PLVD Special Meeting December 16, 2019

Present: Commissioner Scott, Commissioner Strittmatter, Commissioner Vasquez, Treasurer Jamie Dow and Clerk Marcia Pawlowski.

Guests: Shelly Frost DWGB Small PWS Sanitary Survey Manager and Technical Systems, and Cindy Klevin DWGB Small Systems Administrator. There were also 75 residents in attendance from Pillsbury Lake Village District.

Commissioner Scott call the meeting to order at 6:08 PM. Seconded by Commissioner Strittmatter and unanimously approved.

Jamie Dow, Treasurer shared her concerns with the negative remarks toward the PLVD Board and to please be respectful to the Board as they are volunteers who have been working day in and out to help resolve issues with the system.

Jamie Dow, Treasurer continued to share that with the invoices that are going out there is an insert that will tell about the increase in fees. On the current billing there is an increase from $.03 to $.05 a gallon over the 1,000 gallons and this is retroactive. This current invoice also includes the semi-annual meter increase for the January, February, March billing there will be an increase from $.05 to $.07 a gallon over the 1,000 gallons. Because we cannot lawfully increase taxes and raise more money is the reason for the increase. These funds will help us with the needed leak repairs and repairs in general on the system.

Jamie addressed the recent concern that the residents have regarding the funds spent to truck in water. Jamie shared that we have spent approximately $33,000.00 this year. This is a lot of money however, there was not an alternative action at the time. Tonight, Commissioner Scott will discuss the status of the system. Our guests from DES will also be able to answer questions and address concerns.

Commissioner Scott shared that in the last 6 weeks WSO has scoped and repaired 6 sizeable leaks. Fortunately, in the past when we repaired a couple large leaks, we had enough water supply to handle the demand. Unfortunately, at the present time we do not have enough water supply to handle the demand 24 hours a day. Commissioner Strittmatter has been talking to Rural Water and they are sending out someone for free to help with scoping and location of additional leaks. We will continue to look for leaks. The problem is that many of the leaks are losing about 2 gallons of water a minute and these leaks cannot be detected because they are relatively small and cannot be detected. We do apologize for the need to shut down, however, if we do not do that and give the wells the time to recover the water supply and they run dry it will be necessary for the system to be shut down 24-48 hours for them to recover. That is why it was necessary for us to make the decision we did. Commissioner Strittmatter has reached out to an Engineering Firm and we are waiting for their response. We worked on and completed a grant application and Commissioner Vasquez has done most of the legwork and we appreciate that. We have additional grants we are applying for. Cindy and Shelly are helping us locate funding and they are looking right now for emergency funding. We need the engineer to give us a design plan so that we can apply for the larger funding. We need well and a well site. Basically, our wells are drying up and we are looking at half million-dollar project. Our first priority is to get everyone water and our second priority is to get everyone clean water. Right now, we are just doing our best to make sure you have water.

Who will absorb the cost of this project was asked by a resident? Commissioner Scott responded that we will need to apply for an SRF loan for the half million it will probably cost about $25.00 a month. Please know that these are all estimates until we get a plan in place and that is the need for an engineer. Commissioner Scott continued to explain that the system is old, was not designed for year-round residence and when things get old, they need repairs. Unfortunately, money was not put away until a few years ago when a trust fund was established for these needed repairs. However, with the additional ledge for the Deer Meadow Road project, all the monies set aside for this were used. The next phase is to get enough water to overcome the leaks and give us the supply we need and clean water to meet the needs of the community. Next phase will be to work on grants and funding to replace the piping. DES is also working on emergency funds to help us with this project. We most likely will not know anything until March regarding applications that have been applied for. Currently we will be drilling for an emergency well near the Franklin Pierce well pump house and we are hoping we will find water. Commissioner Scott shared that with the drilling of the emergency well that there will be a special assessment that will be sent to all residents on the PLVD Water System. The amount of the special assessment is not yet known. This will be a separate invoice of approximately $150.00 per water customer. At the present the supply of incoming water is not enough to meet the water that is being used by the residents as well as the leaks in the system. We will need to in the future drill a well at a new site and this requires a pump house and that is why we will need and hire an engineer. The engineer will also help us as we apply for grant money and loans for this project. We are hoping to have an idea of the cost before the annual meeting so we can address this at that time.

Commissioner Vasquez has been working on obtaining email addresses, cell phone numbers and working on the best situation to help us with notifications and communication. The Pillsbury Village District (Pillsburylakedistrict.com) website is now up and running. This will supply a better mode of communication between customers and the PLVD Board. The Facebook communication was a temporary mode of communication and now you can communicate directly with the board on the website. Commissioner Scott also invited residents to attend the monthly meeting. Commissioner Scott also shared that there will be several special working meetings as the board continues to work on this project.

Commissioner Scott discussed the timing of the shut off with the residents. The delivery of water was shared with the board that they would no longer be available for weekend deliveries and with the temperature dropping there would not be deliveries, and that was why we needed to quickly make the decision. Commissioner Strittmatter shared that at the Franklin Pierce pumphouse that well 4 is producing 1.5 gallons a minute and well 7 is producing 6.25 gallons a minute and what is going out is 12 gallons a minute and we are at a loss of approximately 4 gallons a minute. This necessitates the need to shut down the water to allow it to build up to meet the supply and demand. It was shared that this community was built to have a community water system. Shelly from DES shared to put in a well correctly and legally each resident needs to apply with Subsurface System Bureau for an amendment to be applied to meet all the requirements regarding size of property and setbacks. Commissioner Vasquez shared that when she was talking with Joe from WSO it is not necessarily the amount of water residents use that is the concern, but the leaks that need to be addressed and repaired/replaced. One resident suggested it might be cost effective for the district to pay for some wells for residents and close off certain areas. Jamie commented that it is not legal for the district to spend public funds for a private purpose.

It was shared by DES that a vote is required for these funds to be applied for and that we need to have a good turn out for the March meeting when the voting will happen. It was shared that unless residents attend the March annual meeting and vote to move forward on these improvements and emergency funds that are needed, there is nothing that can be done. It is important to share with your neighbor and plan to attend and vote to move forward on these improvements. Please mark your calendar for the March 11, 2020, PLVD annual meeting to be held at the Webster Town Hall at 6:00 pm and plan to attend. With many of the needs in this area, we can rise higher on the need chart. The Income Survey was one part that needed to be completed, then the affirmative voting at the annual meeting. Then we can begin to apply for the emergency funds. Based on the results of the voting we can apply for emergency funds and then there are a couple months before these funds will be approved and received.

The residents discussed the time of the shut off and turning on of the water and some possible alternatives. Commissioner Scott shared the concern that the process of turning on and off the water must be done correctly and that at the present time he and Gary French begin the process at 5:00 am so residents can have water by 6:00 am. After a lot of questions and answers it was voted by the residents to continue with the shut off to be from 10:00pm to 6:00am.

Commissioner Scott made a motion at 7:45 to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Commissioner Vasquez and unanimously approved.