

CLARKE COUNTY SANITARY AUTHORITY MEETING MINUTES
February 20, 2024

PRESENT:

Mr. Roderick DeArment, Chairman
Mr. C. Wayne Armbrust, Vice Chairman
Mr. Tom Bauhan (remotely via telephone)
Mr. Bryan Conrad
Mr. Lee Coffelt
Mr. Bev, McKay, Liaison for the Clarke County Board of Supervisors

ABSENT:

None

OTHERS:

Paren Crawford, Inboden Environmental Services
Mark Inboden, Inboden Environmental Services
Mike Legge, Staff
Brenda Bennett, Staff
Catherine Marsten, Staff

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman DeArment called the meeting to order at 9:04 am.

II. MINUTES

A. January 16, 2024

Amend Section VIII to clarify that the Board scheduled a work session for January 26, followed by the next regular Board meeting on February 20.

Mr. Armbrust made a motion, seconded by Mr. Conrad, to approve the minutes of January 16, 2024 as amended. The motion carried as follows:

Mr. DeArment – aye
Mr. Armbrust - aye
Mr. Bauhan - aye
Mr. Coffelt - aye
Mr. Conrad – aye

B. January 26, 2024

By consensus, the Board decided to table the minutes of the January 26 work session and requested that staff revise the draft to include more detail about the Board's discussion on funding options for the proposed budget.

III. PUBLIC COMMENT

No persons appeared to address the Board.

IV. INBODEN REPORT

Paren Crawford reported the following:

- Water production was very high for the month, due in part to two separate water level transducer issues that were resolved as quickly as possible.
- Runoff from melting snow following the recent storm caused the raw spring turbidity (cloudiness) to increase greatly. While this is expected after a large water event, the high turbidity required the filtered flow rate to be greatly reduced. The flow can be increased as the turbidity continues to improve.
- Regarding wastewater, the train 1 and train 2 membranes received a desludging and a recovery clean and are performing like new.
- Debris items (a large plastic piece, a large stick, and a piece of cut lumber) were found in pumps one and two at the Roseville lift station. It is unclear how this debris is getting into the system and staff will continue to investigate.
- A newer gasket was installed on the air release for pump two at Roseville, which should help to resolve a recent air lock issue.
- Nutrient numbers are back in good range, with phosphorous at 0.20 mg/L and nitrogen at 1.94 mg/L.

V. OLD BUSINESS

A. Master Plan

On February 12, Mr. DeArment, Mr. Armbrust, and Mr. Mark Inboden attended the Board of Supervisors work session to present the Authority's Utility Master Plan and to discuss possible funding sources for the upcoming projects.

By consensus, the Board agreed to present the Utility Master Plan to the Boyce Town Council in order to make them aware of the Authority's long-range needs and ask for assistance.

VI. NEW BUSINESS

A. Customer Request (1540 Millwood Road)

Mr. Legge presented the following:

- The account history indicates a substantial water leak or other use issue. The customer is currently using about 1,000 gallons per day, which is affecting the total water production at the plant.
- This is a recurring problem for this customer, as he has received at least seven leak adjustments in the past ten years.

- Over the last two years, this customer has been on multiple payment plans yet only made three payments. The account balance is currently around \$17,000 and a lien on the property has been recorded.
- Staff has notified the customer of the leak several times. On February 7, staff advised him via email that service may be disconnected if he does not take action to repair it in a timely manner.

Mr. Armbrust noted that losing 1,000 gallons per day is harmful to the entire system and the issue needs to be resolved. Further, there is a significant unpaid balance on the account that the customer is not making an effort to pay. As such, it is appropriate to terminate service due to lack of payment.

Mr. Legge advised that if a customer defaults on a payment plan, as this customer has done, then the entire balance becomes due. The total outstanding amount would need to be paid before service is restored.

Mr. Coffelt suggested, and Mr. Bauhan concurred, that the Board could consider alternate payment arrangements if the customer came before the Board to discuss the matter.

Mr. Armbrust made a motion, amended by Mr. DeArment and seconded by Mr. Conrad, to advise the customer that service will be terminated and that service will not be reinstated unless the account is paid in full and the ongoing water loss issue is resolved or the customer appears before the Board to seek an amenable solution. The motion carried as follows:

Mr. DeArment – aye
Mr. Armbrust - aye
Mr. Bauhan - aye
Mr. Coffelt - aye
Mr. Conrad – aye

B. Utility Management Request for Proposals

Mr. Legge advised that the utility management contract with current vendor, Inboden Environmental Services, will expire on June 30, 2024. This contract must be sent out for bid every six years so staff has prepared a draft Request for Proposals. The Board should review this draft and provide feedback to staff. The RFP will be advertised in March and due at the end of April.

C. Source Water Protection Plan

The Board discussed a tracer dye study conducted in 1991 and the Department of Environmental Quality's preference that potential secondary water sources be identified and evaluated.

Mr. Mark Inboden offered that Inboden Environmental Services can develop a source water protection plan at no cost. This plan will evaluate the needs of protecting the spring and also enables opportunities to apply for grant funding for those protection measures.

Inboden can also, using grant funds, conduct a groundwater recharge study on the spring to determine the geologic source of that water. Mr. Inboden will bring information on these programs to the next meeting.

VII. FINANCIAL REPORTS

A. Draft Budget

Mr. DeArment advised that about \$830,000 is needed to fund work on the roof/ventilation and recoating the tanks at the wastewater treatment plant. Any funds that Clarke County and the Town of Boyce can contribute will help, but there will be a balance left that the Authority will need to finance.

Mr. Bauhan inquired about grant funding. Mr. Legge shared that Mark Inboden is a good resource to identify possible grant opportunities. The county has a contracted vendor for grant research and grant writing services, if needed.

By consensus, the Board agreed to delay adoption of the FY2025 budget pending further discussion and revision.

B. Draft Rate Review

Mr. Coffelt noted that there was already a 3% rate increase programmed for FY2025.

Mr. Legge affirmed and added that the Authority should consider a larger increase to correct the existing operational deficit. The Authority could also consider making adjustments to the base rate, as well. For the last decade, the Sanitary Authority has subsidized the sewer fund revenue from water service but it is not in a position to continue that practice, due to the upcoming capital needs on the water side.

Mr. Bauhan requested an evaluation and calculation of the rates that would be required to meet both operational and capital cost needs. Mr. Mark Inboden advised that the Authority will need to explore other funding avenues, as the rate increase necessary to meet both needs is not attainable.

Mr. DeArment observed that the current rates are not sustainable for some customers, so a rate increase would also increase delinquencies.

By consensus, the Board agreed to discuss rates and costs at the next meeting.

VIII. NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be held Tuesday, March 19, 2024, at 9:00 am.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

Chairman DeArment adjourned the meeting at 10:18 am.