



COOKE CITY, PARK COUNTY WATER DISTRICT
Monthly Board Meeting Minutes
August 18, 2011
6:30 pm

Location: Cooke City Community Center
Conference Room

Board Members in Attendance: Kay Whittle, Rick Sommers
Marilyn Hartley, District Clerk

Public Attendance: Cliff Browne

The meeting was called to order by Rick Sommers at approximately 7:00 pm. It was noted that since there was not a quorum of board members present, no formal decisions could be made at this meeting. Kay distributed the minutes from the July meeting for review and no additions or corrections were recommended.

It was decided to use a list of agenda items that Marilyn had sent to Kay as basis for discussion.

- 1) 6 claims were presented for signature approval as follows:
 - Chk # 2165 Livingston Postmaster - \$35.00 - Rent on P.O. Box (Discussion was made as to whether it should be for the 6 months or 1 year. Marilyn preferred 6 months for this time and then go to a year after that)
 - Chk #2166 Bridger Analytical Labs - \$56.00 - 2 invoices for sample testing
 - Chk #2167 Flathead Electric - \$580.38 - July Utility bill
 - Chk #2168 Century Link (formerly Qwest) - \$41.04 - August phone bill
 - Chk #2169 Marathon Printing - \$139.00 - Custom envelopes (Marilyn explained an error in the type of envelope initially produced and that she decided we could use the single window style, too. So she kept both)
 - Chk #2170 Marilyn Hartley - \$463.92 (adjusted) - August salary (Marilyn initiated discussion as to the implications that the auditors were going to make it a finding that she needs to be put on payroll because she does not meet the criteria necessary to be considered as contracted services. Both Rick and Kay indicated that if it needs to be done then we should do it. Consequently, the check amount was adjusted for employee tax deductions.)
- 2) The discussion on payroll benefits led to Marilyn raising the question as to why the district was paying for worker's comp insurance on Chairman, Ken Hufford. She received a request for more information from State Fund as they prepare the premium for the next year (10/1/11 - 10/1/12) and she needed to respond within the next few days. Neither Kay nor Rick knew why or could justify the rationale, so Marilyn was instructed to have Ken removed from the policy with the understanding that he could be added back on if more information came to light.
- 3) Marilyn indicated that so far, the auditors seem to be pleased with the district's system for approving expenditures. Although not ideal, they applaud our efforts.
- 4) The monthly A/R aging report was presented indicating only one customer was over 90 days past due. It was noted that even though the notice that was inserted in a previous billing to all users indicated that a \$35 charge would apply, Marilyn only charged J & D Deli a \$25 service fee because she found that the minutes to the meeting when the fee was established stated \$25. Kay indicated that it had to have been a typo on her part and that it needed to be corrected to \$35 with these minutes and that the current charge to J & D Deli could be left at \$25.
- 5) Marilyn discussed the difficulties she had in getting out the CCR and that it ended up not being as complicated as it appeared. Former Clerk, Patti Smith, indicated to her that it's actually the water operator's

responsibility to put it together and the clerk distributes it and completes the form for DEQ. Marilyn's only request is that a process be developed for next year so that it's not done in a crisis mode.

- 6) The audit for FY11 is underway. Marilyn met with Rosie to go over things and give her the files for the year. She indicated that Rosie seemed pleased with how much was already completed as far as year-end clean up entries. Marilyn received an email from Rosie requesting backup for 5 checks that was missing and copy of all of the minutes from July 2010 forward. Kay said that she would forward the ones that she did to Marilyn as soon as possible to be included in the mailing of the rest of the things Rosie needs to complete the audit.
- 7) In light of the issues with payroll, Marilyn reminded the board that they can't forget about getting a formal contract from Matt Apslund for performing the duties of water operator. It's very important that we have one on file for next year's audit and in case the IRS ever needs to see one. Rick stated that Matt was supposed to have presented one at the last meeting, but it didn't happen and he didn't know why. Both Kay and Rick indicated that they would remind him again. Further discussion was made as to several other things that Matt was supposed to be working on.
- 8) Marilyn asked how the board meetings were being posted. Kay indicated that she usually sees that a notice gets put in the local Newsletter. In order to be sure that proper meeting notice is given, Marilyn offered to contact the Cooke City Chamber to see if a standard notice could be posted in the Newsletter every week and ask if they could automatically change the date as necessary. Kay agreed that it would be a good idea and accepted Marilyn's offer of assistance.
- 9) Discussion on the FY12 budget was initiated. Marilyn indicated that there would be a few last minute changes related to the breakdown of expenses . . . more specifically related to payroll items. She also explained some of the items that the board had questions on. A final budget document will be prepared and presented for board approval at the next meeting.
- 10) The concept of customers being able to set up automatic payments was addressed. Marilyn said that several people have asked about this and she has come up with the idea of acquiring 'check-by-phone'-type software which would allow for customers to set up automatic monthly payments. The bills would be sent out the first of the month and users who sign up would have until the 15th to notify her of any issues. If she doesn't hear from them, the software would allow her to print a check with the customer's bank information on it to pay the bill. Cost of the software would run from \$99-\$250 and the check stock needed to print the checks would be minimal. Marilyn suggested that the district could charge a fee of \$1 per month to cover the cost of supplies to accomplish this. The board members present were in support of the idea.
- 11) Marilyn then brought up the concept of a website for the district. Kay had mention this to her not long after she was hired and she was wondering if this was still something the board wanted to do. She presented copy of another district's homepage to show the possibilities. Kay indicated that Sandy Wulf had offered to help set a website up for them, but she is no longer available. The concept is to get good information out to water users and establish dedicated email communication with the board and district clerk. Both board members were interested in looking into this further.
- 12) The Forest Service is gearing up to look at renewing the district's Special Use Permit which expires on Dec 31st. Marilyn was contacted by their representative to discuss the follow up inspection of the water project and let the district know what they need to process a new application for permit. Their inspection was positive overall, but they have concerns about a weed issue within the permitted area. Since Marilyn also works for Park County she discussed the situation with the County Weed Manager who made recommendations for this season and offered assistance from his department for the future. This satisfied the Forest Service, but they also need copy of the "as constructed" plat map of the water system. Rick indicated that the former water operator had one and that there are some in the well house, but it would probably be easier to simply call Chad at Great West and have him send it directly to the Forest Service. Marilyn will take care of doing that. There will be a 'cost recovery' fee of between \$100 and \$1000 to cover their administrative costs and to do an environmental analysis, if necessary. An amount to cover this fee will also be added to the budget.
- 13) Election Update – Marilyn indicated that there were no registered candidates to date, but Rick indicated that he knew of one outside of incumbents who was definitely going to run. In light of that, Marilyn highly

recommended that the incumbents who wanted to stay on the board get their application/registrations in also. The deadline for filing is next Friday, Aug 26th. If there are not enough candidates (at least 4) to have an election, those who do register to run will be seated by acclamation and the County Commissioners will appoint the rest.

- 14) Marilyn asked if there was any further discussion or decision on whether to purchase a larger laptop for the district clerk position. The previous clerk purchased a smaller 14" laptop which makes visual acuity somewhat difficult when spending longer periods of time on district work. Marilyn looked into the possibility of purchasing a docking station and monitor, but unfortunately this particular laptop is one for which HP doesn't make a docking station. Rick indicated that Matt Asplund was supposed to be checking out the computer that the previous operator was using to see if it was still usable and adequate for that purpose. Marilyn prefers not to download any further software until a decision is made either way.
- 15) Discussion ensued as to the concept of giving district users a small break on their tax assessment this year in order to show good faith because of not having completed the collection of usage data via the meters and subsequent billing accordingly. Marilyn has received several phone calls expressing frustration that we weren't reading meters yet and that they believe their water bills are unnecessarily high. She indicated that our cash reserves are more than adequate, but Rick reminded that there are at least 2 lines that need replaced which will cost a fairly significant amount because Rural Development has not offered much in the line of financial assistance. Kay indicated that the cost for the repairs is estimated to be around \$80,000 of which the district will be covering all of it. Marilyn reported that if everyone pays their taxes on time, the district takes in approximately \$32,000 each year. Because there was no quorum of board members present to make a formal decision and it was determined that there is not enough time to postpone the decision to next meeting, the tax assessment will need to stand as is for tax year 2011.
- 16) Further discussion was made on how to accomplish the work of getting the water operator's projects completed. A training session with RVS, the meter software company, still needs to be arranged for Matt and Marilyn. Kay offered to help Matt where she can and also suggested that a young man who has worked for Antlers Lodge this summer may be a possibility, too. . . either as Matt's employee or occasional labor under the district's payroll. Further discussion with Matt needs to take place in order to determine what his needs are to get things moving.

With no further business to attend to, Rick adjourned the meeting at approximately 8:15 pm.

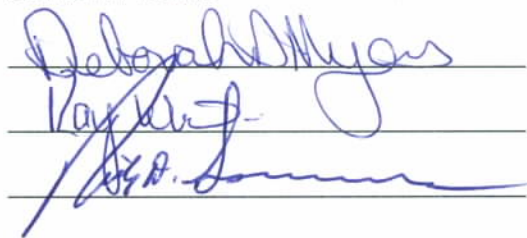
The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, September 15th in the Community Center Conference Room @ 6:30 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,



Marilyn Hartley
District Clerk

BOARD APPROVAL:



Date: 9/15/11