

## Rogers Waterworks and Sewer Commission

January 19, 2021

### Minutes

The Rogers Waterworks and Sewer Commission held its rescheduled meeting at 4:00 PM Tuesday, January 19, 2021 remotely from the Rogers Water Utilities Administration Building located at 601 S 2<sup>nd</sup> St. due to the COVID-19 Pandemic. Commissioners present were Roger Surly, Travis Greene, Kathy McClure, Don Kendall, and Mike Watkins. Rogers Water Utilities staff present were Brent Dobler, Johnny Lunsford, Brian Sartain, Todd Beaver, Jennifer Lattin, Jene' Huffman-Gilreath, Dana Daniel, Matt Savell, Vera Hall, and Patrick Pruitt. Others in attendance were Cullen Carlson of Freese and Nichols and Robert Frazier of the Frazier Law Firm. Chairman McClure called the meeting to order at 4:00 PM.

Jené Huffman-Gilreath, Shared Services Manager, recognized Vera Hall and Brian Sartain for completion of the RWU Education Assistance Program (EAP). Ms. Hall received an undergraduate degree, and Brian Sartain received a master's degree as a result of participating in the EAP program. Johnny Lunsford, Construction and Maintenance Manager recognized Brandon Carnahan for five (5) years of service and received a gift of appreciation. The RWWSC expressed congratulations.

A motion was made by Commissioner Mike Watkins, second by Commissioner Don Kendall to approve the minutes of the December 21, 2020 meeting as submitted. All in favor, motion carried.

Chairman McClure recognized Jennifer Lattin, Controller to present the December 31, 2020 financial reports. Lattin stated that water consumption for the month of December 2020 is up 18.77% from December 2019. December 2020 includes two additional billing days compared to December 2019. Water consumption is up 7.63% from December 2019. The Water Department reported a profit of \$122,000 for December 2020. A loss of \$18,000 was reported for December 2019. The difference is due to an overall increase in revenues (\$179,000) with a minimal increase in expenses (\$39,000). Fiscal year to date collections of access and impact fee revenue for FY 21 are \$552,000 and are ahead of budget by \$252,000. This compares to year-to-date access and impact fee revenue of \$450,000 in FY 20 and \$300,000 in FY 19. Year to date profit is more than the prior year and ahead of budget.

Billed revenue for the month of December 2020 is up 15.83% from December 2019. December 2020 includes two additional billing days compared to December 2019. Sewer consumption is up 5.20% from December 2019. The Sewer Department reported a profit of \$412,000 for December 2020. A profit of \$210,000 was reported for December 2019. The difference is due to an overall increase in revenues (\$218,000) with a minimal increase in expenses (\$16,000). Fiscal year to date collections of access and impact fee revenue for FY 21 are \$1,117,000 and are ahead of budget by \$527,000. This compares to year-to-date access and impact fee revenue of \$907,000 in FY 20 and \$699,000 in FY 19. Year to date profit is more than the prior year and ahead of budget. The 2010 Sewer Revenue Bonds were called and paid in full in December. Currently, the Sewer Department has one outstanding bond issue, 2016 Sewer Revenue Bonds at \$9,260,000.

Lost water is 16% for the month of December 2020, 16% for the calendar year, and 16% for the last twelve months. Total restricted and unrestricted funds are \$38.2 million for December 2020. This is an overall increase of \$2,310,000 from December 2019. Water funds increased by approximately \$1,555,000 and Sewer funds increased by \$755,000. \$8.1 million of the \$38.2 million total funds is

restricted for specific use such as debt service, meter deposits, access and impact fees, and depreciation.

The RWU lobby remains closed with all business being conducted over the phone, via email, online, and in the drive-through. The number of accounts disconnected for non-payment is 247 for December 2020. In December 2019, the number of accounts disconnect was 276. The process for hiring an additional CSR team member is ongoing.

Chairman McClure recognized Brian Sartain, Utility Engineer for the December engineering report. Engineering had a busy month in plan review with strong construction activity. Some new plan submittals in December included Oak St. – 28<sup>th</sup> to 2<sup>nd</sup> (city project), Dixie Patio Homes, Everest Multifamily (apartments), 1<sup>st</sup> Baptist Church expansion, and residential / commercial sewer extensions. Project distribution is spread evenly throughout the City, with infill and redevelopment occurring. For utility projects, three projects that were in construction were completed in December, with 9<sup>th</sup> & 10<sup>th</sup> Street (Persimmon to Walnut) still under construction. The downtown utilities study is being reviewed by ADH. Train 2 rehab will be started in February. The 11<sup>th</sup> St. tank coating plans & specifications are being reviewed by a 3<sup>rd</sup> party consultant. The Pine St. & Pearl St. waterline replacements plans are at about 90%. Plans will be sent out to bid with the Osage & Seneca waterline relocations and the Moberly Metering Station Re-commissioning, likely in March. The wastewater master plan continues to move forward, and Freese & Nichols will be providing an update later in the meeting. Garver continues to work on the water master plan update, and several other projects are in the design phase. Schedules for several city street projects have not progressed, with Pleasant Grove Rd. being delayed by utility conflicts at the proposed Hwy 112 roundabout. Arkansas Street Gateway is moving forward with utility construction nearly complete along some portions of the project. JB Hunt Dr. and 28<sup>th</sup> Pl. plans are ready for bid, but a bid date has not been established. The Walnut widening project is in the acquisition phase and utility work is not expected for several months.

Chairman McClure recognized Todd Beaver, RPCF Manager to present the December RPCF Reports. Beaver reported that the industrial pretreatment and FOG programs are proceeding at a good pace in spite of administrative challenges from COVID-19. There were no violations or significant events of note in December. One employee transferred from RPCF to field operations as a promotion, leaving an available staff position open. There were notable levels of Inflow and Infiltration (I&I) compared to the amount of rainfall in December. RPCF staff is coordinating with other RWU departments and discussing methods to address this concern. There were no questions.

Chairman McClure recognized Johnny Lunsford, Construction and Maintenance Manager to present the December Operations Report. As mentioned by Jennifer earlier, new construction and development is strong in the area, which we believe to be driven by developers attempting to complete construction for their own tax purposes. Regarding field operations, several water breaks have occurred throughout the water system. On average in recent weeks, RWU receives notice of one to two water breaks a day in varying parts of town. At this time, RWU is unsure as to the driving factor(s) causing the recent increase in water breaks. RWU teams continue to work in segregated pods and striving to remain healthy. If employees are required to enter common areas, employees are wearing masks and maintaining six foot distance. Furthermore, employees are also not allowed to ride in the same vehicles. There were no questions.

Chairman McClure recognized Brian Sartain and Cullen Carlson from Freese and Nichols to present an update of the status of the wastewater master plan update, which includes flow projections, collection system analysis, and Rogers Pollution Control Facility condition assessment as well as biological and hydraulic capacity analysis. There were no questions following the presentation.

Chairman McClure recognized Dana Daniel, HR Manager, to present Resolution No. 21-01 approving additional COVID-19 Emergency Paid Sick Leave. Three key points created the need for this resolution. 1. The Federal mandated Covid Leave expired 12/31/20. 2. Extending this leave would provide affected employees with income while they are required to quarantine. 3. The leave provided by this resolution would eliminate an employee having to decide if they should stay home and quarantine or return to work in order to provide for their families. Motion was made by Commissioner Mike Watkins, second by Commissioner Don Kendall to approve Resolution 21-01 with exhibit 1 attached. All in favor, motion carried.

Chairman McClure recognized Todd Beaver, RPCF Manager, to request an additional staff member at the Rogers Pollution Control Plant (RPCF). The request of an additional Plant Operations Technician is due to the increased manhours needed to operate the sludge dryer for 7 days a week. Calendar year effect of salaries and benefits is \$46,000; fiscal year 21 effect is estimated to be \$20,000. The requested position is not included in the FY 21 budget, but current funds are sufficient. A current candidate is available to start if the request is approved. Motion was made by Commissioner Travis Greene, second by Commissioner Mike Watkins to approve the additional staff member at RPCF. All in favor, motion carried.

Brent Dobler, Utility Superintendent, requested approval for renewal of the USGS Osage Creek Monitoring Joint Funding Contract. The agreement maintains operation of the Osage Creek water quality meter and storm event sampling. The amount is \$41,000 and will be a cost share with the City of Rogers to reimburse fifty (50) percent of the cost not to exceed \$20,500. Commissioner Don Kendall inquired whether this is the same annual USGS contract as in prior years. Dobler responded that it is. Motion was made by Commissioner Don Kendall, second by Commissioner Travis Greene to approve the USGS Osage Creek Monitoring Joint Funding Contract. All in favor, motion carried.

Chairman McClure recognized Brian Sartain, Utility Engineer, to present a motion to approve an architectural contract for a new field operations facility and administration building. The scope of preliminary services as outlined in the contract will be the schematic design phase services including programming, planning, and concept plans. Staff requests the approval of the proposed agreement with Hight Jackson Associates to provide schematic design phase services at an hourly rate not to exceed \$47,500 for the schematic design phase. Staff also requests permission to negotiate the final form and content of the agreement. Commissioner Don Kendall made a motion to approve, with a second by Commissioner Mike Watkins. All in favor, motion approved.

Chairman McClure announced that her two (2) yr term as Chairman of the RWWSC has been fulfilled. Commissioner Travis Greene nominated Commissioner Mike Watkins for the Chairman position and Commissioner Don Kendall second the motion. Commissioner Mike Watkins accepted and will fill the two (2) yr term as Chairman of the RWWSC. All in favor, motion carried.

Also, Chairman McClure asked for the Commission's approval to appoint a member of the RWWSC to serve for a two (2) yr term on the RWU Depository and Investment Committee. Commissioner Travis Greene made a motion that was seconded by Commissioner Mike Watkins to nominate Commissioner Roger Surly. Commissioner Roger Surly accepted the position for a (2) yr term on the RWU Depository and Investment Committee. All in favor, motion carried.

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 4:48 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Brent Dobler', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Brent Dobler, Acting Secretary/jal

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