

# FLATHEAD COUNTY WATER DISTRICT #101

## POB 1141, Columbia Falls, MT 59912

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\*\*\* Meeting Minutes April 2, 2019 \*\*\*

### General Meeting:

- I. Call to Order / Roll Call.
  - a. Harold Herman called the April 2, 2019 General Meeting for FCWD #101 to order at 7:02pm.
  - b. Directors present: Harold Herman, President, Russ Barnett, Vice President, Brian Rohletter and Patty Martinez.
  - c. Also present: District residents: Clarence Taber; Casey Becker; Linda Bosworth; Shane Pierson, Certified Water Operator; Tina Bondy, Board Secretary (by telephone); Matt Nerdig, A2Z Engineering; and Randy Snyder, Snyder Law Office.
- II. Reading and approval of the Minutes from previous meeting.

Secretary reviewed the March 5<sup>th</sup> meeting minutes with the Board. Harold made a Motion to approve the Minutes as read. Brian seconded and all voted in favor.
- III. New business:
  - a. Casey Becker, property owner attended in person to request a refund for time he missed work due to being present/on property to fix the freeze up of his pipes. Casey had sent Harold requests via email for reimbursement of his wages due to his staying home to be on site when the work needed to be done on his property to fix the water lines from being frozen. Harold Herman recused himself from this discussion.

Russ responded to Casey to say that the Board's feeling that, as a county water district, we cannot be responsible to a property owner for the time they lost at work and we cannot reimburse for this.

There was a discussion by the Board and Shane Pierson, around the number of freeze ups in the valley during this period, and the quick response that we got to Mr. Becker's freeze up by the plumber.
  - b. Randy Snyder, FCWD Board Attorney – Discussion of easements and water services.

Following last meeting's proposal by Mr. Taber, Randy took that to the Clerk/Recorders office to determine whether they would accept a portion

of the property being annexed into the District. The Clerk said they would agree to that with a good legal description. After that meeting, Randy called Mr. Taber, who would like to talk further about this.

Clarence also went to a surveyor and then talked to Jim and Russ about the water lines. He would now propose that the District could utilize the total property.

There was a further discussion about the number of residences on the property and the number of lines. There is a concern with the District that they have money allocated to this, but if we need to buy another service line, that may be a problem. Discussion of options and creating one central point for meters, which would be more efficient.

Question posed to Randy Snyder, if there is 1 property and 3 rentals, what's the rule? Understanding is that meters and separate service connection for each separate residence.

Randy will get an updated legal property description, including the properties. Randy also mentioned that it would be a good idea to adopt some rules and regulations for the District, to avoid property owner concerns with regard to who is responsible for what and what can or should be reimbursed. Guidance is that it would be better to get this done sooner rather than later.

c. Matt Nerdig, A2Z Engineering - Engineering Update on System Improvement Project

The Plan and spec book are done. Contracts and specifications are all included. Randy has reviewed all of the contracts and now the RD attorney needs to sign off.

He has added an Analysis of the District Mains to the DropBox for viewing by the Board.

Discussion with the Board about service lines and sizes for residential vs. commercial connections, as well as meters; discussion about establishing a standard for commercial rates that would allow expansion and use; discussion about adjusting commercial rates first and then once the bids are in, rates across the board would increase as needed.

Rural Development wants a cushion for a 40 year loan; taking a long term view, what are things that are going to need to be replaced over the life of the loan?

Shane Pierson added that in Martin City, there was a similar project 25 years ago, they now have close to \$150k in reserves.

Discussion with Linda Bosworth about water use and meter placement on hotel property. We could hook up the water now, and do this as part of the project. If no hook up now, whoever owns/develops the River Bridge property would be responsible down the road.

DEQ is looking at a fast track review because of previous enforcement actions for the District.

Material prices vary each day, may be things we can't predict, but the bids are generally pretty close. Matt also talked to Lyle at RD, and they have some money so if we do go over, once we have the bids, we may be able to work with RD.

Russ added that we are such a small district 62 residential, 9 commercial properties, small number of hook ups to pay for over \$1million project. We need water in the district. With 3 pumps, entire system can operate with one of the pumps out of service. Once the bids are in and we know the exact price, then the District can look at raising rates, we will have an exact number to shoot for.

d. District Budget and Commercial Rate Discussion

Russ worked up a preliminary budget for the FY2020 (July 1, 2019-June 30, 2020). There was discussion with the board about this and the potential shortfall and the fact that this is a low-income community.

Russ would be okay with doubling the commercial rate, so perhaps the base rate of commercial is 2x the residential rate.

Linda pays the first of the year for the year ahead, for the hotel, and during the summer months, question whether she should be paying more during those months. But with the meters, at the time the construction finishes, will know more data.

District needs to adopt a policy with how to deal with the meters. Most districts have a base rate, and then if you go over it's so much per 1,000 gallons. This would allow for security/consistency in the monthly water income.

IV. Operator's report

Mr. Pierson provided the Operator's Report and the latest water reading taken on April 2.

Total Reading: 961858 gallons.

Well 1 Reading: 751,100 and Well 2 estimates: 300,000

Monthly Total: 1,051,100 gallons of water

This past month there were several freeze ups. Only one customer that was pretty unhappy, the rest were understanding. We had a phenomenal response to the customers/district. Harold went above and beyond to get people's water lines fixed. There were only 3 properties that were without water for more than 3 days, 2 of which were the gas station that is currently under construction and the electric company which is an unmanned building.

The email reminder to the district residents about preventing frozen pipes worked; only had 1 call after that email.

Earlier today (4/2/19) flushed the system on the far side for about 40 minutes.

Electric bill \$328.98 combined for both wells and the tank house for the month.

V. Water Manager

Discussion with Shane Pierson about the possibility of taking on a water manager role. DEQ has advised us to have a manager. This would also help with reducing neighborhood politics. This would ease the stress on Harold, and he would be responsible for running the system. People could call Shane with problems, rather than Harold.

Question to Shane about whether he would be interested in taking this on, as well as how he handles resident/customer information. Also discussion about meter numbers to have on account. Shane mentioned that Martin City has some metering software and what that may cost. Further that he will bring to the Martin City board the proposal that FCWD may be able to use the software for a sublicense fee.

Further discussion about rates/meters. Base rate in Martin City is \$16 a month, but that is because it is tax subsidized; a portion of the property tax for every house in the district flows to Martin City twice a year. Shane will find out more info from Martin City for us.

VI. Financial report

Secretary reviewed current financials and provided reports on all including aging account report.

VII. Old business

VIII. Correspondence

VIII. Additional items for discussion

- a. Clarence took some time to compliment the FCWD Board on its work.
- b. Linda Bosworth asked about sending some money to Casey Becker, not from the District, but from her business.

IX. Adjournment at 9:22 pm

-- President announced the next General Board Meeting scheduled on May 7, 2019, 7pm, at the Badrock Fire Department.