METROPOLITAN LYNCHBURG MOORE

UTILITY DEPARTMENT

BOARD MEETING

October 11, 2022

The Metro Utility Board meeting scheduled for October 11, 2022, at 6:00 P.M. was called to order by Keith Moses, Chairperson. Member’s present: Keith Moses, Jon Robertson, Will Shavers, Shane Taylor, Barry Posluszny, Russell Sells and Brooke Fanning.

Motion was made by Shane Taylor and seconded by Barry Posluszny to approve the minutes of the September 13, 2022, meeting. Motion carried 5-0.

Visitors: Tabitha Moore, *The Lynchburg Times,* Mayor Sloan Stewart, Travis Wilson, *LJA Engineering*

Engineer’s Report:

1. TDOT Road Widening Project slated to let out on October 14, 2022. Actual construction will not begin until spring 2023.
2. The Sewer Rehabilitation project is currently on schedule. It is still expected to be completed by December 5, 2022.
3. The 12” transmission line pre-bid meeting is set for October 12th at the Legion Building. The bid opening will be held on October 26th at 2PM.
4. The two-booster stations will be let out to bid any day now.
5. The Retreat at Whisky Creek (Tiny Homes) development plans have been reviewed by the engineers and has received the engineer’s approval to proceed for Utility Board review.

Russell Sells asked for a motion to approve the $129,397.38 cost estimate for materials and installation of the 12” transmission line through the Whisky Creek development portion of the overall 12” transmission line installation project. Motion was made by Keith Moses to accept the cost estimate and seconded by Shane Taylor. A roll call vote was taken Shane Taylor – Yes, Barry Posluszny – Yes, Keith Moses – Yes, Jon Robertson – Yes, Will Shavers – Yes. Motion passed 5-0.

Joe Schrader invoice dispute: Mr. Schrader was unable to attend the meeting in person. He sent a detailed email which was distributed to the board for review during the meeting. Mr. Schrader claims the highway department runs over his meter box every time they bushhog around his property. He feels like the highway department is responsible for the damage to his meter box and meter equipment. He requests that the board void the invoice that he received for the meter damage on September 15, 2022. The board agreed to table the discussion on this matter until further evidence can be gathered. Keith Moses asked Russell Sells to request a copy of the highway department’s mowing schedule for the dates Mr. Schrader claims his meter box and meter were damaged. The board also recommend that in future all meter damage invoices be accompanied with photographic proof of damages, as well as the physical parts that were damaged be stored for future investigation. The board feels the customer should be given a timeframe to dispute the charges before an invoice is added to their account.

PubliQ Contract Cancellation: Brooke Fanning presented the board with a contract to cancel software services between PubliQ Software and Metro Utility on December 31, 2022. A motion was made by Will Shavers and seconded by Shane Taylor to accept the contract cancellation as presented. The motion passed 5-0. After the meeting Keith Moses, Chairperson signed the document which will then be sent on to MUD’s attorney, Michael Wall who will submit the contract to PubliQ for completion.

Policy J Review: *Industrial and Commercial Customers*. A motion was made by Shane Taylor and seconded by Barry Posluszny to accept the policy as presented. Motion passed 5-0.

Policy O Review: *Fire Protection Service*: Brooke Fanning presented a revised policy closing the loopholes regarding this policy. A motion was made by Keith Moses and seconded by Will Shavers to approve the updated policy. Motion passed unanimously.

TDEC ARP Letter: Russell Sells presented the board with a copy of a letter Metro Government received notifying of the approval of application for American Rescue Plan monies. He explained in depth what the funds would be used for:

1. $2 million for Phase II of the Sewer Rehabilitation Project
2. $256,000 for Asset Management software/planning
3. $250,000 Planning and Design of approximately 40,000 linear feet of water main replacement.

Irrigation Reel Purchase: Russell Sells presented the board with a quote for $11,015.03 to purchase a Kifco Water Reel. This irrigation reel will be implemented at the Wastewater Treatment plant to remove, and land apply sludge. The funds to purchase the reel come from the $81,144 noted on page 14 of the Metro Utility 2021 Financial Statement restricted for asset management. The agent for the USDA was consulted and he approved the purchase to extend the life of the Wastewater Treatment Plant. The motion was made by Keith Moses and seconded by Jon Robertson to approve the purchase with the specified funds. Motion carried 5-0.

Flail Mower Attachment Purchase: Mr. Sells presented the board with a quote to purchase a Flail Mower Attachment from CAT. This attachment will accompany the CAT mini-excavator for easement clean up jobs. The maintenance crew will be cleaning water line easements in preparation for the completion of MUD’s Water Model Study. After the easements are completely cleaned the leak technicians will “shoot” points with their Trimble unit to record the exact location of all valves, blowoffs, meters and vacant taps throughout the water distribution system. With the easements thoroughly cleaned, Mr. Sells is hopeful more leaks will be detected on water lines that MUD has been unable to access for inspection. A motion was made by Shane Taylor and seconded by Barry Posluszny to accept the quote of $16, 843.04 and purchase the flail mower attachment. Motion passed 5-0. The funds for payment will also come from a portion of the $81,144 noted on page 14 of the 2021 Financial Statement as restricted for asset maintenance. Again, the USDA agent was consulted, and he approved the purchase of the equipment for water line maintenance.

Ford Ranger Purchase: Mr. Sells presented the board with several quotes for various vehicle models. He recommended purchasing the Ford Ranger at a cost of $31,965. After a brief discussion a motion was made by Jon Robertson and seconded by Keith Moses to proceed with the vehicle purchase as recommended. A roll call vote was taken Shane Taylor- Yes, Barry Posluszny – Yes, Keith Moses- Yes, Jon Robertson – Yes, Will Shavers – Yes. Motion passed unanimously.

Manager’s Report: Russell Sells informed the board of the following:

1. Both plants are running well.
2. The lead and copper project is moving forward as planned.
3. Water loss is still hovering at 46-47% monthly. The department received a letter from the State Comptroller’s office recommending the Utility be placed under oversight of the Water and Wastewater Finance Review Board. The department has until December 31, 2022, to respond with a plan.

Keith Moses brought an item up at the end of the meeting. He said he and Mayor Stewart had been receiving complaints from customers regarding the strict lock-off policy and $100 reconnection fee. Mr. Moses suggested that customers who missed a payment and were not habitual offenders should be given an extended grace period (i.e. – possibly until the following month) before their service is disrupted for non-payment. He further expressed those habitual offenders be held accountable and locked off for non-payment according to policy. Brooke Fanning expressed twice that this was discriminatory practice, and the utility could potentially lose federal monies for such a policy. Mr. Moses with other board member agreement asked that legal counsel be asked if there was a way to revise the policy to allow discretionary lock-offs of service. Mrs. Fanning said she would contact the attorney’s office (Branstetter, Branch & Jennings) to seek a policy revision with the requested language and present it at the November meeting.

Motion was made by Shane Taylor, and seconded by Barry Posluszny, to adjourn. Meeting adjourned at 6:53 PM. Motion passed 5-0.

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 Keith Moses, Chairperson