The Utilities Board of The Town of Cedar Bluff

September 19, 2023

STATE OF ALABAMA

CHEROKEE COUNTY

The Utilities Board of the Town of Cedar Bluff met for a regular business meeting Thursday, September 19, 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 Present Jack Bond Present

Linda Pickelsimer Present Mattie Williams Present

William Warren Present

Meeting attendees: Larry Sutherland, Marcia Kastel, April Elders, Attorney Bob McWhorter

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

**Approval of Minutes**

Office Manager Joshua Bolton presented the minutes from the meeting of August 15, 2023. Board Member Warren made a motion to accept the minutes as written, which was second by Board Member Bond.

Motion Carried (5-0)

Aye: Baker, Bond, Pickelsimer, Warren, Williams

Nye: None

Abstained: None

**Manager Report**

Manager Steven Dutton presented the Managers Report to the Board. The report consisted of 1 water tap, 2 sewer taps, 17 water leaks, 2 sewer leaks, 2 meter or fitting repair/replaced, 1 water main repair and 1 sewer line installed. There was a total of 129 completed Work Orders.

Manager Dutton stated he has started ordering parts from Fortiline because they have lower prices than Calhoon Meters.

**Financial Report**

Treasure Pickelsimer stated she would have to rely on Katie Gargus, from BMSS, and Office Manger Bolton for the report, because she has not reviewed any of the checks that were written. She then stated that she liked the new format, and everything appeared to be in order. Treasure Pickelsimer made a motion to accept the Financial Report as written, Board Member Warren seconded the motion.

Motion Carried (5-0)

Aye: Baker, Bond, Pickelsimer, Warren, Williams

Nye: None

Abstained: None

Office Manager Bolton presented the Check Registry to the Board. Office Manager Bolton stated he would like to ask Ms. Gargus about the ACH Chargebacks on the Check Registry and why they were keyed to the Peddy Cash account. Board Member Pickelsimer stated that the transactions were a washout and BMSS was probably using that account to zero out the transactions. She then asked Office Manager Bolton if he could print a weekly check register and Office Manger Bolton stated he could.

**Customers**

Chairman Williams addressed the Board for David Horton who was unable to attend the meeting. Chairman Williams explained Mr. Horton had a mother-in-law cottage on his property and that his account has always been a multiple user account. Because of the changes to the rules and regulations concerning multiple user accounts, Mr. Horton would need to purchase a meter tap to comply. Chairman Williams suggested to grandfather him in instead of having him purchase a second meter. Board Member Bond stated he agreed with Mr. Horton remaining as a multiuser. He then asked if a time limit should be set or if the Board should review each case on an individual basis for other customers. After some discussion, the Board agreed to take everything on an individual basis and to allow Mr. Horton to remain on a multiuser account.

Customers Kenneth Pickens and Fayla Vaughn were not present for the meeting.

April Elders addressed the Board concerning a leak. She stated her toilet stopper was stuck and had caused the toilet to run for several days. Board Member Pickelsimer stated, because the water had gone into the sewer system and would still need to be cleaned, an adjustment could not be made on Ms. Elders sewer. The Board agreed with Board Member Pickelsimer’s statement. Manager Dutton stated that Ms. Elders should talk to the apartment manager at Cedar Key to help with the bill because they oversee the upkeep of the building facilities.

**Old Business**

Chairman Williams addressed the Board concerning the ADEM Clan Water State Revolving matching funds grant. She reminded the Board of her discussion with Cade Runyan, a representative of ADEM, who stated the grant money could be used for the manhole restoration. She added if there was no money for that project Cedar Bluff Utilities would not be penalized if they were unable to run sewer to The Bluffs. Board Member Bond suggested the grant money be used for the manhole restoration. He also stated the Board had already voted not to run the sewer lines to The Bluffs and had turned down the grant. Board Member Pickelsimer stated the grant was voted down but, due to the manhole restoration the discussion was reopened. Chairman Williams stated, the Board was waiting to vote on the grant until Board Member Pickelsimer could determine if Cedar Bluff Utilities had the matching funds. She also stated the Board would have to recast their vote because they originally turned it down. Board Member Warren made a motion to accept ADEM Clan Water State Revolving matching funds grant, Board Member Baker seconded the motion. Board Member Pickelsimer asked if Attorney Bob McWhorter should review the grant before the Board accepts the grant. Board Member Warren stated he could amend his motion to be contingent on Attorney McWhorter’s review of the documents. Chairman Williams reminded the Board there was a time limit on accepting the grant and it would need to be voted on before the meeting was over. Board Member Bond asked Attorney McWhorter if he could review the document and give a report before the end of the meeting. Attorney McWhorter stated he would review the documents.

Chairman Williams addressed the Board concerning rates and tap fees. She stated that she had Manager Dutton and Office Manager Bolton look at other water companies’ rates in the surrounding area. Office Manager Bolton presented the Board with the rate schedule of other water companies in the surrounding area. Board Member Bond suggested the water taps be increased to match Center Water Work. Board Member Warren suggested the Low Pressure and Non-Water sewer taps be increased by $300. After some discussion Board Member Baker made a motion to increase the water taps to match Center Water Works, to leave the Gravity Sewer Taps at $1000, to increase the Low Pressure to $1300 and to increase the Non-Water Sewer taps to $1500, Board Member Bond seconded the motion.

Motion Carried (5-0)

Aye: Baker, Bond, Pickelsimer, Warren, Williams

Nye: None

Abstained: None

The new tap fees are as follows:

* ¾ “water meter tap from $600 to $800.
* 1 “water meter tap from $600 to $1000.
* 2 “water meter tap from $2000 to $2,100.
* Gravity Sewer no change, leave $1,000.
* Low Pressure Sewer from $1000 to $1,300.
* Non-Water Sewer change from $1200 to $1,500.

Office Manager Bolton reported Kathy Bond and Donna Walling have been bonded and they must file the paperwork at the probit judge’s office to become notaries.

Office Manger Bolton reported that RVS Real Time has been implemented. He stated he had spent several hours on the phone with both RVS Mosaic and NextBill pay to work out all the bugs. RVS Real Time will allow the Utilities Office Staff to post credit cards more efficiently and with less human error. Office Manger Bolton stated the program works and it makes posting credit card much easier.

Office Manger Bolton reported Coast, the electronic work order program, is ready but has not been implemented yet. He stated he would need to download the app to the Utilities Maintenance Staff’s phones. Board Member Warren asked if the contract stated the data entered into the application belongs to Cedar Bluff Utilities, and Office Manger Bolton confirmed. Chairman Williams asked if the contractual agreement was for a year and Office Manger Bolton answered from his understanding, the contractual agreement can be voided if Coast was not being used.

Manger Dutton addressed the Board concerning the shoring box he was tasked to purchase. He stated the shoring box he was originally priced was three feet wide by three feet tall and not three feet wide by six feet tall. Manager Dutton stated the three feet wide by six feet tall box was $800 more than smaller box. The Board asked if they increased the spending amount for the shoring box from $7500 to $8500, would it include the cost of everything that was needed. Manger Dutton stated it should be enough. After some discussion, Board Member Warren made a motion to increase the spending amount for the shoring box from $7500 to $8500, Board Member Baker seconded the motion.

Motion Carried (5-0)

Aye: Baker, Bond, Pickelsimer, Warren, Williams

Nye: None

Abstained: None

The Board asked for an update on the new truck. Manger Dutton stated Office Manger Bolton and Attorney Bob McWhorter are putting together a bid. He stated that Jennifer Renalds, the town clerk of the town of Cedar Bluff, stated an Attorney should write the bid. Chairman Williams asked Attorney McWhorter if he was working on the bid. He stated he did not know he was supposed to be working on the bid. Office Manager Bolton stated Attorney McWhorter supplied him with different bids to use as a format and he could type the bid. Attorney McWhorter stated he would review the bid once Office Manager Bolton finished drafting the bid documents.

The Board asked for an update on the new excavator. Manger Dutton reported the new excavator worked well. He stated once they are caught up on the leaks, he would contact Vacavich to fix the old excavator. Once the old excavator is fixed, it and the trencher will be ready to be put on the surplus site.

Attorney McWhorter reported on the ADEM Clan Water State Revolving matching funds grant. He stated the document he reviewed was a preliminary application for the grant. The document identified several documents that were attached to it when it was submitted, primary maps and drawings of the project. He stated the grant money must be used on things that are included in the scope of the project. Board Member Warren asked if the work would be contracted out and Manager Dutton confirmed. Board Member Warren stated it is imperative the contractor follows the scope of the project. Board Member Bond stated the Board should review the scope of the project before they vote. Chairman Williams and Board Member Baker stated the grant needed to be voted on before the end of the meeting because it is time sensitive. Chairman Williams reminded the Board about her phone conversation with Cade Runyan. Board Member Baker asked Manger Dutton if he had a copy of the scope of the project and Manger Dutton stated he would go look.

Board Member Baker stated while Manger Dutton was looking for the paperwork the Board should discuss new business.

**New Business**

Office Manager Bolton addressed the Board concerning the ARWA’s Water & Wastewater Certification. He stated Manger Dutton was going to discuss this with the Board and the certification was for Brock Black. The certification was for grade 1 and grade 2 water certification. Chairman Williams asked what this would allow him to do, and Office Manger Bolton stated he was unsure, but Manger Dutton was certified. Board Member Warren made a motion to spend $400 for Brock Black to take the ARWA’s Water & Wastewater Certification, Board Member Pickelsimer seconded the motion.

Motion Carried (5-0)

Aye: Baker, Bond, Pickelsimer, Warren, Williams

Nye: None

Abstained: None

Board Member Pickelsimer addressed the Board. She stated that September is the end of the fiscal year and historically an additional principal payment is made on Cedar Bluff Utilities debt retirement loan. The balance remaining on the loan is $914,987.00 and $6000.00 is transferred monthly into the Allocation Account from the General Fund Account. By the end of September there will be $96,000.00 in the Allocations Account allocated toward the loan. Board Member Pickelsimer stated that normally when the liability insurance is paid in January the funds are transferred from the Allocations Account to the General Fund Account. A total of $3000 is transferred from the General Fund Account monthly to the Allocations Account. By the end of September there will be $36,000.00 in the Allocations Account allocated toward the liability insurance. Board Member Pickelsimer stated the premium has not increased for the liability insurance and she suggested using $4000 of the money allocated toward the liability insurance and adding it to the $96,000.00 allocated toward the loan to increase the amount allocated to $100,000. Board Member Pickelsimer made a motion to transfer $4000 of the liability insurance money to the debt retirement money and pay $100,000.00 on the note, Board Member Baker seconded the motion.

Motion Carried (5-0)

Aye: Baker, Bond, Pickelsimer, Warren, Williams

Nye: None

Abstained: None

Chairman Williams addressed the Board and stated that the original paperwork for the ADEM Clan Water State Revolving matching funds grant cannot be found and her phone conversation with Cade Runyan was the only thing they had to go by. Board Member Warren made a motion to accept the ADEM Clan Water State Revolving matching funds grant contingent on Attorney McWhorter reviewing the scope of the project, in the next few days, and approving, Board Member Pickelsimer seconded the motion.

Motion Carried (5-0)

Aye: Baker, Bond, Pickelsimer, Warren, Williams

Nye: None

Abstained: None

At 5:08 PM, Chairman Williams made a motion to go into Executive Session for Good Name and

Character. The Board reconvened at 5:42PM.

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

Motion Carried (5-0)

Aye: Baker, Bond, Pickelsimer, Warren, Williams

Nye: None

Abstained: None

The meeting was adjourned at 5:43.

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Mattie Williams, Chairman Date

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Joshua Bolton, Secretary Date