

xPursuant to the Open Records Act: The minutes of the LCRWS #17 are available to its members upon request. Copy rates are posted at the LCRWD #17 office and on file with the County Clerk. Minutes will also be available at our website lcrwd17@myruralwater.com

LCRWD#17 Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

October 8, 2024

- Meeting called to order at 6:04 PM.
- Vicki Cearnal led the meeting with a prayer.
- Roll Call: Vicki Cearnal Chairman, present. Jean Conklin Vice-Chairman, present. Deb Butler Treasurer, present. Kendle Ortiz Secretary, present. Matt Pollard, member at large present.
- Also present were John Butler, Water Operator, Ken Winkenwerder and Dale Franks. Sign in sheet filed with BOD reports.
- Board member resignation: Matt Pollard, Member at Large, tendered his resignation. He expressed his appreciation for the opportunity to serve and to become involved with the community. The entire board expressed their appreciation of his gifting and lending his expertise to the water district and encouraged him to return to our board meetings.
- Secretary's Report: Jean Conklin emailed the September 10th BOD meeting minutes to the board prior to the meeting. Vicki asked if there were any questions or amendments of those meeting minutes. There were none. Vicki Cearnal made a motion to accept the BOD meeting minutes from

September 10th. Matt Pollard seconded the motion. Vicki Cearnal voted yea. Jean Conklin voted yea. Deb Butler voted yea. Kendle Ortiz abstained as she was absent from that meeting. Matt Pollard voted yea. Motion carried.

- **Treasurer's Report:** Deb Butler had emailed the Treasurer's report to the board prior to the meeting. Copy of the report filed with the meeting minutes. Deb asked if there were any further questions regarding the Treasurer's report. There were none. Vicki thanked Deb for getting the reports out early as it was very helpful. Kendle Ortiz made a motion to accept the Treasurer's Report. Matt Pollard seconded the motion. Vicki Cearnal voted yea. Jean Conklin voted yea. Deb Butler voted yea. Kendle Ortiz voted yea. Matt Pollard voted yea. Motion carried.
- **Operator's Report:** John Butler presented his operator's report to the board. A copy of the operator's report is filed with the meeting minutes. There was a lengthy discussion regarding the operator's report. John asked for the boards input into the Freedom water situation regarding water testing for TTHM's. John stated that flushing will never solve our consent order. John stated he had spoken with Peter and Arkansas has a Health Department rather than DEQ. John suggested to Peter moving the testing site to the state line but Peter was questionable about that. Currently they are testing about 2 ½ miles from the state line. Vicki asked John what are we asking of Freedom. John stated that they start testing on the Arkansas side and also flushing their line. Kendle stated that since we are only paying Freedom \$1 per customer meter that it was unrealistic to ask them to also flush their line as there was no incentive for them to do this. Vicki stated she would call and speak with Freedom water regarding this issue. There was a lengthy discussion regarding our water loss numbers and the improvement that we have been seeing with the new systems. Ken Winkenweder stated that Vicki might be able to ask for a special rate for water flushing. There was a lengthy discussion regarding our contract with

Mena water and Arkansas law regarding selling water over the state line. Vicki thanked John for his reports.

- Old Business:
 - Grants Update: Deb Butler presented the board with the grant updates. Copy of the grant update filed with the meeting minutes. There were no questions regarding her update. Vicki Cearnal stated that she had submitted a new application for a \$1.6 million SmartWater/BLM Drought Resiliency grant that they seemed to think fit our needs perfectly. With the grant we would be able to replace booster 1 at the cross roads and that included the cost of a propane tank for a generator. John stated we would need a bigger easement and that he had spoken with the gentleman who had granted us the perpetual easement for the booster site to see if we could enlarge that easement. John stated that he seemed okay with the idea. Vicki thanked John for his initiative on that. Vicki stated if we got the grant we would be able to replace 4 miles of water line and be able to remove booster 3 entirely, which would resolve our Notice of Violation from DEQ. Vicki stated she was able to obtain several letters of support from members of our local as well as federal and state government for our district to submit along with the application. Deb thanked Vicki for doing the application. Kendle stated that every time we applied for a grant we learned something extra.
 - ServLine leak insurance: Jean reviewed the need to decide whether or not to offer it to our members, and recommended it as an opt-in option. Deb confirmed that the \$2.35 monthly charge per meter can be added to the billing software. Servline will provide envelopes and cover the cost of postage whenever we are ready. (We should be able to place our monthly bill inside the envelope.) Kendle Ortiz made a motion to start the process of offering Servline to our customers as soon as possible. Matt Pollard seconded the motion. Vicki Cearnal voted yea. Jean Conklin voted yea. Deb Butler voted

yea. Kendle Ortiz voted yea. Matt Pollard voted yea. Motion carried. Vicki appointed Jean to spearhead the movement. Kendle Ortiz stated she would get her the contact information to get started with setting that up for our district.

- **New Business:**

- **Engineering report findings for Pipe Springs project:** John was able to get Mike Redmond on the phone from Mears Engineers. Deb Butler asked Mike if he had any good sources for potential grants to help cover engineering costs specifically. She stated that we would like any grants we receive to cover construction costs so if there were grants specifically for engineering costs that would be beneficial. Mike stated he would speak with Mellissa Mears regarding this as that was her area of expertise. He stated he would have her get back to us regarding this issue as soon as possible. There was a lengthy discussion regarding the timeline and what needs to be done when. Vicki stated that the Choctaw grant documents would be ready in two weeks. She is going to have Dean Warren review them for us. She stated at that point in about three to four weeks we could start writing checks. There was a lengthy discussion regarding if we prepay will be reimbursed for that money. Vicki stated she would clarify that with Choctaw Nation but it was her understanding that all costs would be covered and absolutely 100% of the engineering costs would be covered. Vicki stated she would have an answer for that tomorrow.
- **Set up bank account for Choctaw grant funding:** Deb stated we needed to set up a new checking account for the Choctaw grant money. She stated it needed to be named Choctaw grant or something that had Choctaw in the name to separate it from our other grant account. Vicki will call the bank and set that up. Deb Butler made a motion to establish a checking account for the Choctaw funding. Matt Pollard seconded the motion. Vicki Cearnal

voted yea. Jean Conklin voted yea. Deb Butler voted yea. Kendle Ortiz voted yea. Matt Pollard voted yea. Motion Carried.

- Hardship approval: A Hardship request was made by Matt Pollard. The hardship application was reviewed by the board and approved.
- Office building and future needs for the district: Vicki Cearnal had spoken with Choctaw Nation regarding the responsibility of storing project supplies. The contractor would be responsible for storing all materials prior to installation, and normally a local site is chosen and prepared for securing their materials, which often included a fenced graveled area. Matt suggested that we get our name as soon as the contract is awarded, for them to come to us as first right of refusal for material storage location. Brody Werst indicated that he felt the office building was salvageable. Brody suggested Galvalume for the roof and clad metal siding for the building. There was a lengthy discussion regarding the roof repair. Brody Werst had submitted a quote for \$5,200 for the roof repair. There was a lengthy discussion regarding the roof repair and the exterior of the building. Brody had offered a solution to do siding, which would cost approximately twice the cost of the roof repair, so approximately \$10,000. Vicki stated that Dean Warren had informed here that there was a member who did not want to be disclosed who was making a donation to the district for the repair of the building. There were some conditions but as soon as she knew how much and what the conditions were we could discuss that further. Matt asked how long it would take for the roof repair. Vicki stated that Brody had stated it would take 2 weeks. Matt Pollard stated that we repair the roof now with the insurance money and we revisit other building repairs when the money is available. Matt Pollard made a motion to repair the roof with a metal roof using the insurance money. Kendle Ortiz seconded the motion. Vicki Cearnal voted yea. Jean Conklin voted yea. Deb Butler voted yea. Kendle Ortiz voted yea. Matt Pollard voted yea. Motion carried. Vicki will call Brody to get started.

- Adjourn to Executive Session: Vicki Cearnal made a motion to adjourn to executive session. Matt Pollard seconded the motion. Vicki Cearnal voted yea. Jean Conklin voted yea. Deb Butler voted yea. Kendle Ortiz voted yea. Matt Pollard voted yea. Motion carried. Adjourned to executive session at 7:15 PM.

- Vicki Cearnal made a motion to come out of executive session. Kendle Ortiz seconded the motion. Vicki Cearnal voted yea. Jean Conklin voted yea. Deb Butler voted yea. Kendle Ortiz voted yea. Matt Pollard voted yea. Motion carried. Adjourned executive session at 8:01 PM.

- Vicki Cearnal made a motion to return to regular session. Matt Pollard seconded the motion. Vicki Cearnal voted yea. Jean Conklin voted yea. Deb Butler voted yea. Kendle Ortiz voted yea. Matt Pollard voted yea. Motion carried. Returned to regular session at 8:01 PM.

- Open Member Discussions: None.

- Adjournment: Kendle Ortiz made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Vicki Cearnal seconded the motion. Vicki Cearnal voted yea. Jean Conklin voted yea. Deb Butler voted yea. Kendle Ortiz voted yea. Matt Pollard voted yea. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 8:02 PM.

Signed: 

Seal: