



LITTLE HOCKING WATER ASSOCIATION, INC.

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Regular Meeting June 14, 2021

The June regular monthly meeting of the Board of Trustees for Little Hocking Water Association was called to order by Vice President Carl Ratliff at 6:10 pm. Board members also in attendance were Steve Rose and Debbie Schultz as well as John Smith, LHWA General Manager.

Guests in attendance were Cliff Sowards, Rachel Carl, Justin and Sheree Wilson, Bob Allen – Warren Local School District, James Booth – Washington County Commissioner, Jesse C. Roush – Executive Director Southeastern Ohio Port Authority, Ben Howard – Rural Community Assistance Program, and Sidney Brackenridge – Warren Local School District.

Carl Ratliff recognized Mr. Sowards and invited him to let the Board know what had brought him to our meeting tonight. Mr. Sowards explained he lives on Dunfee Road and is installing a new double wide home for his parents. He came to our office in the March time frame to purchase a tap. The office staff told him he could come back closer to the time he actually needed the tap to make payment and complete the necessary paperwork. Now, there is a moratorium in place. Will the Board honor his request for a tap he made arrangements to purchase back in March now that there is a moratorium in place for this area. Steve Rose asked Mr. Sowards to give the board time to discuss this situation and let us get back with him. Mr. Sowards agreed to do so.

The next guest recognized was Rachel Carl. She stated she was here to inquire as to the status of the proposed Bell Road Extension. Justin and Sheree Wilson stated they were also here to inquire about this same extension. They have built a house and are waiting for water before they put their former home on the market and move into the new Bell Road home. There are ten homes out there and just about every home will sign up for water. General Manager John Smith explained this extension has not been dropped, it is still a valid project, we just have had other matters that have taken priority. Steve Rose asked if we have all easements needed, the response was yes. It was stated this extension is a little over a mile long. The Board informed these guests they will discuss it further and get back to them by the end of this week.

Sidney Brackenridge and Bob Allen are both representatives of the Warren Local School District. Mr Allen stated he has been a Warren School Board member for the past 13 years and a Little Hocking Water Association member for 35 years. They are in attendance tonight to express their concerns over the list of areas on our system currently under a moratorium for new taps that was recently posted to the LHWA website. They stated this area is growing and without water, the area cannot grow. This lack of growth is detrimental to the Warren Local School System.

Regular Meeting

June 14, 2021

Page 2

Mr. Allen stated he has been involved in Water and Waste Water and is an Infrastructure Project Manager for R. L. Robinson.

During this discussion at approximately 6:40 pm, Board Member Charles Seaman arrived and joined in this discussion.

Also in attendance to discuss the areas under a moratorium were James Booth - Washington County Commissioner, Jesse Roush - SE Ohio Port Authority, and Ben Howard - Rural Community Assistance Program (RCAP), to let the Board know they are all here to assist in any way they can to help develop a resolution to the areas of our water system that are under a moratorium.

They stated they believe they can help LHWA receive funding in the form of low interest loans or debt forgiveness loans. To do this they advised LHWA would need to review our rate structure. Commissioner Booth informed the Board the minimum water rate for Lowell is \$ 43.00.

Another option mentioned by these gentlemen was to add a Capital Improvement Fee to all new extensions. Ben Howard had looked at the income levels in our area and found them to be very high. These income levels are determined by Census Districts. These numbers are important when applying for grants.

Ben Howard was asked what the cost was to use RCAP services. He responded most services are at no cost. A Pro Forma would need to be prepared to show LHWA's ability to support debt. Ohio Water Development Authority (OWD), was mentioned as a resource for funding. Debbie Schultz explained we have already been in contact with them. Little Hocking Water Association was told they do not qualify based on our organization structure.

Jessie Roush with SE Ohio Port Authority believes LHWA can obtain funding working through the Port Authority. The Port Authority will be the Public Facing entity.

Bob Allen mentioned an option to protect the low income members would be a debt service fee based on consumption.

These gentlemen believe there will be another round of funding next year. It is important that LHWA have our planning complete and all documentation in order in anticipation of next year's funding becoming available.

Guest Luke Milliron joined our meeting.

Regular Meeting

June 14, 2021

Page 3

At this time our guests thanked us for allowing them to attend and comment on our current moratorium situation and Bell Road extension. Several guests left their business cards and/or other contact information and all guests excused themselves from our meeting.

John Smith informed the Board he has heard there will be a meeting at the Little Hocking walking track park about the Water Department on June 26th at 9:00 in the morning. He has heard this meeting is being organized by Gary West. John is planning to attend.

MINUTES

Steve Rose moved to approve the minutes of the May 10th regular meeting of the Little Hocking Water Board of Trustees. Charles Seaman seconded this motion which passed by a roll call vote with all votes being yes.

BELL ROAD

Steve Rose moved to proceed to install the Bell Road extension. Charles Seaman seconded this motion. Motion carried via roll call vote with all responses being affirmative.

NEW TAPS

John informed the Board that both the boring machine and excavator are both down. Steve Rose moved and Charles Seaman seconded a motion to give John Smith, General Manager, the authority to hire Jeff Church to install taps. Motion carried with a unanimous roll call vote.

Discussion took place on Townships widening their roads and paving over our valves/lines. We have had cases where we have had take a pick and dig out the blacktop/chip & seal to gain access to a valve. Steve Rose asked that Townships be notified, henceforth they are responsible for moving the water lines before they pave over Little Hocking Water Association valves.

Regular Meeting

June 14, 2021

Page 4

NEW BUSINESS

RADIO READ METERS

The folks at Zenner have gotten the new software up and running, we are starting to program MIUs. We have 400 meters in stock ready to install, ^{and} ~~We are hoping~~ ^{to} get moving on installing those soon. That will leave approximately 600 radio read meters left to install in our system.

CO RD 30/VETO ROAD PRESSURE ISSUES

Nothing new to report at this time.

DUGAN RIDGE BOOSTER

We are waiting on one part, however, we do not have an estimated arrival date.

CONSUMER CONFIDENCE REPORT

The CCR Report is complete and has been posted to our website. This month's bills with the link to this CCR report have gone out to members.

WELL# 2 ISSUES

The repairs to well number two are complete. It is up and running with much improved performance. The total cost for this repair is \$ 46,481.86.

AUDIT

We have received an updated engagement letter. After we have reviewed to ensure the changes discussed have been made, we will sign and return. The audit will commence once the engagement letter has been signed by LHWA and sent to the audit firm.

Regular Meeting

June 14, 2021

Page 5

LOW PRESSURE AGREEMENTS

John Smith provided a copy of our Low Pressure Water User's Agreement for the Board's review. New Taps in areas where these agreements would apply can no longer be sold due to EPA regulations.

WELLFIELD MOWING

General Manager, John Smith, let the Board know the well field has been mowed by Steve Watson. He has submitted an invoice in the amount of \$ 1,800.00. This is the rate he was paid in 2020. Steve is expecting to mow the well field three times in 2021, however, the only contract we have on file expired in December 2019. The agreed upon price in this contract was \$ 1,500.00 each time the wellfield was mowed, the agreed upon number of times the well field is to be mowed was three. The contract stipulated mowing was to be done when notified by Little Hocking Water Association.

John has been working with Steve Watson to obtain the proper paperwork. We do have in hand a Certificate of Insurance. We have prepared a contract with Steve Watson for 2021 outlining these terms, however, this contract will expire once the well field has been mowed the third time and will not automatically renew. The well field mowing will be put out for bid for 2022.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Steve Rose moved to enter executive session at 20:02, Charles Seaman seconded motion. All responses to this roll call vote were affirmative.

At 20:40 pm Steve Rose moved to exit executive session. Debbie Schultz seconded this motion. Motion carried via yes responses only to this roll call vote.

Debbie Schultz moved and Charles Seaman seconded a motion for Carl Ratliff to become President and Steve Rose to become Vice President. This motion passed by a unanimous roll call vote.

WATER RATES

Discussion took place regarding our water rates. Rates did not change last year, 2020.

WATER RATES Continued

Charles Seaman moved to increase water rates 15% across the board effective with the July meter reading. Steve Rose seconded this motion. The results of this roll call vote were all yes responses. Motion carried. This rate increase will first appear on members August bills. Notification of this rate increase was included on the June bills. This increase will raise the minimum bill from \$ 23.50 to \$ 27.02.

CLASS II LICENSES

John informed the Board we do not have any employees scheduled to take the Class II Water Operator's License as of this date.

He also made the Board aware that our current Operator of Record must have 24 hours of Continuing Education hours prior to December to keep their license in good standing. This can be accomplished by attending webinars.

The board agreed to cover the cost of these Continuing Education Hours for our current Operator of Record, Dennis Rezabek.

OTHER

Charles Seaman moved; Due to our field employees being on call 24/7 for emergency call out work, LHWA will permit all field employees to drive a company vehicle home - to and from work. No use of a LHWA vehicle for personal use is permitted. Only when scheduled on call will field employees be eligible for "On Call" pay. Steve Rose seconded this motion. The results of this roll call vote are Steve Rose -Yes, Charles Seaman – Yes, Debbie Schultz – No.

PAYMENT OF BILLS

Steve Rose moved and Charles Seaman seconded a motion to pay the bills. This motion carried by a unanimous roll call vote of all yes.

Regular Meeting
June 14, 2021
Page 7

With no further business to come before the Board at this time, Steve Rose moved to adjourn.
Charles Seaman seconded this motion. Motion carried with all responses to the roll call vote being yes.

Meeting Adjourn at 9:50 pm.

Respectfully submitted,


Debbie Schultz, Secretary Treasurer


Steve Rose, Vice President