

FLATHEAD COUNTY WATER DISTRICT #101

POB 1141, Columbia Falls, MT 59912

*** Meeting Minutes June 1, 2021 ***

General Meeting:

Call to Order / Roll Call. 7:03pm

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

Also present: Shane Pierson, Certified Water Operation / General Manager and Tina Bondy, Board Secretary

I. Minutes

- a. Reading and approval of the March 2, 2021 Minutes.

II. Time for Public Comment and Discussions

- a. No public comments.

III. New Business

IV. Old Business

- a. Membership with Montana Rural Water System (MRWS).

The Board discussed with Shane that this public association is membership driven/supported. They help with doing O&M manuals, rate reports, all the stuff that we have paid engineering to do; lend leak detection equipment; band the rural water systems together to make operating less expensive for those organizations. They also help with grants, etc.

The membership is a couple of hundred a year, and appears to be well worth it. They also have this district on record as being a member in the past.

Shane offered to help get it set up. He reported that he uses their services a lot for Martin City, and has asked them to help with some info for Columbia Heights as well.

Following a Board discussion, Russ made a Motion that FCWD101 become a paying member of the Montana Rural Water System – effective immediately. Harold seconded – all voted in favor.

- b. U-Dig. By MT State law, as a public water district, FCWD 101 must become a member. We had been waiting for the system to be completed. The district will be charged \$1.00 per locate. If anyone digs in the district, we are notified and can get someone to come out and mark water lines; if we don't mark water lines, it's on us if they dig and rupture a water line.

Shane has already started getting the District enrolled. Get charged per locate (minimal). Board discussion with questions about whether we could contract with UDig to mark the lines?

According to Shane, we could, but the concern would be the more of these things that we are responsible for – the tougher it becomes to make any changes (as it is with the small business). There are two locate companies in the area – we can contact them to find out the cost to contract with them.

Shane needs to set up the locate contract now and will get in touch with the two local locate companies to check prices. In the meantime, Shane will do it. He estimated maybe 5 locates a month, takes 5 min to stop and mark the lines.

For future operator – only have a map to go on. Only mark up to the meter; only protecting our own system.

Maps are very accurate.

Russ in favor of moving ahead – and looking into 3rd party contractor, too. Shane will get the locate set up and then we can work with the next steps.

- c. DEQ Water Test Requirements

V. Operator's report (Shane will email me the last 2 months readings)

May 25 – reading: Billed a total of 300,200 gallons.

Estimated loss 10-11% still. Shane and Matt are both expecting 2-4% water loss. Even though there were a few hydrants flushed this month, still feel like this is too much of a loss. Matt suggested Shane shut off individual sections of main and have pressure gauge on to see if dropping. Will be very time consuming though not sure of another way to do this.

Shane is seeking direction from the Board on the water loss. We know the loss is not at the meters, it's before the meters. Discussion with the board about sloppy contractor. Anything over 10% leakage, DEQ wants us actively

looking for the leaks. Lot of money to have the supervisor on the project; Shane is going to talk to Matt about this.

T-5 / John has obligation to give us a system that doesn't leak; John claims to have pressure tested each section before putting in service. He's not returning phone calls, etc., but we have a lot left to finish up, messes to clean up, pipe to be picked up, etc. There are probably 20 meter pits that need cleaned up due to settling, rocks picked up and reseeded. With the crew probably 1-2 days worth of work. Shane getting 5-6 calls a month from customers regarding this.

Shane suggests having A2Z push T-5 to finish as he's having a hard time getting a response from John. Harold asked Shane to get in touch with Matt about this.

If we can't get this to happen, what is the recourse? Possible for FCWD to get a 3rd party estimate and provide to John, and then if not fixed, to go to the bond company with that?

Board discussion about significantly past due accounts and whether to file any liens. Specifically, with the former deli, it is for sale and owes past due water service amounts.

Shane knows how to file a lien – just need to know the deadline to do so. Being a county water district which follows the property, there are certain rules to file. But with the lien, will be reimbursed when it sells or next year's tax statement;

Howell is only other one over 60 days past due. 16th past due is when Shane posts the shut off notices. At the 20th past due, water is turned off.

Board reviewing some usage amounts. Only 4 customers come up as leaks; A&W comes up as a leak – even though not; Ken O'Brien rental (next to pump house) 3500 meters – maybe left sprinkler on; Clarence rental – 8100 gal – and Bonneville power – had a leak – been told multiple times.

Shane reported that there had been trouble with fill valve; ended up with a decent one. Shane has consistently checked – no problems since replaced. John trying to get us reimbursed for the old valve.

The Gordon well / pressure tanks are still not set up correctly. If we open the system to use the pressure tanks, the meter runs backwards. Shane doesn't know why, and there are no explanations. But because we have new pressure tanks – we can bypass meter and go into mainline. Would cut pump cycle in half and eliminate problem of meter running backwards. To do this –

threading 2" pipe – close to/under \$500 to do it. Harold on board with this – but discussion with Board and Shane.

If Board would approve up to \$500 to this – Shane will keep it under the \$500. Don't want to call a plumber in, Shane and Harold can do it. The cost would be for the plumbing, to have to get a pipe threaded. Can cover with the additional 5 services added last month.

Harold made a Motion to approve up to \$500 for Shane to get a 2" pipe threaded and installed to bypass the meter for the Gordon well. Brian seconded and all voted in favor.

VI. Financial report

Secretary provided and reviewed financial reports as of June 1, 2021.

Revenue to date this fiscal year: \$ 64,074.39

Expenses to date this fiscal year: \$ 19,821.46

Checking account balance: \$ 25,759.50

Reserve/ Asset Replacement bank balance: \$ 30,736.79

Checks written / Payments issued in March, April and May from Glacier Checking Acct.:

March 2021

Check # 468 to Pierson Services for monthly service: \$350.00

Check # 469 to Eclipse Tax and Accounting: \$383.00**

Check # 470 to Tina Bondy for Board Secretarial: \$400.00

Check # 471 to Martin City County Water District: \$100

April 2021

Check # 473 to Pierson Services for monthly service: \$400.00

Check # 474 to Tina Bondy for Board Secretarial: \$400.00

Check # 475 to Martin City County Water District: \$100

Check # 476 to Eclipse Tax and Accounting: \$766.00**

May 2021

Check # 472 to Shane Pierson for valve replacement issue: \$820.00

Check # 477 to Pierson Services for monthly service: \$400.00

Check # 478 to Eclipse Tax and Accounting: \$383.00

Check # 479 to Tina Bondy for Board Secretarial: \$400.00

Check # 480 to Martin City County Water District: \$100

Flathead Electric Bill for Mar – \$231.96

Flathead Electric Bill for Apr – \$232.14

Flathead Electric Bill for May – \$205.06

**Eclipse did not receive #469, stop payment issued and replaced with #476

VII. Correspondence

None noted.**Additional items for discussion**

Brief board discussion regarding water rates and expectations during summer. The rates will bring in more income over the summer. We did see a huge spike last year, but this year, customers have more of an idea of what it's costing. Hard to estimate for the summer, particularly with the motel closed down currently.

6 more customers coming online within the next 2 months.

VIII. Adjournment 8:40pm

-- President to announce the next General Meeting of the Board is scheduled on September 7, 2021, 7pm, at the Badrock Fire Department.