The Utilities Board of The Town of Cedar Bluff

February 20, 2024

STATE OF ALABAMA

CHEROKEE COUNTY

The Utilities Board of the Town of Cedar Bluff met for a regular business meeting Tuesday, February 20, 2024, at 4:00 p.m. at 4971 Alabama HWY 68, Cedar Bluff Alabama 35959. The meeting was called to order by Chairman Jack Bond.

Roll Call:

Allen Baker Present Jack Bond Present

Linda Pickelsimer Present Mattie Williams Present

William Warren Present

Meeting attendees: Steve McKelvey, Larry Southerland, Marsha Kastl, Philip Bellow, Angela Ritchie, Garrett Crain

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

**Approval of Minutes**

Office Manager Joshua Bolton presented the minutes from the meeting of January 16, 2023. Board Member Warren made a motion to accept the minutes as presented, which was seconded by Board Member Williams.

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 2 sewer taps, 8 water leaks, 3 sewer leaks, and 3 sewer line/manhole repair. There was a total of 94 completed Work Orders.

Board Member Warren asked if the dump camera had been moved. Manager Dutton replied yes.

**Financial Report**

Treasure Pickelsimer explained she had not received the financial report from BMSS and made a motion to table reviewing the report until the next meeting, Board member Baker seconded.

Motion Carried (5-0)

Aye: Baker, Bond, Pickelsimer, Warren, Williams

Nye: None

Abstained: None

Office Manager Bolton presented the Check Registry to the Board. The Board did not have any questions concerning the Check Registry. Chairman Bond suggested reviewing the Check Registry weekly to eliminate the amount of time used reviewing the report during the Board meeting.

**Customers**

The following customers with concerns who were put on the agenda were not present: Loretta Lindley, Shanda Sutton, Taylor Eads, and James Bussey.

Board Member Williams reported Office Manager Bolton findings concerning Mayo Williams questions at the January 16, 2023 meeting. She explained that the surrounding water departments in the surrounding areas also had a minimum payment. She stated she would deliver Office Manager Boltons findings to Mr. Williams.

Manager Steven Dutton reported that he had checked Renea Moten’s pipes for calcium. He stated he had not found any calcium past the meter, but he did check the filter the customers had installed, and it was full of sediment. The customer informed Manager Dutton and Board Member Warren the filter had not been changed for some time.

Steve McKelvey addressed the Board concerning a leak. After some discussion Board Member Board Member Warren made the motion to adjust Mr. McKelvey sewer rate by $199.02, Board Member Williams seconded the motion.

Motion Carried (5-0)

Aye: Baker, Bond, Pickelsimer, Warren, Williams

Nye: None

Abstained: None

Angela Ritchie addressed the Board concerning a leak. She stated she was told there would be a $100 fee for any after-hours services. Board Member Williams assured Ms. Ritchie there was an after-hours service fee. Board Member Williams asked Manager Bolton if the fee was in the Rules and Regulation. Office Manager Bolton stated that it was in the Rules and Regulation but it as vague. Ms. Ritchie also asked if a customer was allowed to turn off the water before the meter. Manager Dutton had told Ms. Ritchie there was a policy in place stating customers are not allowed to tamper with the cut off valve on before the meter. The policy was put in place to keep customers from damaging the valve. Manager Dutton explained that Ms. Ritchie had a cut off valve after the meter. Ms. Ritchie explained that her cut off valve did not work. Board Member Warren told Manager Dutton if there was an emergency; he could turn off the water before the meter.

Ms. Ritchie also made a formal complaint toward Manager Dutton. She stated he had acted very unprofessional during the inspection. She stated he was not friendly, left trash in her yard and was talking about panties. Manager Dutton apologized to Ms. Ritchie for his conduct and for leaving trash in her yard, but he denied talking about panties.

After some discussion Board Member Williams made the motion to adjust Ms. Ritchie sewer rate by $72.12, Board Member Baker seconded the motion.

Motion Carried (5-0)

Aye: Baker, Bond, Pickelsimer, Warren, Williams

Nye: None

Abstained: None

Gerrett Green, from Cedar Bluff School, addressed the Board concerning two leaks. After some discussion Board Member Williams made the motion to adjust Cedar Bluff School sewer rate on account 1237 by $15.44 and $420.85 on account 624, Board Member Baker seconded the motion.

Motion Carried (5-0)

Aye: Baker, Bond, Pickelsimer, Warren, Williams

Nye: None

Abstained: None

Marsha Kastl addressed the Board concerning a bill she had received while her service was turned off. She explained that she had a house fire and the Cedar Bluff Fire Department had turned off her water and electric service. After some discussion, the Board decided to credit Ms. Kastl’s account by $58.69.

**Old Business**

The Board discussed putting the old gray Utility Truck up for sell. Manager Dutton suggested putting a for sale sign on the truck to sell the truck. The Board was unsure if that could be done because of the value of the truck and asked Office Manager Bolton to investigate. Chairman Bond made a motion to table selling the truck until the next meeting, Board Member Williams seconded the motion.

Motion Carried (5-0)

Aye: Baker, Bond, Pickelsimer, Warren, Williams

Nye: None

Abstained: None

The Board discussed putting the Case Excavator up for sale on the government bid list. After some discussion Board Member Baker made a motion to put the excavator up for action on govdeals.com for a minimum bid of $42,000.00, Board Member Williams seconded the motion.

Motion Carried (5-0)

Aye: Baker, Bond, Pickelsimer, Warren, Williams

Nye: None

Abstained: None

The Board discussed the repairing of the front entrance. Chairman Bond asked Manager Dutton about the bid he had received the first time was over $3000. Manager Dutton replied yes. He also stated he had received a bid from Nick Combs for $3000. Chairman Bond stated he had received a bid from Clark Combs for $1875.00. Board Member Pickelsimer made a motion to accept the Bid from Clark Combs to repair the front entrance, Board Member Warren seconded the Motion.

Motion Carried (5-0)

Aye: Baker, Bond, Pickelsimer, Warren, Williams

Nye: None

Abstained: None

Chairman Bond addressed the Board concerning the employee handbook. He stated Attorney McWhorter wanted clarification on how the chain of command should be. The Board discussed two different types of chain of command at the February 7, 2024 meeting. The first chain of command option suggested would have the Office Employees report to the Office Manager who will report to the General Manager who will report to the Board. The Maintenance Employees would also report to the General Manager. The second chain of command option would have the Office Employees report to the Office Manager who will report to the Board and have the Maintenance Employee report to the Working Manager who will report to the Board. Board Member Warren stated at the February 7, 2024 meeting the Board had decided to use first option for the chain of command. Chairman Bond said it was never voted on and made a motion to use the second chain of command option, Board Member Baker seconded the motion.

Motion Carried (4-1)

Aye: Baker, Bond, Pickelsimer, Williams

Nye: Warren

Abstained: None

Board Member Pickelsimer addressed the Board concerning the spending limit. She stated the limit had been set for $1000.00 and should be adequate for any budgeted item. She stated any purchase that was major would need to come before the Board. Board Member Pickelsimer made a motion to set the spending limit to $1000.00 for both Managers. Board Member Baker suggested to allow the Managers to contact the at least two of the Board Member, in case of an emergency, to spend more than $1000. Board Member Pickelsimer amended her motion to set the spending limit to $1000.00 and allow the managers to contact two Board Members, in case of an emergency, to spend more than $1000.00, Board Member Baker seconded the motion.

Motion Carried (5-0)

Aye: Baker, Bond, Pickelsimer, Warren, Williams

Nye: None

Abstained: None

Board Member Pickelsimer addressed the Board concerning the payroll schedule. She stated during the February 7, 2024 meeting the Board had voted to drop Payroll & Benefit Solutions, who process the payroll, and have the Office Manager Bolton start processing the payroll on February 28, 2024. She stated the decision was prematurely made and could cause issues with the quarterly payroll taxes. After some discussion Board Member Pickelsimer made a motion to continue using BMSS for pay roll services, Board Member Baker seconded the motion.

The Board discussed the payroll schedule. Chairman Bond and Board Member Pickelsimer suggested to change the payroll schedule from Thursday through Wednesday to Saturday through Friday. Chairman Bond suggested reporting the time for Thursday and Friday. Office Manager Bolton stated getting a two-day check would cause issues with the employees’ bills and suggested letting him report time Thursday, Friday, and Monday. Then the next week he would report the time for Tuesday through Friday. So instead of a two-day check the employees would receive a three-day check one week and a four-day check the next week, putting less strain on the employees. After some discussion Board Member Pickelsimer made a motion to change the payroll schedule from Thursday through Wednesday to Saturday through Friday, Board Member Baker seconded the motion.

Motion Carried (5-0)

Aye: Baker, Bond, Pickelsimer, Warren, Williams

Nye: None

Abstained: None

**New Business**

Manager Dutton addressed the Board the Alabama Ruel Watter Association conference in March. Board Member Pickelsimer stated the conference was already budgeted and did not need approval from the Board.

Office Manager Bolton presented the Board with a printer proposal from RJ Young. The proposal was to replace the Lexmark printer in the office with a Ricoh IMC 4510. There would be 60-month lease and the payments would be $194.65 per month. After some discussion Board Member Pickelsimer made a motion to accept the printer proposal, Board Member Williams seconded the motion.

Motion Carried (5-0)

Aye: Baker, Bond, Pickelsimer, Warren, Williams

Nye: None

Abstained: None

Office Manager Bolton presented the Board with a list of old customer accounts with past due balance he thinks should be written off. He also explained to the Board that there are fifteen or more customers that were turned off for non-payment and asked how long the office staff should wait before finalizing the account, taking any balance due from the customers deposit, and refunding the remaining deposit. Board Member Pickelsimer suggested waiting a year, from the cut off date, to finalize the accounts. She also suggested tabling the discussion until Office Manager Bolton can put together a list of customers who were cut off for non-payment and old customer accounts who still have a remaining balance that need to be written off. The Board tabled the discussion.

Manager Dutton addressed the Board about a 25-horsepower pump that needs to be rebuilt. He stated the pump was at Rome Electric and the cost to rebuild the pump would be $5994.00. He also stated he had a 10-horsepower pump that needed to be replaced with a 7.5-horsepower pump, but he was waiting until after the conference. After some discussion Board Member Williams made a motion to pay the $5994.00 to have the 25-horsepower pump rebuilt, Board Member Warren seconded the motion.

Motion Carried (5-0)

Aye: Baker, Bond, Pickelsimer, Warren, Williams

Nye: None

Abstained: None

Philip Bellew, the owner of Bellew Contracting Services, addressed the Board. Bellew Contracting Services uses Cedar Bluff Utilities dump station to dump waste. He was asked to come before the Board because he was using an unmarked pumper truck to dump waste. Mr. Bellew introduced himself and explained to the Board what his company does. He explained the reason he was using the unmarked truck was because his main truck was down. The Board explained to Mr. Bellew that he should not be using the unmarked truck because the pump station could be shut down by ADEM. He assured the Board that it would not happen again. The Board also explained to Mr. Bellew that they were in the process of writing new procedures for the dump station.

Board Member Baker addressed the Board about the dump procedures he had produced.

* The dump station would only be open from 7:30 A.M. to 4:00 P.M.
* Any dumping after hours would result in a $25 fee.
* Pumpers who are not from Cherokee County are required to pay a yearly permit fee of $100.
* Pump trucks that hold 0 – 2000 gallons must pay $50 per dump.
* Pump trucks that hold over 2000 gallons must pay $100 per dump.
* Any exposed hose will result in a $500 fine.
* Each Pumper company must provide a Business License, AOWA License, and a picture of the truck permit.
* All trucks must be clearly marked.

After Some discussion Board Member Pickelsimer made a motion to accept the procedures Board Member Baker produced, Board Member Williams seconded the motion.

Motion Carried (3-0)

Aye: Bond, Pickelsimer, Warren, Williams

Nye: None

Abstained: Baker

Absent: Warren

(The Dump Procedures were revised during a special called meeting on February 27, 2024.)

At 6:00 P.M. Chairman Bond made a motion to go into executive session for good name and character.

The Board did not reconvene, and the meeting was adjourned at 6:10 P.M.

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Jack Bond, Chairman Date

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Joshua Bolton, Secretary Date