PLVD Special Meeting November 26, 2019

Present: Commissioner Strittmatter, Commissioner Scott, 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 47 residents in attendance from Pillsbury Lake Village District.

Commissioner Strittmatter call the meeting to order at 6:03 PM. Seconded by Commissioner Vasquez and unanimously approved.

The first act of business tonight was Commissioner Strittmatter stepping down from Chairperson and nominating Commissioner Scott to take the position as Chairperson. Seconded by Commissioner Vasquez and unanimously approved.

Commissioner Scott welcomed everyone and thanked them for coming out tonight to this meeting. Commissioner Scott shared that the public portion of this meeting will be brief as the main part of the meeting will be non-public. Commissioner Scott welcomed Shelly and Cindy from Engineering Small Water System from DES to help us with planning. We have a lot of issues and one thing we will be looking at is bringing on an Engineering Consultant to help us mitigate some of these issues we are facing. We have found two leaks – one losing 5-6 gallons and one 8 gallons a minute. If we can locate the last leak, we will be able to push water to the other side and hopefully stop the bleeding from bringing in water. At the present we do not have enough water to supply everyone. Commissioner Strittmatter shared that they have located another leak today on New Hampshire Dr. We have asked Cindy and Shelly to come and give us an update on some of the things they are going to help us with.

Cindy Klevins shared that she is the Small Systems Engineering Group with and we have been working. Cindy shared that there are many small water systems in New Hampshire that are having difficulties with their water infrastructure due to age, and share that unfortunately we have not done a good job of saving money and replacing things as we went along. We have now reached a point where new wells need to be drilled and we need more money to work with. We are also dealing with water issues quality issues such as arsenic, iron, manganese, and other issues. Shelly and I have the responsibility of assisting small water systems. Your case is very urgent right now because you do not have enough water and we have a lot of leaks. The first thing we need to do is retain an engineering firm so that they can help us prioritize what needs to be done and so that we are spending our savings and water fees as wisely and efficiently as possible. We cannot be wasting water and we need to make the upgrades. If these things are not taken care of, we will need to move forward with enforcement because our job is to provide safe drinking water every day to the residents on the water system, because there is no substitute for that we have to find a way to do that. There is funding assistance through the state, through USDA Rural development so the Engineering Consultant once we have somebody on board, they can help us access some of those things. So, the very first thing is to get help – expert help so that they can guide you through the steps to prioritize what we need to do and make a plan – a Capital Improvements plan 5-year 10-year plan to move forward so that this is a sustainable system. Shelly can provide more details as she has been doing daily work with the PLVD members. We want to talk more about communication amongst the community because that is important. You are creditable member of the water system and we need to work as a team, both the board, the state, and the users.

Commissioner Scott said that we could take a few questions before going into non-public.

One resident asked if we had an Engineer Firm in mind and Commissioner Scott shared not at this time, but that is one of the items that will be discussed in the non-public portion of this meeting. This is a planning meeting, however because we are elected officials all meetings begin as public meetings and the intention was to then go into a non-public session. Cindy shared we do have a list of engineering firms and the next step is for the board to begin interviewing some firms. There are some firms that have worked with our community before and they can provide an estimate of scope of work usually the board members would meet with different engineers and then you can decide in a future meeting which firm you are most comfortable with and provides the best step forward. One resident asked if would have a vote in the final decision as to which firm to choose. Cindy shared that it depends on the Bi-laws as to how much they can spend on their own or if a public vote is needed. Commissioner Scott shared that there are many factors that govern this, if we need to borrow money then a vote would be required. There are many factors that go into the selection of an Engineering Firm, not just the price, but their qualifications also are important. There will be a lot of detail for the board to leverage as they look into this regarding grants, loans, USDA Rural Development and water fees. Commissioner Scott shared that as the PLVD board goes forward in the planning that either at a monthly meeting or a special meeting that will be called information will be shared with the public as we begin the mitigation plan for this. When it goes into non-public all residents will need to leave and the board will remain. It was shared that all monthly meetings are public meetings. One resident asked if this was a distribution problem, a supply problem or both. The response was that it is both due to the age of the system, not designed for the amount using it as well as how it was installed. One resident asked when we go into non-public what stature will it be. Commissioner Scott responded “RSA 91-A-3, II (c) to discuss matters which, if discussed in public, would likely affect adversely the reputation of any person…” Several additional questions and concerns were addressed. Cindy shared that a priority list needs to be put in place and that the repairs and upgrades may take years, however for the short term it is to get the leaks fixed so that you have water quantity and quality. When there is not enough water then the issues of brown water happen due to the fact there is not enough water to do the flushing that is needed. First, we stop the leaks so we have enough water to flush, then we address additional needs that will require upgrades to the system to eliminate iron and manganese. Cindy asked for patience as the leaks are being repaired and then your participation to allow them to preform the repairs so everyone can have water as soon as possible as well as quality water. One resident asked if there are subsidiaries that are available for residents who want to put in a well who do not want to deal with the water situation anymore. I cannot help you with subsidiaries what I can tell you is the reason you are on the community water system is because your lot size does not support a well and that is why the community water system was formed. So, when it was formed it was approved based on a community well. Commissioner Vasquez shared you need to be 75 feet from your septic system, 75 feet from your neighboring property line as well as 75 feet from the middle of the public road. You also need to make sure you have authorization from the Subsurface Systems Bureau. The subdivision was approved based on a community well water system to be put in place. The systems have been put in place to maintain public health. Consider all of this carefully as you consider putting in a well. When you do your own well, it is an expensive investment. Also, your water may not be tested as often as a community public well system. If you do not have proper setbacks you are putting yourself at risk to contamination from your septic system as well as your neighbor’s activities. The safety from your own private well is worse than having a community water system. The quality of your well may not be any better than the community water system. Public systems are treated and tested for arsenic as there is high arsenic level in this area as well as iron and manganese. There are setback requirements and the risks that homeowners take when they do not comply. Cindy encouraged residents that when they stay together and work together you are much more likely to get a safe reliable drinking water source that is tested regularly. Shelly suggested that if you do get a quote for a well I would recommend highly to ask what do they know specifically about your lot and whether a subdivision amendment is required. Cindy and Shelly shared with the residents in attendance to contact DES with their situation. It was also shared that this situation did not happen overnight and that it will not be solved overnight. Cindy and Shelly shared with those in attendance that they represent the State Department of Environmental Services Drinking Water Bureau and have rules for source capacity and water quality. That means issuing a violation and we have issued a deficiency, and we are on a timeline to address that deficiency. If the timeline is not addressed, we can increase the enforcement we could go to administrative order which is more formal enforcement action to administrative fines. We prefer that you fund what needs to be funded to fix the issues. The date of violation has been changed to right after the annual meeting. So if it gets voted down, within a week or two after that you will get a violation and if you do not address the items in the violation which is to have a plan and to pass funding to help address what the water system needs to provide you all with clean and ample water then it will go up to a letter of deficiency which then goes to administrative order and fines and at the end of it all you will have racked up fines and you will still have to do everything you had to do in the first place. So, one reason we are here is to ask for your support of the PLVD water board and the water system improvement because otherwise nothing will be done. We can do the enforcement, but in the end, you will need to repair your water system. Several residents shared their compliments to the PLVD board for all the hard work they have been doing and even missing work to give the system the attention needed. Sharing that in the past the community supported and approved the requests of PLVD. It was shared that many in the community cannot continue to pay for the increase in their water bill and that they hope to see what grants are available for this community. Shelly and Cindy shared that they do not want to see administrative fines being enforced and that they are looking at grants for this community. They also shared that when an Engineering Firm is on board that they will be looking at available grants. One resident shared that we are under the state as a district and urged those who put in a well to be sure you are within the guidelines or you can be fined. Residents shared their concern as to what these repairs are going to cost the community and hope that grants can be obtained to help fix this situation. Jamie Dow, Treasurer shared that last year those on the water system making quarterly payments covered about 47% of the water expense and the remaining 53% came from taxes from all the residents in the Pillsbury Lake District. If those on the water had to support the water system their bills would double, so the taxes are needed to help cover the water expenses. Part of the annual budget passed is taxed to all in the District to help support the water system. A resident asked the board to address the cost on the water that is being trucked in. Jamie shared that the cost of the water depends on the day of delivery. On the weekends it is more. I just cut a check for $1,455 for water tomorrow for three loads. When the Commissioners were elected and the budget was passed at the annual meeting the District gave the responsibility to the board to control the budget for the year and they are approving these payments as needed. Commissioner Scott shared that at the present time water is being trucked in daily. If we can get the leaks fixed then we can begin to push water over to the Franklin Pierce side so we can get that fixed. Then we will not be bleeding money to bring water in and that is the goal. We have mitigated two of the leaks and Commissioner Strittmatter just shared that we have located a third leak on New Hampshire Dr that will be repaired tomorrow. Hopefully this will give us the ability to adjust the flow either way and eliminate the need to continue to buy and truck in water. As soon as we go into our non-public meeting, we will discuss bringing on an Engineering Firm who will assist us with a diagnosis of the system and help us plan on where we need to go. At 6:47 Commissioner Scott thanked everyone for coming as well as their input and made a motion to adjourn the public meeting and go into a non-public session. Seconded by Commission Strittmatter and unanimously approved.

Marcia K Pawlowski, Clerk

Pillsbury Lake Village District