

WEST MADISON UTILITY DISTRICT BOARD OF
COMMISSIONERS REGULAR MEETING
OCTOBER 13, 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 October 13, 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	Absent
Commissioner Letitia Reeves	Commissioner Evelyn Brown
Commissioner Scott Colson	Commissioner Valencia Buggs

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.

RE: Approval of the October 13, 2020 Agenda

Commissioner Colson motioned and Commissioner Reeves seconded to approve the Agenda for the West Madison Utility District. The vote on the matter being as follows:

Commissioner Larry Bennett Aye
Commissioner Letitia Reeves Aye
Commissioner Scott Colson Aye

The matter carried unanimously and the Agenda for the October 13, 2020 meeting is hereby approved

RE: Approval of Agenda Consent Items:

Commissioner Colson motioned to approve the Consent Agenda, Commissioner Reeves seconded the motion. Consent Items listed as follows:

4. Acknowledgement and Acceptance of EOM RVS Report for September, 2020
5. Acceptance of EOM Financial Report for August 31, 2020.
6. Acceptance and approval of the August 11, 2020, September 8, 2020 and October 6, 2020 Board Meeting Minutes.
7. Acknowledgement and acceptance of Change Order #2 and Invoice from Jay Bearden Construction, Inc. in the amount of \$26,182.13 (payment request #5) for 8-1-20 to 8-31-20.
8. Acknowledgement and acceptance of Invoice from Jay Bearden Construction, Inc. in the amount of \$37,466.18 (payment request #6) for 9-1-20 to 9-30-20.
9. Ratification of Board action regarding approval of adding another \$5,000.00 to the already approved \$40,000.00 for the new WMUD storage building.

The vote on the matter being as follows:

Commissioner Letitia Reeves Aye
Commissioner Larry Bennett Aye
Commissioner Scott Colson Aye

The matter carried unanimously and the Consent Items for the October 13, 2020 meeting are hereby approved.

RE: Customer's Concerns and Issues

1. Willie Ealey; 3000 Center Street
 - a.) Ms. Ealey asked if there was a minimum flat rate set for customers. Commissioner Colson responded that the rates are outlined on WMUD's rate schedule and that there is a minimum rate of \$25.00 for water up to 2,000 gallons and then \$5.00 per every 1,000 gallons used over the minimum 2,000 gallons. Sewer has a minimum rate of \$20.00 for the first 2,000 gallons and \$5.00 per 1,000 gallons used over the first 2,000 gallons.

- b.) Ms. Ealey then asked if the community was notified prior to the work commencing in the Magnolia Heights community and when would it be completed and her yard fixed. She stated that she had been buying water due to the boil water notices and heating it for use, which increases her gas bill. Commissioner Bennett explained that a letter was sent out to the customers about the upcoming work and it was also announced on the website. He then explained that the Board was not happy about the fact that the work had taken so long and the contract was supposed to have been completed two months ago and that was one of the items that the engineer would update the Board about later in the meeting. It is expected that everything should be completed by the end of October and everyone's yard fixed. Ms. Ealey stated that she felt that the customers were being penalized by all the extra expenses they were incurring due to the boil water notices, etc. and asked specifically what was in the water that caused the boil water notices to occur. Also, how is everyone supposed to know when there is a boil water notice in effect and when it will be lifted? K.T. Newman, WMUD's operator, stated that due to the added risk of contamination that the boil water notices were left in place instead of constantly removing and re-erected them due to the contractor damaging the existing lines while working in the area. The lines are in extremely bad condition so it doesn't take much to cause a water leak and there isn't anything "bad" in the water, but it is a precaution to put up boil water notices. Ms. Ealey said she had seen "something" in her water, but Mr. Newman assured her that the water doesn't have anything unusual in it as WMUD has been passing its Department of Health water samples every month. Commissioner Bennett did inform Ms. Ealey that WMUD's water has a large amount of minerals that can stain or leave a whitish film. As for boil water notices, if you sign up on WMUD's webpage, you will receive a text and/or email regarding any boil water notices and they can be as specific as to which streets are involved, etc. WMUD also puts boil water notice signs at the Magnolia Heights entrances to let people know and have asked customers to notify each other as well. Commissioner Bennett stated that WMUD apologizes for the work taking longer than expected and we plan to have the work finished as quickly as possible. Commissioner Colson stated that on the brighter side of things, customers will have a better system when all of the work is finished.
- c.) Ms. Ealey asked about the past due date and amount of the late fee regarding WMUD's bills. Commissioner Reeves explained that the past due date was initially set by the Dept. of Rural Development as WMUD has two loans with that entity and WMUD had defaulted on those loan payments in the past due to not having any money in its accounts. The Dept. of Rural Development set the past due date so that customers would pay early in the month in order for WMUD to pay its bills. As to the amount of the past due payment, it began at \$10.00 and was raised to \$20.00 when the situation was extremely dire and WMUD needed money in its accounts to pay bills. The current Board dropped the past due amount to \$15.00 as an effort to assist customers.

2. Carolyn Robinson, 611 St. Charles Street

Ms. Robinson stated that her questions were basically the same as Ms. Ealey's and she did not have anything to add.

3. Tawonder Jackson-Harden, 118 Simpson Drive

Ms. Harden stated that she has very low water pressure and that with all the breaks in the water line, she was worried that WMUD was in violation of the Clean Water Act. K. T. Newman again stated that all WMUD's water samples have passed according to standards set by the Department of Health. Commissioner Bennett again mentioned the boil water notices customers can receive by signing up on the website and that WMUD also puts up boil water signs. It was again reiterated that customers need to assist by passing the word about boil water notices to those who have not seen the signs and who also do not use the internet or have mobile telephones. Ms. Harden also asked why was there a fee charged for paying online. Commissioner Bennett informed Ms. Harden that the fee is charged by the company that furnishes that service. WMUD does not receive any of that fee.

ENGINEER'S REPORT

Morgan Sims stated that the work should be completed by the contractor by the end of the month. This would include connecting the new pipes and switching over the water service and having the yards fixed. He apologized for the work having taken longer than expected and plan to finish as quickly as possible.

OPERATOR'S REPORT

See report. K.T. stated that the Board had previously approved the purchase of 60 curb stops for the construction in Magnolia Heights, but an additional 55 were needed. Commissioner Colson made a motion that K.T. purchase as many curb stops as needed to complete the Magnolia Heights project. Commissioner Reeves seconded the motion with all commissioners voting "aye." The motion carried.

Mr. Newman also pointed out that from Sept. 1, 2020 to Oct. 9, 2020, WMUD had used its jetter on ten occasions. Prior to obtaining its own jetter, WMUD would spend a minimum of \$250.00 per call to remove a blockage. Commissioner Colson stated that this is a minimum of \$2,500.00 in savings for one month. The jetter is, in fact, paying for itself.

The storage building has been ordered and 20% paid down with the balance due upon delivery. 50% will be paid down on the slab and rest after it is final. WMUD is waiting on the 911 address from the County.

The culvert at The Woodlands lift station should be installed Thursday, Oct. 15, by the County.

K. T. also provided a customer's billing history reflecting an adjustment made to a customer's account because the contractor broke the customer's service line. Before the water line was fixed, the leak ran the customer's bill up substantially. An adjustment of \$722.80 was applied to the customer's account to remove the billing that occurred due to the contractor's error. Commissioner Bennett stated that he felt the contractor should pay for the adjustment as he was responsible for breaking the line. As it stands, WMUD is the one that is coming out on the short end.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Commissioner Scott made the motion to go into executive session to discuss the house paid/sewer line situation. Commissioner Reeves seconded the motion with all commissioners voting "aye." All visitors exited and WMUD entered executive session.

The WMUD Board of Commissioners exited Executive Session.

OLD BUSINESS

Upon advisement of the engineer, Morgan Sims, Commissioner Reeves made the motion for a 60 day extension regarding the contract affecting the Magnolia Heights water lines to December 15, 2020 in order to complete all paperwork regarding the SRF Loan. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Colson with all commissioners voting "aye." The motion carried. It was noted that this extension is solely to complete all paperwork as the actual work should be completed by the end of October, 2020.

Commissioner Colson stated that he plans to have someone look at the situation of the rain/standing water behind the office and the fire station and the area between both buildings later this week.

NEW BUSINESS

None.

Commissioner Bennett stated if there were no more questions someone could make a motion adjourn. Commissioner Colson motioned to adjourn and Commissioner Reeves seconded with all Commissioners voting in favor. The meeting was adjourned.

Minutes Prepared by: Commissioner Letitia Reeves, Vice President