

**WEST MADISON UTILITY DISTRICT BOARD OF  
COMMISSIONERS REGULAR MEETING  
JUNE 10, 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 June 10, 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  
Commissioner Scott Rye  
Commissioner Ernest Odom  
Commissioner Carolyn Andrews  
Commissioner Mary Mitchell Rushing

Also Present: WMUD Engineer, Morgan Sims  
WMUD Operator, K. T. Newman

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 June 10, 2025 Agenda**

Commissioner Brown motioned and Commissioner Rye seconded the motion to approve the Agenda. The vote on the matter being as follows: Commissioners Odom, Rye, Brown and Rushing voted "aye" and Commissioner Andrews voted "no". The Agenda for the June 10, 2025 meeting is hereby approved.

**RE: Motions From Commissioner Andrews Per June 5, 2025 Email**

Commissioner Brown mentioned that Commissioner Andrews had voiced two motions via email that she wanted Board action on as follows:

- a. Revise the May 13, 2025 Minutes deleting that Commissioner Andrews contacted Morgan Sims to discuss an invoice and put instead that she called him to inform him not to attend any future meetings without prior board approval. NOTE: Current minutes reflect she called him to discuss an invoice and she also mentioned for him not to do anything without prior Board approval.
- b. That WMUD engage a third party to review the Rate Study and relevant accounts to ensure accuracy of the financial data and the "fairness of the recommendations made to the community".

Commissioner Brown asked if there was a second for these motions. Both motions died for lack of a second.

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

Commissioner Brown stated that the Board needed to move on to approve the consent agenda items. Commissioner Rye made the motion to approve and accept the consent agenda and Commissioner Odom seconded the motion. All commissioners voted "aye" with the exception of Commissioner Andrews who voted "no". The consent agenda is hereby accepted and approved as follows:

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

5. Acknowledgement and Acceptance of EOM RVS Report for May, 2025.
6. Acknowledgement and Acceptance of EOM Financial Report for April, 2025
7. Acknowledgement and Acceptance of EOM Financial Report re Community Center for April, 2025
8. Acceptance and Approval of the May 13, 2025 Board Meeting Minutes
9. Acknowledgement and Acceptance of May 20, 2025 Letter to Dr. Daisy LaCour
10. Acknowledgement and Acceptance of May 20, 2025 Letter to Rosie Medlock with Concerned Citizen People (CCP)
11. Acknowledgement and Acceptance of Resignation Email from Joyce Monroe (effective May 19, 2025)

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

**RE: Rate Increase**

Commissioner Rye made the motion to end the rate increase discussion as the Board had already enacted the rate increase to take effect July 1, 2025. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Odom. The vote was as follows: Commissioner Rushing, Commissioner Brown, Commissioner Rye and Commissioner Odom voted "aye" and Commissioner Andrews voted "no". The motion carried.

Commissioner Andrews stated that she still had issues with the rate study and could Chris Shelton with Mississippi Rural Water Association (MsRWA) come and explain what information was used for him to arrive at the rates. Commissioner Brown stated that information from the financial statements were used as well as other information and basically K. T. and Chris worked together to arrive at the rates and everyone else just waited. Commissioner Brown asked K. T. for his input, and K. T. stated that the financial data was used and they calculated the needed projects funded over a five year period. Commissioner Andrews asked "and how are we to monitor this over a 5-year period? We all may not even be here. What about the account that has \$218,000 in it that we make a deposit into every month?" Commissioner Brown stated that WMUD just spent \$18,000 out of that account, which is the short lived assets account, to run a water line on Willow Way Road as discussed at the last meeting. Commissioner Andrews asked "Why is West Madison's rates higher than Flora's?" Commission Brown stated that "WMUD has to collect the money it gets from water and sewer bills; we do not have access to tax money that the Town of Flora has. We stand on our own and we have to run this as a business. We tried to get you to work with us about these rates but you refused." Commissioner Andrews stated "I see \$200,000 for meters on this list of projects. We don't need this right now. We need to let the community know what we have accomplished and when we start with each project." Commissioner Brown stated that WMUD has to figure in costs of projects it must pay for as it currently cannot afford a loan, nor can it apply for a grant with it losing money each month as most grants require matching funds. Greg Higginbotham, the County Administrator, informed Commissioner Brown that WMUD will not be able to borrow

from local banks, etc., unless it starts having an annual audit performed. That type of audit will cost approximately \$25,000. Commissioner Brown also mentioned that WMUD just had a hydrant blow off a water line this past week and replacing that alone will run several thousand dollars.

Commissioner Andrews again stated that she wanted Chris Shelton to come and explain how he arrived at his rates as she was not in attendance at the meeting where he input the information. She also complained about who was present at that meeting and asked why they were there.

Commissioner Andrews stated that if WMUD removes some of the projects the rate increase should not be this much. Commissioner Brown stated that they had already removed one project at an estimated amount of \$600,000 to help bring the rate down. Madison County cannot help WMUD as it is a separate entity that is supposed to be self-supporting. Bobbie Griffin interrupted and stated that the Board needs to separate short and long term projects and asked Commissioner Brown his background. Commissioner Brown stated that he was a business owner and he had owned various businesses and at one time had 186 rental houses. Then Ms. Griffin asked him if he ran his businesses successfully. Commissioner Brown said "yes".

Rosie Medlock asked that the Board have a special meeting showing how the rates were calculated. Evelyn Brown stated "We are simply asking that the rate increase be put on hold. Why is it so high? Can it be done over a period of time?" Commissioner Rye stated that there had not been a rate increase since 2017 and the Board has been trying to enact a rate increase for the last 2-3 years but could not obtain a majority vote so that is why it is so high now. Commissioner Brown stated that WMUD has had a loss of \$200,000 already from expenses being higher than income and WMUD still has to make repairs and is supposed to have a 15% profit each month. Commissioner Andrews stated "WMUD is not in the negative. You are looking at depreciation." Commissioner Brown stated that "we removed depreciation from the calculations to establish the rate".

Commissioner Andrews then asked about the financial statement and asked what the \$560 charge was for internet/computers. She stated "it appears to be monthly because there is a previous balance of \$1,580.71". Commissioner Rye stated that he could not recall but that every check he signed had an invoice. Letitia Reeves stated that the internet service and telephone service for WMUD should still be free as that was negotiated in a contract with Ozbourn Communications in exchange for allowing their cellular equipment on the water tank. Commissioner Brown said I think the \$560 is for the webpage. Commissioner Andrews asked if that is per month. Letitia Reeves said "no," but Commissioner Brown stated he was unsure. Commissioner Andrews said "you better check into that because we need another web service if that's so. How much does WMUD pay MsRWA each year to be a member of its organization? What is the \$1,580.71 for? Send it to me later in an email because I know I have never seen this before". Commissioner Brown told Commissioner Andrews that if she looked at last month's financials, she should see what the previous charges were for. (NOTE: The previous charges were for the billing program—RVS system—and its support services.) Commissioner Odom stated "This is why we need an audit."

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

(See report.)

K. T. Newman stated that Magnolia Heights is under a boil water alert after a hydrant blew off the water line near a storage building on St. Charles Avenue. The boil water alert will last 1-2 days. When the water pressure dropped, the tank drained and an alert was put on the website. More customers need to be signed up on the website to receive the alerts. He stated "We like to let customers know whenever there is a repair or a boil water notice in place and we

need for the customers to sign up on the webpage". K. T. had some information printed with instructions on how to sign up on the webpage for alerts, etc., and gave them to the CCPgroup and asked that they help spread the information in the community. K. T. also stated that he would leave some in the office for customers.

The hydrant on Hunt Avenue behind Allan Ramsey's warehouse is leaking. Does the Board want to shut off the valve? Commissioner Rushing asked if a fire happened in that area, with the valve turned off, could they use that hydrant if the valve is shut off? K. T. stated that they would have to use the next closest hydrant which is 200 feet in each direction. Commissioner Brown asked if WMUD has a hydrant on a dead line that can be moved over to this location. K. T. stated that most of them are 4" not 6", but it can be adapted. Commissioner Brown stated that he felt K. T. should try moving one of the 4" hydrants to that location and making it work. Meanwhile, K. T. stated he is trying to identify which hydrants are working, which are not, etc. per Board directive at a previous meeting. Commissioner Andrews asked about the fire hydrants and K. T. explained everything the Board had discussed previously about identifying working versus non-working fire hydrants, dead lines, etc.

K. T. stated that the water quality report is due July 1<sup>st</sup> each year and it is on the website now. K. T. mentioned that the July 1<sup>st</sup> water/sewer rate increase will show up on the bills sent out the first part of August. Commissioner Andrews stated that this leaves plenty of time for Chris to come and talk about how he arrived at the rates. K. T. then stated that per last Board meeting the chlorine recirculation pump at the wastewater effluent is still not working so WMUD will not be able to meet the e-coli limits of the wastewater permit. Again, K. T. emphasized that the 2-inch water line to the lagoon from Pecan Street needs to be installed. Commissioner Andrews asked about the pump at the lagoon and K. T. reiterated everything from the last Board meeting in this regard.

K. T. presented an expense report to the Board with P.O. numbers that reflected monthly expenses of \$16,000+/-.

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

K. T. stated that he had received the Tank Inspection Report. Commissioner Andrews asked why did WMUD have to pay to have this done? Does the tank need painting? K. T. explained that it was painted back in 2020 and it was due for its five year inspection per health department requirements. Commissioner Rye made a motion to acknowledge and accept the Tank Inspection Report. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Odom with all commissioners voting "aye". The Tank Inspection Report dated June 4, 2025 is hereby acknowledged and accepted.

#### **RE: Customer Issues**

1. Casey Mullins, 2912 Virilia Road; Tracy Mooney, Sam Arnold (not present-Nick Miller)  
Casey Mullins addressed the Board and stated that Tracy Mooney, Sam Arnold and Nick Miller had purchased the Southern Vital Records lands for past due taxes and the electricity from that property went to the well where he receives his water. Entergy cut the power and stated that Southern Vital had owned all the power poles, power lines, etc., within that property and they could not turn on electricity to that location. Mr. Mullins has been using a generator to get water. He stated that Entergy told him he would have to pay \$85,000 to have the electricity hooked to the well. Commissioner Andrews stated that she recalled that K. T. had provided the Board with an estimate to run a water line to his property in the past and she asked K. T. if he still had that information. Mr. Mullins stated that he had been talking to K. T. about this situation and Commissioner Brown informed Commissioner Andrews that the conditions surrounding this area have changed because now it is not simply running a water line to service one person, but the persons standing in front of her plan to develop the property (1,000 acres) and the water line would serve those people as well in the future and Cynthia Alford and Edwina Bardin own about

another 1,000 acres right next to this area and they plan to cut the timber and sell their property as well. This will open up all this location to development which means future customers for WMUD.

Casey Mullins stated he was paying about \$30/day to run the generator to get water from this well, which was drilled sometime in the 1960's. He stated that Nick Miller needs water too and then you have the future people who will be buying property in this area. Commissioner Brown stated that he had mentioned the situation to Supervisor Karl Banks and planned to go to the Board of Supervisors meeting with these customers that will be held June 16<sup>th</sup>, 2025 to see if somehow they can help with getting Entergy to turn the power on and perhaps somehow help with getting water to this area as WMUD definitely wants to serve them but it just does not have the money to be able to get the water lines in place at this time. Also, it is just outside of WMUD's certificated area, so at some point WMUD will have to request a Supplemental Certificate of Necessity for water service in this area. At this time, the audience became quite loud and Commissioner Brown asked the audience to be quiet. Commissioner Odom asked a question (could not hear the exact question)... Commissioner Andrews told him to be quiet. Commissioner Odom informed Commissioner Andrews that he did not tell her to be quiet so she should show him the same courtesy and quit telling him to be quiet. Conversation ensued as to the size of the lines and placement of the lines in the area.

## 2. Robert White, 707 Harris Road

Robert White asked the Board "Are we paying for the police to be here?" Commissioner Brown answered him, saying "no". Then Mr. White asked for the Board to "hold off on the rate increase". Commissioner Brown stated "I wish we could but we do not have enough money to make the necessary repairs that need to be made right now. The line from the well to the tank is still leading and you just heard about the fire hydrant problems. The Church Hill area only has 1" water lines in place and they need larger lines and fire hydrants, and you heard the persons who just spoke talking about an area that we need to be ready to serve in the very near future. I just attended a bid opening this past Thursday at the Madison County offices for repair of some of the sewer lines and this will only fix a small area." Commissioner Andrews asked Commissioner Brown, "will the rate increase fix all the sewer lines in Magnolia Heights?" Commissioner Brown stated, "no, it cannot do it all; grinder pumps are not even on the list." Mr. White stated "I feel offended that the police are here."

Bobbie Griffin interrupted and stated "the people that were just up here are going to develop that area and bring in income. Why can't we postpone or wait for a rate increase? How many people right now are past due on their water bills? You can amend your rate increase." Commissioner Brown asked K. T. Newman how many people were past due on their water bills and K. T. answered "none." Michael Spires stated "you were very eager to help those others so how can you help us?" Commissioner Brown stated "We have discussed going up on the base rate from 2,000 gallons to 3,000 gallons and that will save folks some money." Michael Spires responded, "Please do that." Bobbie Griffin stated "The Board is moving too fast. You need to slow down and go back and revisit the projected budget and eliminate some. Work with what you have and wait until you bring more customers in first." Ms. Griffin then made a comment to Commissioner Odom about him staring at her. He said "I am listening. I look at someone when I am listening to them. I am here for business." Commissioner Odom starting informing Ms. Griffin that he was a water certified operator and his past experience with water service and she interrupted him and stated "I don't need your resume." Commissioner Odom stated "This ain't no game to me." Kayretha McField asked the Board, "This is owned by the people, right?" Commissioner Brown answered, "No. It was set up by the Board of Supervisors and we are a utility district; it is like a company." Ms. Reeves gave a brief history of the creation of WMUD and stated that the details could be found on the website for anyone who was interested. Kayretha McField then stated "Why this rate increase all at once. Break it down some kind of

way. Show me some compassion." Commissioner Brown stated "We backed some things out to reduce it some." Robert White asked the Board to formally make a motion to bring Chris Shelton back to explain how he arrived at the rate. Commissioner Brown stated that he would contact Chris Shelton to see if he would be able to find a time to come meet and emphasized that Chris Shelton worked for MsRWA and did not live in this area so his schedule may not allow him to come to a WMUD board meeting. Plus, Chris Shelton's responsibilities are to perform rate studies for water/sewer providers and that may not include coming to open public meetings to defend his work. Commissioner Rye made a motion for Commissioner Brown to contact Chris Shelton with MsRWA for a rate study. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Brown with all Commissioners voting "aye". The motion carried.

Commissioner Andrews asked Commissioner Brown if she could say something and Commissioner Brown stated that he needed to go through the customer sign in sheet so he could give everyone some time to speak.

3. Mildred Robinson, 108 Lincoln Street. No answer. She left.

4. Linda Williams, 106 Peyton Lane. Ms. Williams addressed the Board and pointed to Commissioner Odom and said "He is a hothead and not professional. We have to work together. You have to keep a cool head to do that." Bobbie Griffin stated "We are not being hostile. We need answers.

5. Larry Henderson, 100 Oak Grove Drive. No answer. He left.

6. Evelyn Brown, 108 Peyton Lane. Ms. Brown stated "We are trying to focus in on doing an increase in steps. You take \$200,000 over a 5-year plan, break that down and come back in 2 years. I know inflation is going on, but have 2 year, 4 year and 6 year plans with annual increases of about \$3. We don't object to that." Commissioner Rye stated "the last rate increase was in 2017. No one could get a rate increase passed in the last 2-3 years because they could not get enough people on the board to vote for it." Commission Brown stated "When we get enough money in the account to do the project we consider the most pressing, we will do the project. Then we will move on to the next one. We have to have a rate increase to pay for these things." Evelyn Brown stated "I understand. You just have assets. If it were one small adjustment per year. What would happen if we do not pay our water bills?" Commissioner Rye stated "you would have your water cut off." Commissioner Andrews stated "You are not listening to the people."

7. Kayretha McField, 108 Norris Street.

Kayretha McField stated that she had already had her questions answered.

At this point, so many people were speaking that continuing along the agenda appeared unlikely and it was impossible to take minutes.

Commissioner Rye made the motion to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Odom. All commissioners voted "aye" and the motion carried and the meeting was adjourned.

Minutes Prepared by: Letitia Reeves

Approved By: 

B. W. "Sammy" Brown

Date: 7-8-25