Bruce, motion 2<sup>nd</sup> by Jon. Meeting adjourned. 4-0

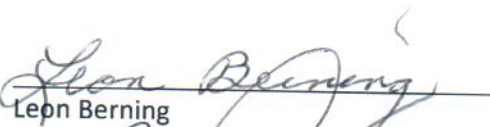
Next meeting will be the regular meeting for November 14, 2022 at 6:30 pm.

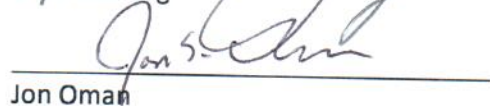
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