

Pursuant to the Open Record's Act: The minutes of the Rural Water District No. 17, LeFlore County are available to its members upon request. Copy rates are posted at the RWD No. 17 LC office and on file with the County Clerk. Approved minutes will also be available at our website
<https://lcrwd17.myruralwater.com>

Rural Water District No. 17, LeFlore County

Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

September 16, 2025

6:00 PM

Prayer: Jean Conklin led the meeting with prayer.

Roll Call: Vicki Cearnal, Chairperson, present. Jean Conklin, Vice-Chairperson, present. Kendle Ortiz, Secretary, present. Ronny Blake, Member at Large, present. Billy Page, Water Operator and Shelly Goodson, Office Manager are present. Others present were Buck Roba, Bernadine Himes, David Conklin, Fred Mathews, Ginger Martinez, Dalia Lavender, Alex Cole, Judy Cole and Kelly Pipkins. Sign In Sheet will be filed with meeting minutes.

Call to Order: Call to Order: Vicki Cearnal called the meeting to order at 6:02 PM.

Approval of Agenda: Vicki Cearnal asked if anyone had any amendments to the agenda. There were none. Kendle Ortiz made a motion to approve the agenda. Jean Conklin seconded the motion. Vicki Cearnal voted aye. Jean Conklin voted aye. Kendle Ortiz voted aye. Ronny Blake voted aye. Motion carried.

Secretary's Report: Kendle Ortiz stated that she had emailed the minutes from the Special called BOD meeting on August 2nd and the BOD meeting minutes from August 26th. Kendle Ortiz asked if there were any questions or amendments. There were none. Kendle Ortiz made a motion to approve the Special meeting minutes from August 2nd and the BOD meeting minutes from August 26th. Jean Conklin seconded the motion. Vicki Cearnal voted aye. Jean Conklin voted aye. Kendle Ortiz voted aye. Ronny Blake voted aye. Motion carried.

Treasurer's Report: Kendle Ortiz presented the Treasurer's Report to the board. Kendle Ortiz stated that the reports were the Balance Sheet, the Bank Activity Report for all bank accounts, the P&L, the Cash Flow Report, the Monthly Billing Recap and the to date Water Loss Reports. Kendle Ortiz stated that the available funds in the bank as of 9-2-25 were \$64,592.55 from all accounts. Kendle Ortiz stated that the district had deposits of \$14,851.87 and checks/debits of \$15,868.87, so the district was operating in a deficit for August. Kendle Ortiz stated she apologized to the board as she had been very busy with work and family issues and that next month, she hoped to have a better handle on everything. Kendle stated that she would be reviewing the end of month paperwork with Shelly Goodson at the beginning of October and would get the reports out to the board early for review. Ronny Blake made a motion to accept the Treasurer's Report. Jean Conklin seconded the motion. Vicki Cearnal voted aye. Jean Conklin voted aye. Kendle Ortiz voted aye. Ronny Blake voted aye. Motion carried.

Operator's Report: Billy Page stated he had emailed his report to the board. Billy asked if there were any questions regarding his report. There were none. Vicki Cearnal asked Billy Page how many leaks there had been. Billy Page stated that there had been five leaks, three had been fixed and two had not been fixed yet. Billy Page stated that one was east of Kiamichi River. There was a discussion regarding the leaks and repairs. Vicki Cearnal thanked Billy Page for his report and all his hard work. Vicki Cearnal stated that she would like to introduce the new office manager, Shelly Anderson Goodson, and to welcome her to the district. Shelly Goodson stated she would try to do as good a job as possible.

Silk Purse Update: Jean Conklin presented the Silk Purse update to the board. Jean stated that there had been about 21 wallboard holes made during the electrical repair and that on Friday they would start the repair on that and touch up the paint as there had been some areas that had bled through. Everything should be completed by Monday and the rehabilitation of the office would be complete except for fine-tuning and touch ups. Jean Conklin stated that there was still a Needs List for items to donate to the office project and Jean distributed the list to the members present. Jean stated that she would be happy to accept any of the items that the members might donate. Vicki Cearnal stated that she wanted to thank Jean Conklin for everything she had done. Vicki stated that Jean had taken the project and was present for every phase of it acting as a contractor, subcontractor, painter and laborer. Vicki Cearnal stated that it was an amazing transformation.

Grants Update: Vicki Cearnal stated that she would combine the grants update and the standpipe project update together. Vicki Cearnal stated that she would review the grants that were current or had been applied for. Vicki stated the Choctaw Development Fund had been applied for \$17,460 for an ADA ramp and the emergency electrical repair of the office building. Vicki stated that this grant had good odds of approval as she had been asked to select the ramp that the district wanted to be installed. Vicki stated the ORWA-ARPA for \$30,235.58 to address obtaining valves and pump hydrants. Vicki stated the ORWA RIG Grant would be available to apply for again in the spring. Vicki stated the KEDDO REAP grant for \$1,800 for computer equipment for the office had been applied for. Vicki stated that ORWA ARPA had released funds that had been suspended and that they were looking for projects to fund and that the district had reapplied for Pipe Springs for \$1 Million. Vicki Cearnal stated that Indian Health Services had funding and that the district had applied for \$5 Million and that was in process. Vicki Cearnal stated that the Standpipe project was getting ready to start and that the members had possibly seen the pipe and other materials being stored along the highway for that project. Vicki stated that the remediation of the standpipe was for the DEQ consent order and should begin the first week of October. Dalia Lavender asked if there would be interruptions of the water supply during the construction. Vicki Cearnal stated that there would be no interruptions of the water supply as there was a bypass in place for the construction. Vicki Cearnal stated that the district had been awarded a grant from ORWB for \$41,000 for the electrical work for booster station 1 and the district just had to complete the paperwork for that and that should be completed by the end of the year. Vicki stated that the USDA had awarded \$149,000 for the river bore at River Road. There was a discussion regarding the temporary repair of the river bore.

Standpipe Project Update: See above.

New Business:

Authorizing Resolution – Approval for the Secretary of the Board to co-sign any grant documents previously authorized to have been co-signed by Deborah Butler, former Treasurer of the Board, relating to the USDA ECWAG (Kiamichi River Bore) grant resolution dated July 1, 2025: Vicki Cearnal stated that USDA ECWAG grant resolution that had been done on July 1st had listed Vicki Cearnal Chairman and Deborah Butler Treasurer as the signers on that grant. Vicki stated that since Deborah Butler had resigned, they needed to amend the resolution. Vicki Cearnal read the resolution into the minutes.

RESOLUTION

AUTHORIZING RESOLUTION FOR AMENDMENT TO THE APPLICATION FOR OKLAHOMA WATER RESOURCES BOARD REAP GRANT

WHEREAS Rural Water District #17 in LeFlore County has a water loss ratio between 50-70% monthly due to poor installation of the water line 22 years ago that has depleted their resources; and there is danger of loss of water service for customers

WHEREAS, Rural Water District No. 17 in LeFlore County is financially incapable or remedying the situation which threatens the public health and welfare of the people of Big Cedar, Oklahoma; and

WHEREAS, Rural Water District No. 17 in LeFlore County has applied for and been awarded a \$41,000 grant from the Oklahoma Water Resources Board through the REAP program; and

WHEREAS, The original resolution dated July 9, 2024 gave Vicki Cearnal as Chairman and Deborah Butler as Treasurer the authority to sign any/all related applications and documents related to this OWRB REAP grant

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that a situation is hereby recognized and declared to exist in LeFlore County, Oklahoma and that the Chairperson of the Board and/or the Secretary, are hereby authorized and directed to sign related documents to process the grant on behalf of Rural Water District #17 in Leflore County, Oklahoma.

Kelly Pipkins stated he had an objection to having Kendle Ortiz being able to sign for the district. Kelly stated that it had come to his attention that Kendle Ortiz had been taken to court by her grandmother. Vicki Cearnal stated that this was not on the agenda at this time and if they had concerns, they should speak to the board privately. Kelly stated that he had asked to speak to Vicki about this but that she had not called him back and if she had they would not have to talk about it at the meeting. Vicki stated that she had left two messages for Kelly to call her but that she had not received a call from Kelly. Kelly stated that he had called Vicki and sent her messages regarding this. Vicki Cearnal stated she had not received any messages from Kelly nor were there any missed calls from Kelly. There was a lengthy discussion regarding the objection. There were very heated discussions regarding the objection, district policy and members' input. Vicki Cearnal called for a point of order that was ignored by the members. Judy Cole stated that

this was her first meeting that she had attended. Judy Cole stated that she had heard that the members were being cheated and that she wanted to know about that. Vicki Cearnal stated that she was happy she came to the meeting, and she hoped she would come to all the meetings so she could be informed of what is happening in the district. Judy Cole stated she had been told that the district was being cheated and that the rates had doubled and that they needed to go back to where they were before. Vicki Cearnal asked Judy Cole whatever she had been told if she had specific questions that she could call or email her, and she would be happy to get her answers. There was a lengthy discussion regarding the rates and the ORWA rate study that was done prior to the rate increase. There was a discussion on who ORWA are and what they do. Jean Conklin stated that the Bylaws and Policies and Procedures are posted on the website for everyone to review. Vicki Cearnal called for a point of order which was ignored by the members present. Ronny Blake stated that since the members would not come to order that the board should just continue the business on the agenda. Kendle Ortiz made a motion to accept the resolution as read into the meeting minutes. Jean Conklin seconded the motion. Vicki Cearnal voted aye. Jean Conklin voted aye. Kendle Ortiz voted aye. Ronny Blake voted aye. Motion carried.

USDA ECWAG Grant Project – Signature of the Task Notes document for the Kiamichi River Bore Project: There was a discussion regarding the Kiamichi River Bore Project. Jean Conklin made a motion to approve the Task order to replace the 4" lines. Ronny Blake seconded the motion. Vicki Cearnal voted aye. Jean Conklin voted aye. Kendle Ortiz voted aye. Ronny Blake voted aye. Motion carried.

Board Vacancy – Discussion regarding the open seat on the board: Vicki Cearnal stated that as most of the members were aware Deborah Butler had resigned from the board and that left a vacancy on the board. Vicki Cearnal stated that the board would be looking for a candidate to volunteer to fill the board seat. Buck Roba stated that he had been wanting to get on the board for quite a while. David Conklin stated that during the January Membership meeting when Deborah Butler was up for reelection that Buck Roba had not put himself forward as a candidate for the seat. Buck Roba asked if there was even a January meeting. Kelly Pipkins stated that yes there was a January meeting. Vicki Cearnal stated that if Buck Roba was interested that she would send him a list of the responsibilities and expectations required of board members. Buck Roba stated that would be fine. Vicki Cearnal stated that anyone wanting to volunteer to be on the board that they should contact the board for more information and consideration.


Stand Pipe Project – Discussion of duties and responsibilities for the construction inspector: Vicki Cearnal stated that the district was looking to hire an inspector for the upcoming standpipe project and that position would be hired through Wall Engineering. Ronny Blake asked how long the position would be. Vicki Cearnal stated that approximately 330 construction days. Vicki Cearnal stated that the position would start slow, anywhere from some days a few minutes or a couple of hours and up to several hours as the project progressed. Vicki Cearnal stated that there would be a daily log and a time sheet that would need to be completed by the inspector hired. Buck Roba asked if there would be a conflict in being the inspector if you were a board member. Ronny Blake stated he might be interested in the position as well. Vicki Cearnal stated that she would contact Dean Warren regarding any conflict with a board member being the inspector for the construction project. There was a lengthy discussion regarding the prior

installation of the waterlines in the district and the ensuing problems and lawsuit. Vicki Cearnal stated that the district wanted to make sure that whoever the inspector was did the inspection correctly and made sure it was being installed according to the plans and specifications to avoid any issues with the waterlines. There was a discussion regarding the water operator being the inspector. There was a discussion of the inspectors hired for the original construction. Vicki Cearnal stated that the board wanted to make sure that this construction was done correctly. Vicki Cearnal stated that anyone interested in the inspector position should contact the district. Vicki made available copies of the Construction Inspector job description and Time Sheets for distribution.

October Meetings – Discussion of the October regular meeting and the October board and budget workshop: Vicki Cearnal stated that the board had started having a meeting in October to do a board and budget workshop. Vicki stated that the purpose of the meeting was to discuss the needs of the district as well as Federal and State money. Vicki Cearnal stated that there had been \$6 Million in grants applied for by this board. Vicki stated that usually districts hired grant writers to do this but in our district the board had done all of the applications for grants. Vicki Cearnal stated that October 14th was the date of the regular board meeting and the board needed to select a date for the budget workshop. There was a discussion on October 18th or October 25th. October 18th was selected as the date for the workshop. Vicki Cearnal stated she would get an agenda prepared for that meeting.

Old Business – None.

Adjournment: Jean Conklin made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Kendle Ortiz seconded the motion. Vicki Cearnal voted aye. Jean Conklin voted aye. Kendle Ortiz voted aye. Ronny Blake voted aye. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 6:41 PM.

Signed: 
10-14-2021

Seal: _____

