The Utilities Board of The Town of Cedar Bluff

August 15, 2023

STATE OF ALABAMA

CHEROKEE COUNTY

The Utilities Board of the Town of Cedar Bluff met for a regular business meeting Thursday, August 15, 2023, at 4:00 p.m. at 4971 Alabama HWY 68, Cedar Bluff Alabama 35959. The meeting was called to order by Chairman Mattie Williams.

Roll Call:

Allen Baker Absent Jack Bond Present

Linda Pickelsimer Absent Mattie Williams Present

William Warren Present

Meeting attendees: Larry Sutherland, Bobbie Hicks, Marcia Kastel, Katie Gargus, Todd Hindsman

The prayer was led by Chairman Williams followed by The Pledge of Allegiance, led by Board Member Warren.

**Approval of Minutes**

Office Manager Joshua Bolton presented the minutes from the meeting of July 18, 2023. Board Member Warren made a motion to accept the minutes as read, which was second by Board Member Bond.

Motion Carried (3-0)

Aye: Bond, Warren, Williams

Nye: None

Abstained: None

**Manager Report**

Manager Steven Dutton presented the Managers Report to the Board. The report consisted of 2 water taps, 14 water leaks, 1 meter or fitting repair/replaced and 1 pump station repair. There was a total of 71 completed Work Orders.

Board Member Bond asked Manager Dutton if Paradise Point had water service. Manager Dutton informed him Northeast Alabama Water District provides water on Paradise Point and we have sewer service. Board Member Bond asked how many sewer-only customers are on Paradise Point. Manger Dutton stated he thinks there are fifteen customers with 2 more customers waiting for sewer taps to be completed.

Board Member Bond asked Manger Dutton who was paying for the water at the baseball field. Manger Dutton informed him it was the Cedar Bluff Schools. Board Member Bond stated a customer had told him someone was filling trucks up at the baseball field. Manager Dutton stated Mark Baty, with Cedar Bluff Town Hall, had informed him and sent pictures proving of the trucks filling up a at the baseball field. Manager Dutton then stated he had met with the man, who was filling the trucks who brought to his attention that the Town gave them permission to fill up at the baseball field. Manger Dutton informed him the water he was using belonged to Cedar Bluff Utilities and not the county and the water used will need to be purchased. Manger Dutton stated the manager of the company talked to Office Manger Joshua Bolton to make payment arrangements. It was estimated the company had used 9000 gallons of water. Board Member Bond asked how much the 9000 gallons would cost and if the school would have to pay for it. Manager Dutton informed him the water came from a fire hydrant and not through a meter. Office Manger Bolton informed the Board he charged the company $60 for the water. Board Member Bond and Chairman Williams questioned the rate charged to the company. Manger Bolton informed the Board the rate was for water only, which does not include sewer or trash. Chairman Williams and Board Member Bond asked if the charge was for commercial use? Manger Bolton stated he had charged them the residential rates. He also stated he informed the manager of the company, if they were to need any water in the future, they would need to set up an account and keep track of water usage for the trucks. Chairman Williams stated if the company were to fill the trucks again, they would need to be charged a commercial rate.

**Financial Report**

Katie Gargus, from BMSS, presented the Financial Report to the Board. She stated there was a new feature that BMSS was providing for their clients called reach reporting. She then stated the Financial Report can be hard to understand and the Reach Report takes the key components from the financial report and analyses the data into an easy-to-understand format. Ms. Gargus explained the July 2023 Reach Report to the Board:

Unrestricted Cash bank accounts were $38.5k higher than June 2023.

Restricted Funds were $7.8k higher than June 2023.

Accounts Receivable were $7.2k higher than June 2023.

Accounts Payable was $20.1k higher than June 2023.

The Total Income was $98.8k for June 2023.

The Total Expenses was $97.3k for June 2023.

The Net Profit for July 2023 was $2147.

Ms. Gargus needed Chairman Williams to sign the paperwork for the payroll taxes. Chairman Williams signed the paperwork and Ms. Gargus stated she would mail the paperwork to the IRS the following morning. Ms. Gargus told Office Manager Bolton that the only thing left to submit was the state unemployment payment. She stated that she needed the login information for the Alabama Department of Labor. Office Manager Bolton stated that he had asked Bob Blunt, with Cambridge, for the information but he had not gotten a response.

Chairman Williams asked Manager Bolton if BMSS had created a different Check Registry in QBO resembling the Check Registry in Sage. Office Manager Bolton stated the report had not been completed and confirmed his statement with Ms. Gargus. Ms. Gargus asked what was missing from the report. Office Manager Bolton stated he was unsure, but he would email her a copy of the Check Registry generated by Sage.

Board Member Bond made a motion to accept the Financial Report as given, Board Member Warren seconded the motion.

Motion Carried (3-0)

Aye: Bond, Warren, Williams

Nye: None

Abstained: None

Office Manager Joshua Bolton presented and explained the Monthly Check Registry to the Board. He explained the letters in the CLR column on the report “C” meant the check had cleared the bank and “R” meant the check had been reconciled in the chart of accounts. Board Member Bond asked if the accounts were listed on the Check Registry generated by Sage. Office Manager Bolton stated he thinks it was listed in the report generated by Sage. Ms. Gargus stated she should be able to create a similar report too the one generated by Sage. Board Member Bond asked about a charge of $1244.75. Office Manager Bolton explained it was for the System Awards Management (SAM). He stated the credit card company never removed the first payment due to the fact it was not fraudulent. Board Member Bond asked if SAM was something Cedar Bluff Utilities needed. Office Manger Bolton stated he called Derrell Sears, with LADD, who stated SAM was something we needed in order to be awarded any grants. Board Member Bond asked Office Manager Bolton if he could give more details of purchases in the “MEMO/DESCRIPTION” column. Manager Bolton stated he would give more detailed descriptions of purchases. Board Member Bond asked if Kathy Bond and Donna Walling had been notarized. Office Manager Bolton explained the process of getting of becoming a notary and said he could get it done this month.

**Customers**

Joshua Elders nor Larry Durham was present at the meeting to discuss their leaks. Chairman Willams asked Manager Bolton if both customers had paid their balances. Office Manager Bolton stated that Larry Durham did, but Joshua Elders did not. Chairman Williams directed Office Manager Bolton to call both customers to inform them they would need to be present at the Board meetings to get any adjustments made to their sewer.

**Old Business**

Office Manager Bolton reported he had called RVS Mosaic, our billing software, to implement RVS real time. He stated that they are working on the code now and he is waiting for the implementation to be completed. He also reported he has not received an invoice for RVS real time.

Office Manager Bolton reported on Coast, the company with electronic work orders. He stated he had received an answer to the information the Board requested.

1. Would Coast automatically delete the data after a length of time had passed?
   1. Coast would not delete the data after a length of time.
2. Will the Board still have access to the database if they discontinue the service?
   1. We will be given a copy of the database.
3. Will the price increase after a year of having the service?
   1. The price may increase over time, but it will not be immediately.

Board Member Warren and Chairman Williams asked if there is a written contract that stated the data in the database belongs to Cedar Bluff Utilities. Office Manager Bolton stated it would be in a written contract.

Chairman Williams made a motion to use Coast for generating the electronic work orders, Board Member Warren seconded the motion.

Motion Carried (3-0)

Aye: Bond, Warren, Williams

Nye: None

Abstained: None

Chairman Williams asked if there were any further old business not listed on the agenda.

Board Member Warren asked are the Utilities Maintenance Staff clocking in and out at the shop. Office Manager Bolton stated yes.

Board Member Warren asked for the outcome of the removal of the bushes behind the office and the flagpole. Chairman Williams stated that at the July 18, 2023 meeting, Board Member Pickelsimer stated the bushes were beautiful and we did not need to be removed. She added that the Board had voted to remove the flagpole and mount a new flagpole to the entrance columns, but the removal of the bushes was tabled. Board Member Bond stated he thinks the bushes do not need to be removed because of aesthetics and asked if the flagpole had been removed. Office Manager Bolton stated that it has not been removed nor have the new flags been mounted to the columns. Manager Dutton then explained the flagpole was in bad condition and the pulleys and rope used to raise and lower the flag would need to be replaced. He also stated that in the past the flag that flew on the old pole would get wrapped around the pole due to the winds coming off the lake. Office Manager Bolton stated the flagpole is also very close to a powerline. Board Member Bond stated he was having second thoughts about removing the flagpole. After some discussion Board Member Bond made a motion to reconsider keeping the flagpole and replacing the pulleys and ropes. Board Member Warren seconded the motion.

Motion Carried (3-0)

Aye: Bond, Warren, Williams

Nye: None

Abstained: None

**New Business**

Board Member Warren stated he had talked to Manager Dutton about producing a strategic plan for Cedar Bluff Utilities. He stated he would volunteer to collaborate with Manager Dutton and Office Manager Bolton to develop a short-term and long-term strategic plan. He stated once the plan is developed, he will present it to the Board. Chairman Williams stated once the plan is developed, and in writing, the Board’s Attorney, Bob McWhorter, should review it to make sure it follows the Utilities Board’s bylaws. Board Member Bond asked what the plan would entail. Board Member Warren stated the plan would outline the yearly goals, a preventive maintenance plan and an upgraded plan for the system. Chaiman Williams stated the plan will also include rewriting the Cedar Bluff Utilities Handbook. Board Member Bond asked how much time it would take away from Manager Dutton and Office Manger Bolton from their normal daily task. Board Member Warren Stated he did not think it would take too much of their time. Board Member Bond stated he would like the plan to be written and reviewed by the Board before asking the Boards Attorney to review the document. Chairman Williams stated the normal process was for the Board to review any documents and then pass them off to the Attorney for review. Chairman Williams made a motion that Board Member Warren along with Manger Steven Dutton and Office Manager Joshua Bolton develop a short-term and long-term strategic plan for the Utilities Board of the Town of Cedar Bluff, Board Member Bond seconded the motion.

Motion Carried (3-0)

Aye: Bond, Warren, Williams

Nye: None

Abstained: None

Chairman Williams addressed the Board concerning the Rules and Regulations, which is listed on the Cedar Bluff Utilities website. This document contains a list of fees for each service provided by Cedar Bluff Utilities. Chairman Williams stated Manger Dutton had spoken to her regarding customers not being charged for some of the services. Manager Dutton then addressed the Board and gave a list of different services and fees that were not charged to the customer. He also suggested an increase in both water and sewer taps. Board Member Bond suggested each of the Board Members take home a copy of the Rules and Regulations to produce a new fee schedule. Chairman Williams made a motion to table any further discussion on the subject until the next meeting, giving each Board Member a chance to review the document and decide on any adjustments or deletion. Board Member Warren seconded the motion.

Motion Carried (3-0)

Aye: Bond, Warren, Williams

Nye: None

Abstained: None

Manager Dutton addressed the Board concerning the truck that was ordered from Stivers Ford Lincoln. He stated it had been three months since the truck was ordered and we still have not received it. Manager Dutton stated he had discussed canceling the bid with the representative from Stivers Ford Lincoln. Charman Williams stated that she had instructed Manger Dutton to call the League of Municipalities to find out if Cedar Bluff Utilities had to use the State Bid List. Chairman Williams stated, according to the League of Municipalities, if the truck did not exceed the threshold of $30,000 Cedar Bluff Utilities would not have to use the State Bid List. Board Member Bond asked Manger Dutton if the truck was going to cost under $30,000 and why did the truck need to be an 8-cylinder Engine. Manager Dutton stated the truck would be over $30,000 and he had talked to Board Member Baker who stated anything under an 8-cylinder does not have the power needed to pull equipment. Manager Dutton then stated he had found a 3-year-old truck with 40k miles for $1800 more than the new truck. Board Member Warren suggested putting a bid in with other dealers in the area. After further discussion Board Member Bond made a motion to cancel the bid with Stivers Ford Lincoln and do a bid process with Ford dealerships to get a new truck. Board Member Warren seconded the motion.

Motion Carried (3-0)

Aye: Bond, Warren, Williams

Nye: None

Abstained: None

Todd Hindsman, with BMSS addressed the Board concerning selecting a company to do the end of the year audit. Mr. Hindsman presented the Board with three audit proposals. He stated that all three companies are excellent. He then stated that Gerald G. Pentecost, CPA has the lowest fee, and he would recommend using him to do the end of the year audit. After some discussion, Board Member Warren made a motion to use Gerald G. Pentecost, CPA to do the end of year audit. Chairman Williams seconded the motion.

Motion Carried (3-0)

Aye: Bond, Warren, Williams

Nye: None

Abstained: None

Board Member Warren addressed the Board concerning OSHA regulation 29CFR1926.650, 651, 652. The regulation requires trenches four foot in depth and greater to be shored. Board Member Warren had asked Manger Dutton if Cedar Bluff Utilities had shoring equipment, to which the answer was no. Board Member Warren proposed getting a trenching box. He then stated Manager Dutton was interested in an aluminum trenching box with three panels making the height of the box range from three feet to nine feet. Board Member Warren made a motion to purchase the trenching box for $6500. He then stated the $6500 price included 30-inch fixed spreader bars. He also stated they also have adjustable spreader bars ranging from 24 to 48 inches, which would give them more flexibility. He asked Manager Dutton his thoughts on getting the adjustable spreader bars, who answered he thought it was an innovative idea. Chairman Williams asked Board Member Warren if the trenching box had a warranty, who answered he thought it had a 5-year warranty. Board Member Warren amended his motion to allow Manager Dutton to purchase the trenching box with the adjustable spreader bars if the price did not exceed $7500. Board Member Bond seconded the motion.

Motion Carried (3-0)

Aye: Bond, Warren, Williams

Nye: None

Abstained: None

Manager Dutton addressed the Board concerning the purchase of two pumps. He stated the pumps would cost $1368 each and they normally always keep two pumps in stock. Board Member Warren asked if it would benefit raising Manager Dutton’s spending limit from $1000 to $2000 so that in the future, he would not have to get the Board approval. Board Member Bond stated he did not like the idea of raising Manager Dutton’s spending limit and it would need to be addressed at the next Board meeting. Board Member made the motion to allow Manger Dutton to purchase the two pumps. Board Member seconded the motion.

Motion Carried (3-0)

Aye: Bond, Warren, Williams

Nye: None

Abstained: None

Manger Dutton addressed the Board concerning the Excavator. He stated it was bought in hast and never tested or showcased before it was purchased. He explained it had to be put through a regeneration cycle because it did not produce black smoke. Manger Dutton then stated a mechanic had to work on the Excavator because it was bogging down and losing all power. The mechanic put the Excavator through the regeneration cycle. After the mechanic supposedly fixed the Excavator, it started to have the same problem as before. He then stated the Excavator has over 700 running hours and if it was to break down it could be a problem because it is a major piece of equipment we use. After much deliberation, Board Member Warren made a motion to allow Manger Dutton to get bids from two dealers for the same brand and one other brand. Board Member Bond seconded the motion.

Motion Carried (3-0)

Aye: Bond, Warren, Williams

Nye: None

Abstained: None

Board Member Bond asked that the agenda be sent to the Board a week before the meeting. This will give the Board time to review the agenda and to research the topics on the agenda in advance.

Board Member Bond made a motion to adjourn the meeting, Board Member Warren seconded the motion.

Motion Carried (3-0)

Aye: Bond, Warren, Williams

Nye: None

Abstained: None

The meeting was adjourned at 5:11 PM.

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Mattie Williams, Chairman Date

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Joshua Bolton, Secretary Date