

**WEST MADISON UTILITY DISTRICT BOARD OF  
COMMISSIONERS REGULAR MEETING  
MARCH 11, 2025**

**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 March 11, 2025, in the Kearney Park Community Center at 443 Livingston Vernon Road, Flora MS, as follows to wit:

The President of the Board, B. W. "Sammy" Brown, presided and called the meeting to order. The following members were present:

Commissioner B. W. "Sammy" Brown	Absent:
Commissioner Scott Rye	Commissioner Joyce Monroe
Commissioner Ernest Odom	
Commissioner Carolyn Andrews	

Also Present: WMUD Attorney Jim Herring

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

**RE: Approval of the March 11, 2025 Agenda**

Commissioner Rye motioned and Commissioner Odom seconded to approve the Agenda. The vote on the matter being as follows: All Commissioners voted "aye" and the matter carried unanimously. The Agenda for the March 11, 2025 meeting is hereby approved

**RE: Approval of Agenda Consent Items:**

Due to Commissioner Andrews having questions about the consent agenda items, they were not motioned to be approved as a group but were taken individually as regular items on the agenda.

Item # 4: Acknowledgement and Acceptance of the EOM RVS Report for February, 2025. Commissioner Brown made a motion to approve agenda item number 4; the motion was seconded by Commissioner Rye with all present voting "aye". Item # 4 on the agenda is approved.

Item #5: Acknowledgement and Acceptance of EOM Financials for January, 2025. Commissioner Andrews asked for clarification of a couple of items on the January, 2025 financials: a \$1,050 professional fee charge and a \$383 charge. Commissioner Brown stated that he would have to go back and check to see what the \$1,050 charge was but it was calculated by the CPA based on the bank statements and check stubs for the month. The \$383 charge was the MCWA monthly fee. Commissioner Andrews asked why the fee was now \$383 and Letitia Reeves, WMUD's MCWA representative, stated that it was because the base fee used for calculations was increased by MCWA. Commissioner Andrews insisted that Ms. Reeves remain quiet and not speak, and again asked Commissioner Brown why the fee increased. Commissioner Brown stated that it obviously increased due to an increase in expenses as everything has increased; he also added that the monthly fee paid to the CPA increased by \$100 per month so it was now \$1,050. (NOTE: This amount agrees with the professional fee amount asked about earlier in the conversation.)

After discussion, Commissioner Brown made the motion to accept the EOM Financials for January, 2025; the motion was seconded by Commissioner Rye. Commissioner Brown, Commissioner Rye and Commissioner Odom voted "aye" with Commissioner Andrews voting that she "opposed" which is a "nay" vote. The motion passed and Item #5 on the agenda is approved.

Item #6: Acceptance and Approval of the February 11, 2025 Board Meeting Minutes. Commissioner Brown voted to approve the February 11, 2025 Board Meeting Minutes; Commissioner Rye seconded the motion. Commissioner Brown, Commissioner Rye and Commissioner Odom voted "aye"; Commissioner Andrews voted that she "opposed" as she disagreed with some items contained in the minutes. The vote carried and Item # 6 on the agenda is approved.

**RE: Customer's Concerns and Issues**

There were no customers present at the meeting.

Commissioner Brown stated that he had asked Marvin Ross, the local Fire Chief to come to the meeting to discuss fire hydrants, and when he arrived, he would address the Board.

**RE: Operator's Report (K. T. Newman)**

(See report.)

K. T. Newman stated that there was an item not listed on his report that he needed to address with the Board. Dorothy Bennett, the manager of the Community Center, had informed him that a gentleman had rented the CC for a birthday party and wanted to have a mobile bar. They have a liquor license but need permission from the WMUD Board in writing per the example letter. Commissioner Andrews stated that the insurance policy needed to be examined to see if it contained anything protecting WMUD regarding the serving of alcohol. Commissioner Brown stated that the Board needed more information such as exactly who will be selling the liquor; a copy of their liquor license; and a copy of their insurance policy which should reflect WMUD as additional insured. Also, it is unknown as to whether the person distributing the alcohol would buy it himself and then sell it to individuals or be giving it away to persons at the birthday party. K.T. stated that he would contact Ms. Bennett and let her know what was needed.

K. T. informed the Board that the CDBG project is ongoing and Waggoner submitted the preliminary drawings and Compress Street was included. Morgan Sims, WMUD's engineer had a few comments regarding the drawings, but there were no objections. However, Norris Street, which was included in the initial stages of the project, was not included. K. T. and Morgan questioned Waggoner Engineering about the omission of Norris Street as it was everyone's understanding at the last meeting that Norris Street would be included. Waggoner's engineers stated that they had thought it would not be included. Morgan Sims asked for a meeting as this was not the consensus from WMUD. The issue at this point is that there is not more time to go back and revamp the drawings, etc., as the County Administrator, Greg Higginbotham, had set March 29<sup>th</sup> as the deadline for bids. WMUD needs to make a decision on how to proceed. If Norris Street had been added as an alternate and the bids came in high, it could be rebid. They already have all the data required. Commissioner Brown stated that he would contact Greg Higginbotham to discuss the matter as during the last meeting Greg had stated that the County would find the money for Norris Street if the existing CDBG grant was not enough.

K. T. stated that since the Board had asked him about the possibility of WMUD installing automatic meters that he would periodically supply the Board with information in this regard and the Board may want to put a funding package together. This would enable the Board to decide how many meters they could purchase at a time, and how they would pay for everything. The meters cost probably about \$300 each but the software could run \$15,000 to \$20,000. K. T. stated that he would contact the companies that sell the meters and try to schedule a 15-20 minute presentation during a Board meeting. Commissioner Brown asked Ms. Reeves what accounts could be used for the purchase of meters; Ms. Reeves informed Commissioner Brown that WMUD has a meter account that consists of leftover construction money that has been dedicated to the purchase of meters and there is also a short-lived asset account into which WMUD makes monthly deposits that can be used to make purchases for the system. Ms. Reeves further stated that the Board needs to be cautious when pulling funds from the short lived assets account because they would need to have enough funds available in the event of an emergency to replace large equipment items. Commissioner Odom asked K. T. about the maintenance cost for the automatic meters; K. T. stated that the primary issue with this type of meter is the battery; the batteries have a 10-15 year warranty and there are no issues unless the customer clips a wire as some of the meters have a transducer with wires on top. Otherwise, the meters require only typical maintenance similar to any other meter. The meters are waterproof up to a certain point and typically have an expected 10 year lifespan.

K. T. stated that the issue regarding the water on Magnolia Street had been examined and the sewer line had been repaired. It was discovered that the water running onto Aaron King's property was actually from a water leak from someone else's property (under a trailer). K. T. stated that he had made the customer aware of the leak.

Reverent Hambrick is building a church on Harris Road in an undeveloped area. Water is across the road so water can be provided. The issue in this area is providing sewer as manhole was located near the area, but Morgan Sims and K.T. could not find the old sewer line. K.T. stated that he plans to have Mississippi Rural Water Association perform a smoke test to locate the sewer line; if it does not work and there is no sewer line close by, the church will need to install a treatment plant. Commissioner Brown asked if WMUD has to bore under the road who pays for that cost; K. T. stated that the customer would have to pay that cost. Commissioner Andrews asked how much it costs for Mississippi Rural Water Association to perform a smoke test. K. T. informed the Board that the only costs charged to WMUD for a smoke test would be the oil and fuel as this is a service provided by MsRWA for its members. Commissioner Andrews then asked who pays for Morgan Sims to be involved with trying to locate a sewer line; K. T. responded that it is a WMUD expense. Commissioner Andrews stated that she thought Board action was needed before the engineer was called. Commissioner Brown stated that Morgan Sims is WMUD's engineer of record, and K. T. can contact him if he decides the engineer needs to be present. Commissioner Brown then asked K. T. if he felt Morgan needed to be involved in this situation, and K. T. stated "yes".

Commissioner Andrews asked K. T. about the sewer issue presented by Lawrence Morris at the last meeting. K. T. stated that the sewer issues on Madison Street had been examined and the main problem is that the original 8-12 inch sewer line runs through the backyards of the homes in this area. This sewer line is made of concrete, and it is old and full of holes. The problem is too widespread to fix only a small area and the whole line would need to be replaced.

Commissioner Andrews then asked K. T. if anything had been done regarding the Franklin issue discussed at the last meeting. K. T. stated that the situation remained the same.

K. T. then stated that Office Depot had stopped offering a credit card for office supplies purchases after January, 2025, so WMUD needed to decide how to proceed regarding purchasing supplies because at this point, someone would need a check to pay for purchases. Commissioner Andrews asked for a "budget" for office supplies. NOTE: A 2025 budget (which includes office supplies) was attached to the annual USDA report submitted at the last Board meeting.

K. T. stated that Commissioner Brown, Commissioner Odom and Commissioner Rye were all registered to attend Board training on March 18<sup>th</sup>, 2025..

No compliance issues to report and all water samples passed all standards set by the Dept. of Health for February, 2025.

A jetter usage report was submitted to the Board., Information regarding AMR System, Sensus Electronic Registers (Meters), was submitted to the Board. No work orders or purchase orders were submitted.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

Fire Chief Marvin Ross arrived at the meeting and Commissioner Brown asked Mr. Ross to address the Board regarding the fire hydrants in the area. Mr. Ross stated that they had stopped checking the fire hydrants some time back as there were so many leaks whenever they tried. K. T. flushes the fire hydrants from time to time, but he does not check them. Commissioner Brown asked if Mr. Ross would have the fire department start checking the hydrants again and he agreed. Commissioner Odom asked Mr. Ross how often were the fire hydrants checked. Mr. Ross stated that the fire department checks hydrants twice a year. Commissioner Odom asked how many hydrants are in the area and how many are working. Mr. Ross stated that he could not recall at the moment but they had a new system on their cell phones that map the hydrants and the program indicates if the hydrants work. The fire department will begin using this system for all the hydrants in the area. Mr. Jim Herring, the Board attorney, asked Mr. Ross what was the current fire department rating, and Mr. Ross informed him that it was an eight. Mr. Herring stated that the fire department should be proud of having such an excellent rating as this rating certainly helps everyone in the area on their insurance costs.

Commissioner Odom asked Mr. Ross if they had an "ear horn" and he stated "no". Commissioner Odom explained that you can place it on top of a hydrant and while listening you can hear if there are any leaks. He also stated that you can use a "poking iron" to locate a water line and place the ear horn on it, and hear if water is running in the line. Commissioner Andrews asked if he knew the cost of acquiring an ear horn and Commissioner Odom said "no".

Mr. Ross mentioned that in the past the fire department was granted one free use of the Community Center per year, and Commissioner Brown stated that was still true. He also informed Mr. Ross that he gave Katina Palmer, a Fire Department Board member, his free use of the CC since he would not use it. (Each WMUD Board Member is entitled to one free of the Community Center per year.) Commissioner Brown also informed Mr. Ross that he would supply him with a key to the gate for Woodlands Lane (which Commissioner Brown owns) so that the fire department would have access in case of a fire, and also be able to check any fire hydrants in that area.

Commissioner Brown made a motion to go into Executive Session to discuss matters related to the Town of Flora; Commissioner Rye seconded the motion with all commissioners voting "aye." The Board entered Executive Session.

A motion was made in Executive Session by Commissioner Andrews to have Mr. Herring prepare a letter to the WMUD Board that there is not a conflict of interest in having Letitia Reeves prepare the minutes, have access to WMUD's financial records and various other matters relating to WMUD; the motion died for lack of a second. Commissioner Andrews asked why no one seconded the motion; the other commissioners stated that they felt it was not needed as it was obvious there was not a conflict of interest and there was no need to incur the cost.

The Board exited Executive Session:

**OLD BUSINESS**

None.

There being no other business to discuss, Commissioner Rye made a motion to dismiss the meeting, seconded by Commissioner Brown. All commissioners voted "aye," and the meeting was dismissed.

Minutes Prepared by: Letitia Reeves

Approved By: \_\_\_\_\_

B. W. "Sammy" Brown

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

4-8-25