

WEST MADISON UTILITY DISTRICT BOARD OF  
COMMISSIONERS REGULAR MEETING  
January 14, 2020

BE IT REMEMBERED that the regular meeting of the Board of Commissioners of the West Madison Utility District was duly convened, held and conducted on January 14, 2020, in the Kearney Park Community Center at 443 Livingston Vernon Road, Flora MS, as follows to wit:

The President of the Board, Larry Bennett, presided and called the meeting to order.

The following members were present:

Commissioner Larry Bennett	Commissioner Evelyn Brown - Absent
Commissioner Scott Colson	
Commissioner Valencia Buggs	
Commissioner Letitia Reeves	

The Board President announced that the members of the Board present constituted a quorum and declared the meeting duly convened. Commissioner Bennett opened the meeting with a prayer.

Commissioner Bennett asked attendees to hold their comments until after the meeting and collected the sign in sheet for persons wishing to address the Board.

**RE: Introductions**

Commissioner Bennett introduced Supervisor Karl Banks and asked persons to introduce themselves. The following people introduced themselves: Lawrence Morris, Dorothy Bennett, the Community Center Manager, and each of the Board of Commissioners.

**RE: Approval of the January 14, 2020 Agenda**

Commissioner Colson motioned and Commissioner Buggs seconded to approve the Agenda for the January 14, 2020, meeting for the Board of Commissioners of the West Madison Utility District. The vote on the matter being as follows: All Commissioners present voted "aye." The matter carried unanimously and the Agenda for the January 14, 2020, meeting is hereby approved.

**RE: Approval of Consent Items**

Commissioner Colson motioned to approve the consent items on the agenda and Commissioner Buggs seconded the motion. All Commissioners voted "Aye" and the consent items listed as follows were approved:

\*\*\*CONSENT AGENDA\*\*\*

5. Acknowledgement and Acceptance of EOM RVS Report for December, 2019
6. Acknowledgement and Acceptance of Financial Statement for November 30, 2019
7. Acceptance and Approval of the December 10, 2019 Minutes
8. Annual Review of Emergency Response Plan for Water Systems
9. Annual Review of Security Vulnerability Self-Assessment Guide for Water Systems

\*\*\*END OF CONSENT AGENDA\*\*\*

**RE: Customer Issues**

1. Account #572; James Davis, 143 Renfroe Drive

Mr. Davis addressed the Board regarding his December water bill and stated that there was no way that he could have used 12,860 gallons of water. He stated that his bill was usually \$45.00 per month and he has not been able to locate any leaks anywhere. The account detail does reflect that his bills were \$45.00 per month all year until December, 2019. Commissioner Reeves asked the Operator, K. T. Newman, if he went and re-read the meter to which K. T. answered "yes." K. T. stated that when



they went to re-read the meter that the needle was not moving, which it would be doing if there was a leak. K. T. also stated that it appears that the January bill appears to be back in line with Mr. Davis' usual monthly charge. K. T. stated that the meter was working correctly. No one could identify a leak, and no one had any explanation of why Mr. Davis' water usage in December was higher than normal. Commissioner Bennett instructed K. T. to keep a watch on Mr. Davis' water usage and try to identify what is happening. Commissioner Bennett stated "I am at a loss to tell you why your water bill was so high, but if you identify a leak and have it fixed, we can adjust your sewer charges only." Mr. Davis stated that he didn't make the kind of money to pay this large of a bill and Commissioner Bennett informed him that he could be placed on a payment plan if he needed it.

## 2. Account #145; Kristen Dukes; 150 Willow Way

Ms. Kristen Dukes addressed the board and stated that it was just 4 hours earlier that she had received the December 16, 2019 letter regarding her water charges. She further stated that she thought it was "low taste" to mention her divorce agreement in the letter as she had met all her obligations in her divorce. Ms. Dukes then proceeded to elaborate on her divorce. She then stated that the \$1,100 charge she incurred was due to a faucet that had a leak after the freeze and she did not have any idea that there was a faucet in that area as it wasn't there when she had lived there before with her parents so either the prior owners or her husband had placed it there. Because she did not know that the faucet was in this location, she felt that she should not be responsible for the water charge. Ms. Dukes mentioned that another large water bill was the result of an automatic horse waterer that had gotten clogged and kept running without her knowing. Ms. Dukes stated "I have lived here a very long time. We are a community. Why send a letter bringing up my divorce when someone could have just called me? I spoke with Commissioner Bennett before about my ex-husband being removed from the account and he informed me that his name could not be removed." Commissioner Bennett informed her that he told her she could not remove her husband from her account prior to her divorce. Ms. Dukes then stated, "I am not a loser. I run my own business and I have been in business for over twenty years. I am asking you to remove the huge bill amounts because I cannot pay this. I want to pay my debts but I cannot pay this. When I talk about this with people in Madison and Canton they tell me I need to ask for forgiveness and get these amounts removed from my bill as they are able to do so there. I do not have much income. I always get my water cut off and run up here to pay. Call Madison and ask them, they would remove that charge. I did not know that water line was there and I have lived here before there was a water system."

Commissioner Bennett asked Ms. Dukes if she agreed to put the water account in her name. She answered "yes." Then Ms. Dukes stated "This is not just this situation...not me doing what my divorce decree says. I did." Commissioner Bennett stated the Board would let her know their decision.

## 3. Account #102; Sharon & Lonnie Moncure; 442 Livingston Vernon Road

Ms. Sharon Moncure addressed the Board and provided a list of costs that she wanted to have reimbursed due to sewage backing into her home on December 22, 2019. The Operator provided a timeline of events in his report regarding Ms. Moncure's situation. Ms. Moncure asked for someone to be sent to test for bacteria. She further stated that "I have been here since 2003 and this has been a problem at least once a year during heavy rains. Can't you install something to keep the sewer from backflowing into my home? I don't know if the previous Board did anything to correct the problem." Ms. Moncure also asked why the Board was just now finding out about the situation when it happened in December. K. T. responded that the Board did not meet until now and could not make a formal decision until they met. He told Ms. Moncure that the reason he wanted her to appear before the Board was to let them hear the facts direct from her. Ms. Moncure stated that "I usually file a claim. I want to be compensated for the expenses I have incurred and I want MSDEQ to be contacted to come and inspect my home like they did before." Commissioner Bennett addressed Ms. Moncure and stated that the current Board had been here since 2016, but this is the first time we have heard anything about her issues. Commissioner Bennett asked K. T. if it was the backflow from the main sewer line that caused this situation and K. T. said "yes." The heavy rainfall with the water flowing into the sewer lines upstream cause this backflow into her line. Commissioner Scott asked Ms. Moncure if the previous Board did anything like installing a flap and she stated that she did not know. K. T. did not know. Commissioner Bennett stated that installing a flap valve would be a step in the right direction. Ms. Moncure asked for the name of WMUD's insurance carrier in order to file a claim. Commissioner Reeves informed her that it



was WMUD who would contact the insurance company and the insurance company would, in turn, contact her. Ms. Moncure wanted to know how long to wait until someone contacted her and Commissioner Bennett stated to please give us a couple of days like before the close of business on Friday." Ms. Moncure stated that she was okay with that. K. T. said that we would do our very best to resolve this but this, like everything else, has a procedure.

#### **RE: Operator's Report**

K. T. Newman, Operator, addressed the Board and stated that the annual inspection by the Health Department will be February 20, 2020. K. T. then addressed the situation of the lift station at The Woodlands along Kearney Park Road and said that it currently had only one working pump and WMUD needed to install two five-horse power pumps that would be about \$3,000 each. Also, WMUD needs access off of Kearney Park Road to get to the lift station. We need a culvert installed and some type of riprap to stop the erosion as well.

The sewer jetter is paying for itself. It is used by WMUD at least once a week. Commissioner Bennett asked K. T. if the jetter did a better job than when WMUD had contractors jet the line as we usually ended up jetting the same area several times. K. T. stated that they had enacted a procedure where they would jet the line the first time and if it was clogged a second time, they would dig up that section of the line and replace it. The biggest problem is the service lines that "y" into one.

Commissioner Bennett asked K. T. about installing a check valve on Sharon Moncure's line. K. T. stated that should alleviate the sewer back up into her home but the valve would need to be installed on her line as it needed to be placed as close to the house as possible where the line is the most shallow for maintenance purposes. Commissioner Bennett stated that he felt WMUD needed to take this action but make sure that there was something in writing where Ms. Moncure allows WMUD to install the flap valve on her personal line, but acknowledging that she would be responsible for upkeep of the valve in the future as it would be on her line. All other Board members agreed.

K. T. stated that a new gate had been installed at the lagoon.

Commissioner Bennett asked why the water main on Willow Way broke. K. T. told him that the ground probably shifted. Commissioner Bennett asked what size was the line and K. T. informed him it was a 4 inch line.

K. T. stated that the purchase orders were attached to his report.

#### **RE: Audience Comments**

Commissioner Bennett stated that prior to going into Executive Session, if there was anyone who had anything else to say that the Board would be willing to hear that now.

Ray Sanders with the Fire Department was in attendance and he stated that fire insurance rates should go down for the area because their rating had dropped from a 9 to an 8. The Board of Commissioners congratulated the Fire Department for that accomplishment.

Joyce Taylor addressed the Board and wanted to know why when someone rented the Community Center on Friday that they paid the same amount as someone who rented it on Saturday or Sunday when they could only get in the Community Center after 1:30 p.m. on Friday but could get it the whole day on either Saturday or Sunday. Commissioner Bennett stated that the Board would discuss this as no one had ever raised this question before.

Commissioner Bennett, thanked everyone for coming and stated the Board would be going into Executive Session and they would have to step out but would be welcome to return after the Executive Session was adjourned. Supervisor Karl Banks was invited to stay for the Executive Session.

#### **RE: Executive Session**

Engineer, Morgan Sims, to address Board regarding Contracts  
Supervisor Karl Banks in attendance

Executive Session was adjourned and Board was returned to regular session.

Scott Colson made the motion and Valencia Buggs seconded, with all present voting "aye," that K. T. will install a flap valve on Sharon Moncure's line but to make sure WMUD had an agreement in writing where she gave permission for WMUD to install it, and that she and her husband acknowledges

that it will be their responsibility for upkeep/maintenance of the flap valve as it will be on their personal line.

Scott Colson motioned and Valencia Buggs seconded, with all present voting "aye," that the payment arrangements as stated in the December 16, 2019 letter to Kristen Dukes will stand as will the charges that she incurred. WMUD's policy does not allow for "write offs" of water usage.

Scott Colson motioned and Valencia Buggs seconded, with all present voting "aye," that WMUD should submit an insurance claim regarding Sharon Moncure's problem with the sewer backup into her home on December 22, 2019. Commissioner Reeves stated that she would contact the insurance carrier in the morning and forward Ms. Moncure's statement that she brought to the meeting, along with K.T.'s timeline.

Scott Colson motioned and Valencia Buggs seconded, with all present voting "aye," the rental of the Community Center should remain the same for Friday as for Saturday and Sunday.

**RE: Old Business**

None.

**RE: New Business**

None.

Commissioner Bennett asked if there was any other business to discuss, and if not a motion to adjourn could be made. Commissioner Colson made the motion to adjourn and Commission Buggs seconded to adjourn the meeting. All Board members voted "aye" and the meeting was adjourned.