

Beulah Utilities District  
Minutes of Regular Board of Directors Meeting  
February 17, 2015  
5320 Lee Road 270 Valley, AL 36854  
6:00 pm CST

The Board of Directors of Beulah Utilities District met in a regular meeting on February 17, 2015 at the Beulah Water Department.

1. **WELCOME**

Chairman Sims welcomed those in attendance.

2. **CALL TO ORDER**

Chairman Sims called the meeting to order.

3. **ROLL CALL**

The following Board Members were present: Shane Franks, James Majors, Lamar Sims and Dan Roberts. Absent: Leon McCloskey.

Visitors in Attendance - See attached Visitor Sign In Sheet.

4. **DECLARE QUORUM**

After the roll was called, Chairman Sims declared that a quorum was present.

5. **ADOPT AGENDA**

Chairman Sims presented the proposed agenda for adoption. Mr. Majors motioned to adopt the agenda. Motion was seconded by Mr. Franks. It was pointed out that the year of the date of the March meeting needed to be changed from 2014 to 2015. Upon changing the date, the motion was unanimously approved and the agenda was adopted.

6. **APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MEETING MINUTES** January 20, 2015

Chairman Sims asked for approval of the minutes from the January 20, 2015 Regular Meeting of the Board of Directors. Mr. Franks motioned to approve the minutes. Motion was seconded by Mr. Majors. The motion was unanimously adopted and the minutes were approved.

7. **APPROVAL OF FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**

Chairman Sims reviewed the Financial Statements for January 2015 as well as for the year to date. He stated that there wouldn't be a vote to approve the statements tonight as it was discovered that some expenditures were placed in the wrong category. As a result of that, as well as the fact that there were new people working on the finances, it was decided to go back and review all financial documents and reports to make sure everything was being accounted for accurately. Mr. Sims said that the statements would be approved at the March Regular Meeting.

8. **OLD BUSINESS**

a. Policy And Procedure Handbook Update

i. Section 8: Billing and Payment of Water Bills.

Chairman Sims recognized Houston Black from Clearwater to brief the Board on recommended changes to this section of the Policy and Procedure Handbook. Mr. Black reviewed each section and provided recommendations to the Board on revisions that needed to be made.

ii. Section 13: Other Fees and Charges

Mr. Black reviewed this section of the Policy and Procedure Handbook and provided recommendations to the Board on revisions that needed to be made.

Ms. Linda Holt, 315 Lee Road 375, provided insight as to how things were handled under East Alabama.

Chairman Sims stated that Board Attorney Rick Davidson's Office would review the law and would offer revised language as needed.

Chairman Sims also stated that the Board would hold a Work Session on Tuesday February 24, 2015 at 9:00 a.m. C.S.T. to go over the remaining Policy Manual Sections.

9. **NEW BUSINESS**

a. Fire Department Report

Chief Jacob Geiger was recognized to give the report on the Fire Department. He stated that the Department ran 75 calls in January, seven of which were house fires. He stated that that was an unusually high number of house fires for the area in a month.

He also stated that volunteer participation in the Fire Department is up.

Chief Geiger stated that the Alabama Fire College was offering an online Volunteer 160 course to certify volunteer fire fighters. He stated that the Department had about 23 volunteer firefighters that had signed up to take this course and that getting these people certified would help with the District's ISO rating. To enable the those volunteers without computer or internet access to take the course, Chief Geiger asked the board to approve up to \$2,000.00 to enable him to purchase two computers and the necessary software to be kept at the Fire Station to be used for taking the course. He stated that this money was budgeted and that this online course would be much cheaper than sending the firefighters to go take the non-electronic course. Mr. Roberts motioned to approve the purchase of the computers and software for up to \$2,000.00. Motion was seconded by Mr. Majors and unanimously passed.

Chief Geiger asked the Board to approve a 3% salary raise for the three Shift Captains and Assistant Chief. He stated that for those who had completed their one year probationary period, the raise would go into effect immediately and for those who had not completed the probationary period, the raise would go into effect once they did. He mentioned that this money was budgeted. Mr. Roberts motioned to approve the raise. Motion was seconded by Mr. Franks and unanimously passed.

Chairman Sims asked the Board to approve raising the Fire Chief's salary from \$41,500/year to 43,500/year. He stated that this raise was budgeted. Mr. Franks motioned to approve the raise. Motion was seconded by Mr. Roberts and unanimously approved.

Chairman Sims proposed introducing an incentive plan for the Fire Department whereby if the ISO rating came in at a 4 or better by October/November of 2015, the Chief would receive a \$2,000 bonus, the Assistant Chief would receive a \$1,500 bonus and \$6,000 would be split and paid to those firefighters who, based on the Chief's recommendation, contributed the most to help improve the ISO rating. Mr. Dave Jacob, 996 Lee Road 380, was recognized and asked if a 4 rating was even achievable and that maybe there should be a step program should be instituted so that the Department was rewarded even if a 4 was not achieved. Chief Geiger stated that a 4 rating was obtainable and that it should be the goal but, if the Department received a 5 rating, it should not be looked upon as a failure. Mr. Majors asked if the Department does a routine performance evaluation of its employees. Chief Geiger stated that it does for the full time employees, not volunteers, and that such review was just completed. Ms. Linda Holt asked where the money for this would come from. Chairman Sims stated that it was a budgeted expense. The Board decided to table a vote on the incentive program in order to further study it.

b. ClearWater Solutions Report

Mr. Houston Black was recognized and briefed the Board on the two adjustments that had been received the previous month. He stated that the first adjustment was for Ms. Cathy Shoemate for \$158.40. He stated that the other adjustment was for Timothy S. Harris for \$524.25. Mr. Franks motioned to approve the adjustments. Mr. Roberts seconded and the motion was unanimously passed and the adjustments were approved.

Mr. Black then briefed the Board on Clearwater's activities over the past month.

Mr. Black requested that the Board approve the purchase of a Hammerhead Mole machine, hose for the Mole and an air controller. He stated that the lowest quote he received for the equipment was from Vermeer in Birmingham and the price was \$3,551.75. Mr. Black stated that this equipment was needed to help the District run its lines under County roads without having to dig them up. Mr. Majors motioned to purchase the equipment from Vermeer for \$3,551.75. Motion was seconded by Mr. Franks and unanimously approved to purchase the equipment.

Mr. Black also stated that he was researching a listening device to purchase to help detect leaks. He also said the Board might also want to look into purchasing a compactor to help with repairing roads.

Chairman Sims asked for approval of a leak reporting incentive program whereby the first caller who calls in and reports a specific leak would be placed on a numbered list and that each month the number/names would be drawn to determine who would receive a \$20.00 Gift Card. Mr. Black suggested doing a six month trial program to determine whether or not the incentive has a noticeable effect on the District's water loss before deciding whether to make it permanent as it would somewhat burden the staff. Mr. Franks motioned to initiate the six month trial program. Motion was seconded by Mr. Majors and unanimously approved.

Mr. Black stated that Clearwater had gone over their \$30,000.00 expense limit and that, per the contract, the District would be paying for any further expenses. It was stated that Clearwater would bill the District monthly for any expenses. Chairman Sims stated that this limit was reached rather quickly due to the startup costs incurred when Clearwater took over.

Mr. Black recommended that the Board purchase a new office computer, software and receipt printer for the Water Department Drive Thru as this would help the office employees process customers quicker during periods of heavy traffic. He stated that he received prices from CNI of \$895.00 for the computer, \$220.00 for the software and \$750.00 for the printer. It was decided to look further at the need for this equipment and that it would be discussed at the March meeting.

10. **OTHER BUSINESS**

Mr. Franks asked that the Board address the Lee Road 252 line extension which had been brought to the Board's attention at the January meeting. Mr. Black stated that the Board should look at how the project should be paid for. Mr. Franks motioned to get a price for material and to propose to the requestor of the line extension that he pay the material cost plus \$2.00/foot of pipe laid. The motion was seconded by Mr. Majors and unanimously approved.

11. **CITIZEN COMMUNICATIONS ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS**

Ms. Martha Pugh, 641 Lee Road 270, was recognized and spoke about her problem she first brought before the Board in January whereby she was trying to remove a second home, which she no longer owned, from her meter. She asked the Board to help resolve her problem if it could but that if it could not, then she needed something in writing stating that they could not help her. Chairman Sims stated that she would be provided with something in writing.

Hon. Robert Ham, Lee County Commissioner, was recognized and congratulated Chief Geiger on his engagement. He also thanked Clearwater for trying to minimize having to dig up County roads when working on the water lines. He also stated he was pleased that the District's Water loss coming down to the national average. He praised Houston Black for his helpfulness.

Mr. B.J. Crenshaw, 52 Lee Road 965, was recognized and mentioned a problem he had with water pressure at his home and asked how the District's pressure problems were being addressed. Chairman Sims stated that the District's Engineer would be present at the March meeting and would be prepared to address what the District needed to do to fix its pressure problem. Mr. Crenshaw also stated that he was all for the incentive program and raises for the Fire Department as otherwise they would lose personnel to the bigger fire departments.

There being no further business, Mr. Franks motioned to adjourn. Motion was seconded by Mr. Majors and unanimously approved and the meeting was adjourned at 7:40 p.m. C.S.T.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

