

Rogers Waterworks and Sewer Commission

June 16, 2008

Minutes

The Rogers Waterworks and Sewer Commission held its regularly scheduled meeting at 4:00 PM, Monday, June 16, 2008, in the Rogers City Hall. Commissioners present were Guy Cable, Travis Greene, Donna Warren, and Lon Pepple. Don Kendall was absent. Rogers Water Utilities staff in attendance were Tom McAlister, Joyce Johnson, Everett Balk, Mike Lawrence, and Earl Rausch. Others in attendance at the meeting were Asa Hutchinson, III, and Kevin Hesse. Chairman Greene called the meeting to order at 4:00 PM.

There was a motion by Cable, second by Warren, to approve the minutes from the May meeting. All in favor, motion carried.

Greene recognized Mark Johnson, P. E., Utilities Engineer. Johnson presented the Commission with a report detailing the status of the several projects in which the Commission had a pecuniary interest. Johnson said that the Stoney Brook Road/Horsebarn Road water and sewer project was essentially complete, with the final pay estimate from the Contractor (Crossland Heavy) for approximately \$28,000. He said that the RWU partners on the project would be billed for their portions of the project, as soon as the project is finalized.

Johnson said that the hydropillar at Lilac St. was being sandblasted for painting. He said that the tank contractor should move on site in July.

Continuing, Johnson noted that the Stave Mill Road water line was complete except for cleanup. He said that the Pinnacle Hills Parkway facilities relocations were complete. Johnson said that the contractor on the S. 26th St. project was focusing on drainage and a large culvert for a landowner, so no utilities work was underway. Johnson said that the Utilities contractor for Pleasant Grove Road was installing a 24-inch water main in front of Bellview School. He said that the rest of the project was put on hold by the City of Rogers over right-of-way issues.

Green recognized Tom McAlister, Rogers Water Utilities Manager. McAlister presented Mike Lawrence with a certificate of appreciation and a gift for twenty years of service to Rogers Water Utilities and the citizens of Rogers.

Greene recognized Joyce Johnson, CPA, Utilities Controller. Johnson said that water consumption was down over the same period last year due to the rain. She said that the schedule of funds showed a transfer of funds from access fees to unrestricted funds to pay RWU back for monies already spent for improvements to the water and sewer systems. She noted that the 1998 bond issue had been defeased, and the statements now referred to

2008 water and sewer bonds. She said that water department had actually made a slight profit for May 2008, but that the projected water sales for budget year 2008 would not be met, due to the cool, rainy weather. There were no problems in the sewer system, Johnson said. She said that the impact fees were running well ahead of budget projections.

Continuing, Johnson presented the Commission with a budget proposal for FY '09. Greene asked about the reduction in full time employee equivalents (FTE's) in the engineering division. Johnson said that the division had lost a half-time employee and a full time employee, and another full time employee had made a lateral move to Field Operations. Warren asked if the engineering employees would be replaced. Mark Johnson answered in the negative.

Continuing, Joyce Johnson said that the water department was operating on the slimmest possible of margins, and that the services of a rate consultant had been procured to perform a rate analysis this summer. She noted that the weather and the variable access and impact fees made revenue projects difficult. She said that the expenses are easier to project. There was a motion by Warren, second by Pepple, to approve the budget proposal for FY'09.

Greene recognized Everett Balk, P. E., Project Facilitation Engineer. Balk made a brief report to the Commission on the activities of his section. He said that the number of plan sets submitted for approval was up slightly over the previous month. Warren asked about the RWU website. Balk said that the staff was working to improve the engineering website as time permitted.

Greene recognized Mike Lawrence, RWU Pollution Control Facility Manager. Lawrence said that the staff had taken on the project of improving the main lift station at the PCF by replacing pumps with larger pumps. He said that there were two pumps remaining to improve the capacity of the lift station from 51.5 million gallons per day (mgd) to 64 mgd. Bids were solicited, and two bids were received, he said. The low bidder was Jack Tyler Engineering, for \$32,830 each, or a total of \$65,660. Warren asked if there was any savings to realize from purchasing both pumps at once. Lawrence answered in the affirmative. He said that the project (completing the lift station upgrade) needed to be finished now. There was a motion by Pepple, second by Cable, to approve the low bid. All in favor, motion carried.

McAlister reported that he had been contacted by a contractor for T Mobile for a possible cell tower lease at the treatment plant property. He said that he had been interested in the lease to generate revenue, but had serious reservations about the lease terms. Warren opined that she would not want to hear a presentation from the contractor until the lease terms were agreeable.

Greene recognized Kevin Hesse, El Montano Road, in Benton County, near Monte Ne. Hesse had come to an earlier Commission meeting, complaining about the practice of dumping trench spoil into his neighbor's hollow. He said that the dumping had adversely

affected his well water. McAlister said that the practice was legal and the accepted method of getting rid of trench spoil, which was a mixture of top soil, clay, chert, concrete and asphalt. McAlister said that the landowner, Tim Seratt, had sought approval for the dump from state and local officials, and had been told that no permit was necessary. McAlister said that RWU had ceased taking spoil to Seratt's property, and promised to clean the mud off of the street. Hesse admitted that the heavy rains had washed the street, but complained that he had been lied to about washing the street. He also claimed that he had been condescended to, and that some of the Commissioners had not returned his phone calls. Hesse admitted that he could not prove that the dumping had affected his well.

McAlister said that he knew of several residents in the area that had bad well water, and suggested that Hesse get together with his neighbors to see who might be interested in obtaining rural water. Hesse said that the subject had been discussed at a POA meeting, and had been rejected by the majority present. The Commission urged him to pursue the option, "to turn this into a positive" for Hesse and his neighbors.

Could we get an independent opinion regarding the situation with Hesse's well? Pepple asked. McAlister said that without prior data regarding water quality, such an opinion could yield questionable and expensive results.

Hesse complained that RWU employees were dumping top soil, and later retrieving it for some other use, all the while using City equipment. Cable said that material belonged to the landowner once the material is left. Mark Johnson said that the repair crews were pretty cognizant of the material coming out of the trench, and were able to reuse some of it, but there was always some material left over for disposal.

Warren said that there was a difference between that which was legal, and that which was right. She said that the appearance of wrongdoing (dumping of dirt, improving private property, using publicly-owned property for employee purposes) must be avoided in future; however, she did not hear anything that convinced her that the dumping adversely affected Hesse's well. Hesse said that his main issue was the "cascading lateral effect" that dumping caused on the environment. McAlister said that he would be glad to put Hesse in touch with engineers that specialized in organizing rural water systems.

The meeting adjourned at 5:00 PM

Respectfully submitted,

Tom McAlister, Acting Secretary
Rogers Waterworks and Sewer Commission

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