

WEST MADISON UTILITY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS MEETING
February 13, 2018

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 February 13, 2018, 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 Louvella Lawson
Commissioner Evelyn Brown
Commissioner Letitia Reeves
Commissioner Scott Colson

Vistors: Attorney Jim Herring
Engineer Alan Hendrix
MSrwa JoJo Grammar

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

In RE: Approval of the January 9, 2018 Agenda:

Commissioner Colson motioned and Commissioner Brown second, to approve the Agenda for the December 12, 2017 meeting for the Board of Commissioners of the West Madison Utility District.

The vote on the matter being as follows:

Commissioner Scott Colson Aye
Commissioner Larry Bennett Aye
Commissioner Letitia Reeves Aye
Commissioner Louvella Lawson Aye
Commissioner Evelyn Brown Aye

The matter carried unanimously and the Agenda for the December 12, 2017 meeting is hereby approved.

RE: Consent Items:

Pres. Bennett asked for a motion to approve the following consent items:

CONSENT AGENDA

3. Acknowledgement and Acceptance of EOM RVS Report for January, 2018
4. Acknowledgement and Acceptance of Financial Statement for December 31, 2017
5. Acceptance of the December 12, 2017 Minutes
6. Acceptance of the January 9, 2018 Minutes
7. Ratification of Emergency Purchases and Resulting Expenses Associated with Repairing Damages in the Community Center and WMUD Office Resulting from Broken Water Pipes
8. Ratification of Policy for Customers for Large Water Bills Resulting from Recent Cold Temperatures (Posted on the Door)
9. Acceptance and Approval of EOY 2017 Rural Development Report
10. Acceptance and Approval of 2018 Projected Budget
11. Authorization for Commissioner Reeves to attend the Mississippi Rural Water Association 2018 Annual Conference

END OF CONSENT AGENDA

Colson motion to accept and Comm. Brown second. The vote on the matter being as follows:

The vote on the matter being as follows:

Commissioner Scott Colson Aye
Commissioner Larry Bennett Aye

Commissioner Letitia Reeves Aye
Commissioner Evelyn Brown Aye
Commissioner Louvella Lawson Aye
The vote on the matter carried unanimously.

RE: Alan Hendrix with Engineering Services

A cost estimate to repair and refurbish the elevated Water Tower and remove old galvanized pipes in the Magnolia Heights area will be approximately \$591,075.00. As instructed by the Board a SRF State Revolving Fund Loan Application is being finalized to get funding for the project. It is possible that WMUD could get some principle forgiveness money which means you would not have to pay back all of the money that was borrowed. Last year it was about 30% and hopefully it will be the same for the coming year. A facility plan has been started along with some of the hydraulics part of the system. There are several lines missing and if KT could review this map (WMUD service area map) and tell what other lines are missing. An environmental impact study will be submitted to about eight government agencies so as to get their comments on the projects. This is necessary to make sure we are not hurting the environment or endangered species in the area. It usually takes 30 to 60 days to get those comments back from the agencies. The Ranking Form, the State Revolving Fund and the Federal Assistance Form must be signed and turned in at the same time with your application for this amount of money. It is very important that a copy of the lay-out map showing the improvements that will be made, and a copy of the application be sent, to all three agencies or they will not review your request for funding. One thing that the State Revolving Loan Fund require is a facility plan that includes system layout, health department report which will show that WMUD has a significant deficiency on the elevated Water Tower. Fixing the Water Tower will be a top priority that will need to be done. Pres. Bennett commented that a letter stating repairs on the Water Tower must be completed by August 31, 2019.

The galvanized lines on the northern end and the center of the system have corroded to the point that on the outside the pipe maybe one inch but on the inside it is only half-of-an-inch which would cause a slow flow coming out of the pipes. This will also cause contaminants (settlements) to come out of the pipes into the sinks. President Bennett said this was a big concern that was expressed in meetings last year about the quality of the water coming through the pipes because and if the pipes were badly corroded it could cause pipes to break. Mr. Hendrix said even if they don't break the corrosion will stop the flow of water completely. K. T. Newman was asked to review the map and fill in the lines in the area of Virililia Road and Windy Hill.

RE: Operators Report:

K. T. Newman stated he would not do a line by line explanation but if there were questions he would be happy to go over that particular line item. K. T. stated that the annual inspection of the water supply was conducted by the Mississippi Dept. of Health today, February 13, 2018, and the inspection went well. The system records were all in order and all water systems components were functioning properly and no deficiencies were noted. Mr. Herring asked what does that mean? KT said that basically that he and the Board members were doing their jobs of following guidelines that are required by the state. Mr. Herring asked if that included leaks? KT said that leaks are not necessarily considered part of this inspection. However, they do look at the water loss. The inspector was able to see that over the past year the water loss had dropped and they were pleased with that.

President Bennett expressed his appreciation for K.T. repairing the water pipes that had burst in the Community Center/WMUD office. Due to K.T.'s quick response, it helped contain the damage that was done to the Community Center and to the WMUD office.

Willie Ellis, a customer in the audience, wanted to know what does the Health Dept. look for since the pipes are contaminated according to the Engineer? K.T. responded that Mr. Hendrix did not indicate that the pipes were contaminated, rather that contaminants were coming out of the pipes. Each month water samples are sent in to Dept. of Health for testing and all of our samples are good and meet the Dept. of Health Standards. The water system in the Magnolia Heights area has been in place since 1942, therefore, there will be water leaks along with quite a few pipe repairs.

Another customer, Bobbie Griffin, wanted to know if the price Mr. Hendrix had quoted would repair all of the pipes. Mr. Hendrix answered that the quote would only repair the galvanized pipes. There are some areas that have PVC pipes which will not need replacing. Ms. Griffin also wanted to know in the Magnolia Heights area is that the reason why yellow water comes out in the tubs and toilets which causes them to stain? President Bennett commented that even though some areas have galvanized pipes, that does not mean the quality of the water is poor. Sometimes you get water that have settlement or discoloration, WMUD is taking the necessary steps in treating the water so it does not pose any kind of health issues. The inspection that was done on today was not to evaluate our delivery system, our pipes, water tower or the well. This inspection was to insure that we are delivering good clean water to our customers.

Mississippi Rural Water Association Representative, Jojo Grammer, was introduced by Mr. Herring to the Board. Mr. Grammer explained that MSRWA trained and provided services when needed to utility districts. Comm. Lawson wanted to know where the annual MSRWA annual conference is held and who can attend. He replied that the conference is held the last week in March and anyone who pays the fee can attend. The total cost to attend is \$195.00 for the entire week and it will be held at the MS Trade Mart. There will be about 150 vendors and training classes for Board members, operators and office personnel. It is open for anyone to attend.

RE: Customer Issues

(1) Cassandra Jones - 3008 Center Street

According to Ms. Jones, she paid her water bill on December 9, 2017 with a money order. She put the bill and money order in the drop box. Not knowing the reason why her water was off, she called the office to see if the water was being worked on in the area. She was told that her water was turned off for non-payment. K. T. had informed her that he would look into the matter but it did not get resolved.

K. T. stated that after checking with Comm. Colson there was no record of payment. Each check or money order is logged in on a deposit slip and taken to the bank. There was no record of Ms. Jones' payment. Ms. Jones did not keep the receipt to her money order. Ms. Jones said she has come up to the office at various time to pay her bill but the office is closed, therefore as she will sometimes do she put it in the drop box. Comm. Lawson suggested that she contact the place where the money order was purchased. Ms. Jones said the place did not keep a record of money order purchases. Comm. Lawson informed Ms. Jones that she could call directly to the Money Order place of business and they would be able to tell her if the money order was cashed.

Pres. Bennett asked for a motion to give Ms. Jones 30 days to try and find out what happened to her money order. Ms. Jones has agreed to come to the March meeting and give a report about her findings. Comm. Brown motion and Comm. Reeves second to allow an additional 30 days, with no further late fees to be charged while this issue is being investigated. The vote was as follows:

Commissioner Scott Colson Nay
Commissioner Larry Bennett Aye
Commissioner Letitia Reeves Aye
Commissioner Louvella Lawson Aye
Commissioner Evelyn Brown Aye

The motion carried.

(2) Charlene Harris - 131 Hidden Lake Drive

Mr. Alan Harris, Charlene Harris' husband, was present to address the board. Per Mr. Harris, he left home for work on January 11, 2018 when his neighbor called him and said that a water pipe had broke in his front yard. Mr. Harris called his son to go over and turn off his water. Mr. Harris is not sure how much that water leak effected his water bill. On January 29, 2018 he left to go out of town to New Orleans. He was gone from Friday to Sunday. Upon returning home he noticed that his water pressure was very low. Upon investigating he found there was a 2 inch water line from the water meter and goes about 900 feet down the drive way back to the house that branches off to a boat house. A pipe inside the wall of the boat house had broke. He had someone to come out and put a cut-off on the pipe. He realized that the water had been running for quite awhile. Mr. Harris bill is for \$1,332.00 and he is asking

for an adjustment. Usually his water bill is for \$25.00 a month. Comm. Brown explained the procedure for paying water bills that are unusually high. The customer can ask for a hardship installment payment plan which would allow him to pay a certain amount each month along with his current bill payment. Mr. Harris wanted to know how much he would need to pay and Comm. Reeves told him he would be paying about \$110.00 plus \$25.00 each month. Mr. Harris said he could not believe that WMUD could not do anything for him. He is being asked to pay \$1,332.00. over a year's time when he usually only pay \$300.00 per year. Mr. Harris left the meeting very upset.

(3) Sharon Ross - 142A Ellis Road

Ms. Ross received a water bill for \$620.00 and she requested to be put on a payment plan. KT accommodated her by allowing her to pay \$95.00 per month on a payment plan plus the amount of her current bill.

(4) Wayne Oettinger -150 Willow Way Drive

Asking for an adjustment but he did not agree to the payment terms that was offered by KT. He was not present at the meeting.

(5) Plantation Mill Works 110 Howard Drive

Asking for an adjustment because he did not agree to the payment terms that was offered by KT. Mr. Shepherd had informed K. T. that he could not be present for the Board meeting but had requested that he present his bill for consideration to the Board. The Bill for the January reading is \$479.61. The Board agreed that the policy in place should be followed as K. T. assured the Board that the meter was working correctly.

(6) James Wilson - 105 Norris Street

Kay Retha McFields addressed the Board on behalf of her uncle, James Wilson, who is 85 years of age and is deaf and partially blind. She stated that they had inspected everything around the property and could find no evidence of any leaks and there was no way she could see that 33,000 gallons of water could be used by her uncle. His bill for January reflects a usage of 31,730 gallons for a charge of \$343.70. Ms. McFields stated that she had paid \$95.00 on the bill and she feels that is all that should be owed and paid. The Board offered to extend the payment plan for the remaining balance of \$248.70 from a 6-month plan to a 12-month plan which would amount to approximately \$20.73 per month. Ms. McFields stated that she did not want to put it on a plan and she felt that something was wrong with the meter and the remaining amount should be removed by WMUD. Commissioner Bennett asked K.T. about when the meter was replaced at this location and K. T. stated that it was around August of 2017 when Ms. McFields had come before the Board complaining that Mr. Wilson's bill was too high and something was wrong with the previous meter. After replacing the meter, it was discovered that the water had been left on at the outside spigot at the back of his house. That could have accounted for a higher than usual water bill. Ms. McFields reminded the Board that her personal property had a new meter that was put in that proved to be leaking and she felt that the same thing was going on with this meter. The Board informed Ms. McFields that they would discuss this matter in Executive Session and someone would contact her afterwards to inform her of what the Board decides.

(7) Jimme & Almarie Winters - 106 Hickory Street - not present

(8) Carolyn Orr Andrews - 3061 Virililia Road - not present

(9) Stark Russell - 3003 Center Street - not present

(10) Connie Greenwood - 735 Harris Road - not present

(11) Corine Gordon - 108 Hilltop Drive - not present

(12) Sandra Denton - 109 Cedar Street - not present

(13) Thomas Thompson - Norris Street

Thomas Thompson was there because the last bill that he received in June, 2017 was for \$47.00. After he paid that bill he had the meter pulled because he was going to be doing construction on the house. The bill is now \$467.00 and he does not have a meter at the location. Mr. Thompson had a video which showed that there was no meter. There was no sink or toilet in the house. Now he does not

understand how they can still be charging him. Pres. Bennett asked KT to address this issue. KT said he would like to discuss the issue later. Comm. Reeves asked if there was an address and telephone number that he provide in order to contact him and he said: 319 Madison Ave. and the phone number was 601-201-3464 WMUD would discuss his issue later during Executive Session.

15. **OLD BUSINESS** - None

16. **NEW BUSINESS** - None

17. **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

Upon motion by Commissioner Colson and second by Commissioner Reeves, the Board voted unanimously to go into Executive Session for attorney update and possible litigation matters.

Commissioner Brown left the meeting shortly after Executive Session began.

Upon motion by Commissioner Colson and second by Commissioner Reeves, the Board voted unanimously to leave Executive Session.

The Board agreed to the following: 1) Contact Kay Retha McFields regarding James Wilson's bill and let her know that the Board is going to do some further investigation into this matter; and 2) Contact Thomas Thompson to let him know that the billing system was supposed to have removed his property on Norris Street from billing after June, 2017, but it was not removed so that the \$467.00 bill is being removed as it was incorrectly billed by the system. However, it was agreed that he would be contacted and asked about how he intended to reimburse WMUD for the hydrant damage that he caused with his automobile accident in May, 2017.

There being no further business to discuss, Commissioner Colson made a motion to adjourn the meeting with a second by Commissioner Reeves, with all present voting "aye" The meeting was adjourned.