

Rogers Waterworks and Sewer Commission

July 15, 2002

Minutes

The Rogers Waterworks and Sewer Commission held its regularly scheduled meeting at 4:00 PM, Monday, July 15, 2002, in the Rogers Water Utilities Training Center. Commissioners in attendance were Donnie Moore, Dick McLelland, and Jerry Pittman. Fred Wanger and Lon Pepple were absent. Rogers Water Utilities staff present were Tom McAlister, Mark Johnson, Don Roberts, Luanne Diffin, Mike Lawrence, Earl Rausch, Joyce Johnson, Steve Ponder, Carmen Vellon, and Michelle Williams. Others in the audience were Deputy City Attorney Jim Clark, Lori Harrison-Stone, Christine Cox, Mike Bender, Tim Sorrey, E. J. Miller, Barbara Miller, Arnold Lehman, John Lehman, Ron Wheeler, and Charles Kester. Chairman Moore called the meeting to order at 4:02 PM.

No action was taken on the June 17, 2002 Commission minutes.

Moore recognized Mark Johnson, P. E., Utilities Engineer. Johnson presented the Commission with a summary of the many construction projects in which the Commission had a pecuniary interest. He noted that there had been significant progress on some jobs that had been dragging slowly. Johnson said that the now-infamous sewer project known as Phase VI was almost finished. He said that sewer project Phase VIII, or the southeastern Rogers sewer project, was stalled due to lack of an easement and permission from the Arkansas Missouri RR to bore under its railroad. Johnson said that work on the proposed regional sewer lift station near Garrett Road was on hold, pending action by Cooper Homes to submit plans for a development.

Johnson continued his oral report by saying that the Phase III water projects were making good progress. He said that one contract of Phase III, which created a twelve-inch hydraulic loop on the west side of I 540, was almost complete. Johnson said that he was fairly confident that the plans for the ground storage tank and pump station would be ready next month.

Moore recognized Luanne Diffin, RWU Laboratory Director. Diffin presented Carmen Vellon, an Environmental Quality Technician with the Rogers Pollution Control Facility, with a certificate of appreciation for five years of dedicated service to RWU.

Moore recognized Joyce Johnson, Utilities Controller. Joyce recognized Michelle Williams, RWU Customer Service Representative, with a certificate of appreciation for fifteen years of dedicated service.

Moore recognized Tom McAlister, Utilities Manager for RWU. McAlister presented the commission with copies of a proposed ordinance, which would amend an ordinance passed by the Rogers City Council in March, authorizing the Mayor to enter into a contract with Springdale, Bentonville, and Siloam Springs, to create Northwest Arkansas Conservation Authority. McAlister said that the agreement needed to be changed to reflect the fact that Bentonville and Siloam Springs were not ready to join the authority. Therefore, references to those cities were expunged from the new agreement. Pittman asked Jim Clark if the proposed changes were “OK”? Clark answered that it was the same ordinance as last time, with Bentonville and Siloam Springs deleted. There was a motion by Pittman, second by McLelland, to recommend the changes to the Council. All in favor, motion carried.

McAlister showed the Commission a video that the staff had had professionally produced. The video showed the role Northwest Arkansas Conservation Authority (NACA) could play in solving regional wastewater problems. He said that he intended to show the video to the Council, Springdale Water Commission, and the various civic groups.

McAlister continued by raising the issue of continued water quality issues, specifically phosphorous and the State of Oklahoma. He said that the effect of tightening effluent limits would cost more money, and the Oklahoma stream standard for phosphorous would still be violated, opening up the point source dischargers (cities) to lawsuits. McAlister said that, as the area grew, there would be additional water quality issues, and that, at some point, it might be cheaper to go to a zero discharge regime, either by reusing 100% of the effluent, or by rerouting the effluent to a stream that could assimilate the effluent, such as the Arkansas River. He said that he wanted to talk to some national consulting firms about the feasibility of diverting the effluent. The Commission asked if this might be something for NACA to do? McAlister said yes. Moore said that McAlister should talk to Springdale about it, and report back to the Commission.

Moore recognized Mike Lawrence, Manager of the Rogers Pollution Control Facility. Lawrence presented the Commission with a brief report on the facility’s concerted effort to remove phosphorous from the effluent. He said that there were presently no phosphorus limits, but he expected a limit of one part per million total phosphorus to come from the state soon. He envisioned a scenario whereby that limit could be met with the current plant facilities and current phosphorus loadings. Lawrence said that, if the plant had had such a limit last year, there would have been three “violations” to report. Recently, a phosphate streaming analyzer had been installed, and

the operators had “real time” phosphorus data that would allow the plant to meet a one part per million total phosphorus limit. The Commission praised the staff at the pollution control facility for being proactive about removing phosphorus from the effluent.

Moore recognized Don Roberts, Superintendent of Field Operations. Roberts presented the Commission with proposed Resolution No. 03-01, which set new fees for water services. He said that the rising cost of materials and manpower necessitated the increase in fees. The Commission noted that the average cost for a double meter service was over \$405 and the proposal was to charge only \$400. Pittman said he was not for losing money setting services, and moved to approve the resolution, with the cost for a double service set at \$425 instead of \$400. McLelland seconded the motion. All in favor, motion carried.

Moore recognized Tim Sorrey, P. E., of Sand Creek Engineering. Sorrey said he represented the developers of the proposed Avalon subdivision in Benton County, near Horseshoe Bend Park. Sorrey said that the property was contiguous with a six-inch water mainline. He said the developer wanted to extend a main into the property to serve about 24 lots. Sorrey said that the RWU staff had concerns about the level of fire protection offered by the small line, and had asked that approximately 3600 feet of eight-inch water main be extended to the property. Sorrey asked if it would be permissible to build the water main inside the development to city standards, and the fire hydrants be installed if and when another mainline is ever extended?

Pittman asked Mark Johnson what he thought of Sorrey’s proposal. Johnson said that the subdivision would include large homes with lots of landscaping, requiring lots of water for irrigation. Sorrey said that there was a well on site that could be used for irrigation, and that irrigation with public water could be minimal if prohibited by protective covenants. Johnson said that the city only had one level of service, and thought it would create a dangerous precedent if the Commission made a waiver in this case. McLelland agreed, and moved to send the matter back to staff for resolution. Second by Pittman. All in favor, motion carried.

Moore recognized Mike Bender of Northstar Engineering. Bender represented the developer of Quail Tree Addition, who had been required by RWU staff to upsize a sewer main and force main through his addition to accommodate future growth. The total request for reimbursement was \$8940. There was a motion by McLelland, second by Pittman, to approve the request. All in favor, motion carried.

Continuing, Bender said he represented the developer of Top Flight No. 5 Addition in Benton County. He said the addition was on hold until the improvements to the water system were completed in and along Pleasant Ridge Road. There was a motion by McLelland, second by Pittman to recommend the extension into Top Flight No. 5, provided it met with City Council approval. All in favor, motion carried.

Moore recognized Joyce Johnson again. Johnson did not have the June financial sheets finished, as she wanted to keep the accounts open for year-end adjustments.

The meeting adjourned at 5:00 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

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

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