

# **Rogers Waterworks and Sewer Commission**

**June 18, 2007**

## **Minutes**

The Rogers Waterworks and Sewer Commission held its regularly scheduled monthly meeting at 4:00 PM, Monday, June 18, 2007, in the Rogers City Hall. Commissioners in attendance were Travis Greene, Don Kendall, Donna Warren, Donnie Moore, and Lon Pepple. Rogers Water Utilities staff Tom McAlister, Mark Johnson, Joyce Johnson, Mike Lawrence, Everett Balk, and William Evans were present. Others in the audience included Asa Hutchinson III, Lori H. Stone, Evie Blad, Richard McKeehan, and Eric Haussermann. Chairman Moore called the meeting to order at 4:06 PM.

Moore started the meeting by welcoming new Commissioner Travis Greene to the Board. Green was appointed by the City Council to serve out the unexpired term of Jerry Pittman, term to expire February 1, 2010.

There was a motion by Warren, second by Kendall, to approve the May minutes as submitted. All in favor, motion carried

Moore recognized Mark Johnson, Utilities Engineer. Johnson gave the Commission a brief report on the status of the projects in which the Commission had a financial interest. He said that the Dogwood St./Turtle Creek water transmission job was proceeding with 6000 feet of pipe installed already. Johnson said that the Stoneybrook/Horesbarn Road water line project was stalled again, as he attempted another water line design. He said that the previous design was obviated due to City Council intervention. Johnson said that the latest design would entail tunneling between the Holiday Inn and Staybridge Inn.

There were several questions from the Commission. Was our water line construction the cause of the traffic gridlock at the west end of New Hope? Kendall asked. No, said Johnson, noting that the Commission's contractor, Crossland Heavy, had not worked in the area for some time. Could the project be completed on time? Warren asked. Johnson said that the Staybridge Inn was set to open in August, but he thought the project could be on line by that time. Was the easement across the property owner to the south abandoned? Warren asked. Johnson said that he had asked the attorneys to reverse the condemnation order on that property. Johnson said that he had been working on the project since December of 2005, and the project had been frustrating to him. He said that the work on the water line had taken him away from his design work on the proposed two million gallon elevated tank project at S. 23<sup>rd</sup> St. at Lilac St. Johnson said that Stephen Ponder, Project Review Engineer, was coming over from Project Facilitation to help on the design work.

Continuing, Johnson said that work on the Pauline Whitaker Parkway had started, and that the City had asked for a delay in the water main construction until the dirt work was finished. He said that the City was obtaining easements and rights-of-way for the widening of South 26<sup>th</sup> St.

Moore recognized Everett Balk, Project Facilitation Engineer. Balk said his section was still performing reviews within ten days of receipt. He noted that the number of plans submitted for approval had slacked off for recent months. He noted the Stephen Ponder was being loaned to Mark Johnson to help with design work on the 2006 water revenue bond projects.

Moore recognized Joyce Johnson, Utilities Controller. Johnson presented the Commission with financial sheets for May 2007. Johnson took some time to explain the statements for the sake of the new Commissioner. Unaccounted for water rate was explained, as well as the monthly cash statements. She noted the large impact that the impact fees and access fees had on the bottom line of the water and sewer departments.

Continuing, Johnson presented the Commission with budget proposals for both departments for FY '08. Again, she spent some time explaining how the different schedules "flowed together". She noted that contributed capital, i. e., the value of those facilities paid for by developers and dedicated to the Utilities for operations and maintenance, had a large impact on the depreciation expense. Johnson also pointed out the changes in manpower (reduction in force) and the large increase in sludge disposal, due to long hauls to a landfill in Oklahoma.

Moore asked about the impact of the increased rates from Beaver Water District. McAlister said that the rate increase would not be effective for several months, and, since the increase was so small (\$0.02 per thousand), he and Johnson decided not to increase the "water purchases" account.

There was a motion by Pepple, second by Kendall, to approve the budget as submitted. All in favor, motion carried.

Moore asked if there was any change in the way the water system operated since Bentonville had gone off the system. Mark Johnson said that Beaver could go off line now for hours at a time, which was not possible when the two cities were combined. Joyce Johnson noted that Bentonville had been paid in full for its share of the two transmission mainlines from Beaver Water District.

Moore announced that the City Council had adopted the impact fees and access fees at their last meeting. He said that the Council wanted another tier of rates for "affordable housing", so that the impact fees would not discouraged those who would purchase a starter home. McAlister said he had searched some sites on the Internet to find other cities that have enacted such policies or ordinances. He said that many cities had such policies, and the policies were all different. Some cities forgave all or a portion of the fees. Some cities rebated the fees back to the homeowners, he said. McAlister said

that the City of Rogers had an “affordable housing” zoning designation, which could easily be administered by the Utilities. However, he was reluctant to make a recommendation at the time. McAlister said that the Council was looking for some guidance from the Commission in the near future.

Moore said that the other city agencies should be involved, as well as other stakeholders. He suggested a meeting to gather input. McAlister said that he would put something together for the Commission’s review.

The meeting adjourned at 5:06 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Tom S. McAlister, Acting Secretary  
Rogers Waterworks and Sewer Commission

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