

The Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Parkersburg Utility Board

June 9, 2020

CALL TO ORDER

Pursuant to the call of its Chairman Tom Joyce, the Parkersburg Utility Board met in the Parkersburg Utility Board Administration Building, at 125 19th Street on the 9th day of June, 2020. Chairman Joyce called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. Due to the ongoing Coronavirus pandemic this meeting was held by telephone conference and in-person.

Roll Call

Present:

Tom Joyce, Chairman
John Lutz, Vice Chairman
Gregory Herrick, Board Member
Robert Wright, Board Member
Jeff Reed, Counsel
Eric Bennett, Manager
Erin Hall, Comptroller
Christopher Pauley, Assistant Comptroller

Absent:

Paul Hoblitzell, Board Member

Others in Attendance:

Evan Bevins, Parkersburg News & Sentinel

Customer Comment

None

Consideration of Minutes

Chairman Joyce requested the Board consider the minutes of the May 26, 2020 regular Board meeting for acceptance into the record.

Motion and Vote

Robert Wright moved to dispense with the reading of the minutes and approve the minutes of the May 26th meeting as presented to the Board. John Lutz seconded the motion and it was approved by a unanimous vote of the Board members present.

Consideration of Bids for Potassium Permanganate

Bennett stated Board members were provided with a brief correspondence on the issue. Bennett stated bids were requested from approximately eight different vendors and we received responses from four of them, with two of the responses being “no bid”.

Bennett stated a Brenntag Mid-South, Inc. provided a bid of \$6,440.00 per ton and Univar USA Inc. provided a bid of \$6,580.00 per ton. Bennett further stated that Brenntag’s bid is twenty dollars less per ton than their bid last year and Univar had submitted the same price as the previous year.

Bennett recommended the bid be awarded to Brenntag Mid-South, Inc. at a cost of \$6,440.00 per ton for a purchase of roughly 11.25 tons for an approximate total cost of \$72,450.00.

Herrick questioned if we had any problems with Brenntag. Bennett responded none that he was aware of.

Motion and Vote

Robert Wright moved to award the potassium permanganate bid to Brenntag Mid-South, Inc. at a cost of \$6,440.00 per ton. Greg Herrick seconded the motion and it was approved by a unanimous vote of the Board members present.

Consideration of Late Fees and Service Termination during June.

Bennett stated with the timing of the meeting, staff needs a determination of whether late fees are to be applied to delinquent bills and if we are to resume terminations for non-payment. Bennett stated it was his opinion that if terminations were resumed it be on 120 day money that was delinquent prior to any economic slow-down related to COVID-19.

Lutz stated he had not heard what was said and questioned what was recommended. Bennett again stated that if terminations were resumed it be for 120 day money that was delinquent prior to any effects of the virus were felt in the area. Bennett further stated that it was his understanding Rainelle was currently the only community performing terminations for non-payment.

Joyce stated that grant funding will be made available either through federal/state programs or the local program developed by the City that will work through the United Way or Community Resources. Joyce further stated what he is hearing from all the officials is for funds to be made available for individual utility assistance loss of service or homelessness must be imminent. Joyce stated it will be necessary for the customer to qualify that a termination is pending, so termination notices must be mailed.

Bennett stated he had been informed by the WVRWA Executive Director that the State had set aside 22 million dollars of the Cares Act funds to be utilized to assist customers in paying their utility bills. Bennett stated there was no program or process put in place at this time. Joyce stated

he had heard similar information through the Municipal League and it was his understanding it would likely utilize an existing federal program. Joyce stated at some point we would have to provide termination notices to our customers. Bennett stated we have continued to send termination notices with a note that it was for informational purposes only even though we had no intention on terminating service. Bennett further stated the notices that went out this month did not have any special notes on them, so if they are needed for any assistance program there should be no question of PUB's intention to terminate service.

Joyce stated the City's program using CDBG funds has been approved and should be in place soon. Bennett questioned whether recipients had to be financially impacted by the virus. Joyce stated he did not remember specifically, but they must be income qualified. Joyce stated CDBG and HUD funds must be utilized for low to moderate income households or areas.

Joyce stated he would recommend we continue not terminating service for at least one additional month. Joyce further stated we need to keep good records of those requesting arrangements or needing assistance to pay bills.

Joyce questioned the policy on arrangements for 120 day bill. Bennett stated an arrangement for payment of the past due balance is negotiated, preferably for a period not to exceed 12 months, and the customer must keep the current bill and the payment arrangement terms otherwise service can be terminated and the entire amount must be paid before service is restored. Joyce questioned if the arrangements are based on a percentage or if we review the customer's finances. Bennett stated staff does not review customer finances, they negotiate a reasonable payment and term the customer feels they can handle.

Joyce questioned if we provided customers with a list of agencies that provide assistance with utility bills. Hall stated they were listed on the back of the termination notices and the customer service clerks have the information to provide to customers in need.

Bennett stated in his opinion the PSC must rescind their order urging utilities to suspend terminations or provide an order for utilities to return to normal operations, something as public as the original order so customers hear from the state agency.

Hall stated there are 260 customers that have not made any payments since February. Joyce stated we need to share with the PSC the financial impact their order has caused on ours and all utilities. Bennett stated the PSC has not requested any information during this issue, but WDA has done a survey that seems to only be concerned with the utilities ability to make their bond payments.

Joyce reiterated he believed the PSC needs to understand the financial impact of their order on the entities they regulate. Bennett stated he felt the best method to provide that information statewide would likely be through RWA or MWQA, and that he would look into that possibility.

Motion and Vote

John Lutz moved to waive late fees and suspend terminations during the month of June. Greg Herrick seconded the motion and it was approved by a unanimous vote of the Board members present.

Consideration of Invoices in Excess of \$750

The following invoices totaling \$240,579.27 were considered for approval:

A- One Heating & Cooling	Compressor for a/c- WWTP	3,057.18
Bosley Rental & Supply	2- overfill alarms for fuel tanks- admin	850.00
Brenntag Mid- South, Inc.	1102.30 lbs. of superfloc A-130 polymer- WTP	2,808.78
Burgess & Niple	Professional services thru April 30, 2020-Water System Improvements- Design	41,760.13
Burgess & Niple	Professional services thru April 30, 2020-Water System Improvements- Bidding	1,463.38
Capital Software	Accounting software maintenance- admin	1,275.75
Carus Corporation	551.25 lbs. potassium permanganate- WTP	1,620.68
Continental Utility Solutions	Billing Software- Payment #3	10,000.00
Frontier	Phone service - May 2020	964.58
JCI Jones Chemical	2988 gal of hypochlorite solution- WWTP	2,420.28
Lubeck PSD	Parkersburg revenue collected by Lubeck PSD 7.5% fee - May 2020	1,250.07
Maryland Biochemical Company, ll	120 gals of Waste De-Grader - sewer maint.	1,932.00
MonPower	6th St. Pump Station - May 2020	5,806.34
MonPower	1st. Ave. Pump Station - May 2020	4,939.61
MonPower	Water Treatment Plant - May 2020	15,360.12
MonPower	Waste Water Treatment Plant - May 2020	22,173.35
MonPower	Neal Run Pump Station - May 2020	810.97
MonPower	Kanawha St. Pump Station - June 2020	1,117.87
Office Depot	Conferencing camera- admin	882.15
Pace Analytical	Quarterly and semi-annual testing- WWTP	1,436.80
Pace Analytical	Stage II 2nd quarter- WTP	904.85
Parkersburg Utility Board	Sewer bill - WTP - May 2020	7,362.99
Parkersburg Utility Board	Water bill - WWTP - May 2020	1,006.12
Retiree Health Benefit Trust Fund	Contribution for retired employee health insurance - May 2020	12,879.26
Seckman Pest Control	Quarterly pest control - all depts.	755.00
SmartBill	May postage and service fee- billing	7,699.38
Smith Concrete	5.5 yds. of 9 bag 2% Hi-Early concrete - sewer maint.	797.50
Smith Concrete	9 yds. of 9 bag 2% Hi-Early concrete - sewer maint.	1,305.00
Smith Concrete	7 yds. of 9 bag 2% Hi-Early concrete - sewer maint.	1,015.00
Smith Concrete	7 yds. of 9 bag 2% Hi-Early concrete - water maint.	1,015.00
State Electric	Contactors for north step screen- WWTP	1,015.96
State Equipment	Fuel/exhaust system repair- 72-104- water maint.	2,004.00
Strand Associates, Inc.	Professional services thru April 30, 2020 - Misc. & Computer Services	6,570.84
Strand Associates, Inc.	Professional services thru April 30, 2020 - SSO Abatement Report	12,111.62
Stuart Oil Co.	700 gallons diesel - all depts.	1,293.74
Stuart Oil Co.	744 gallons unleaded- all depts.	1,256.91
WVPEIA	Employee Health Insurance - May 2020	59,656.06
	TOTAL APPROVED	240,579.27
Total amount of checks paid from sewer operating fund May 22- June 5, 2020		325,361.83
	Check #83259- 83389	

Motion and Vote

Greg Herrick moved the list of invoices over \$750, dated June 9, 2020 in the amount of \$240,579.27 be approved for payment as submitted to the Board. Robert Wright seconded the motion and it was approved with a unanimous vote of the Board members present.

Other Business

Audit Selection Committee

Hall stated we needed volunteers for the audit selection committee for the review and selection process related to PUB's annual audit for the next two years. Wright and Bennett volunteered to serve along with Hall.

Motion and Vote

Greg Herrick moved that Robert Wright, Eric Bennett and Erin Hall serve as the audit selection committee. John Lutz seconded the motion and it was approved with a unanimous vote of the Board members present.

John Lutz's Board Position

Herrick questioned how it was coming with John's replacement. Joyce stated that Mike Evans would be before City Council for approval as a Board member. Joyce further stated Mr. Evans retired from Dupont as a chemical engineer and he resides on South Lake Drive.

Joyce stated his appreciation to John Lutz for his 16 years of service to Parkersburg. Bennett stated he too appreciated John's service and that he had been a pleasure to work with and was always level headed, helpful and dedicated to what was best for the community.

Lutz expressed his gratitude, pleasure and enjoyment in serving for 16 years.

Next Meeting Date

Erin Hall stated the next regular meeting would be June 23, 2020.

Board members agreed to meet in regular session, at the Parkersburg Utility Board Administration Building in the conference room, at 9:00 a.m. on June 23, 2020.

This meeting shall be held by telephone/computer conference call and in person.

Adjournment

Robert Wright moved the meeting be adjourned. John Lutz seconded the motion and it was approved by a unanimous vote of the Board members present. The meeting adjourned at 9:27 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted:

Eric Bennett, General Manager