

SEELEY LAKE SEWER DISTRICT
REGULAR BOARD MEETING
January 21, 2021

Tom Morris	President	PRESENT	Walt Hill	Director	PRESENT
Beth Hutchinson	Vice President	PRESENT	Jason Gilpin	Director	PRESENT
Pat Goodover	Director	PRESENT	Felicity Derry	Secretary	PRESENT
Jean Curtiss	Manager	PRESENT	Kim Myre	Missoula Co	PRESENT

Public Attendance - Appendix A

CALL TO ORDER:

The meeting was called to order by Tom Morris at 6:04pm. The meeting was held remotely via Zoom, due to COVID-19.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

Tom Morris recommended that the Executive Session be moved before Unfinished Business, so as to not keep the litigation attorney longer than needed. Also, to move the Manager's Report after Unfinished Business. The Board agreed to these agenda changes.

PRESIDENT'S COMMENTS:

Tom Morris commented that things were being said in public and articles were being published that had not been approved by the Board. Personal opinions were fine, but to speak for the Board outside of a meeting was not. The Board needed to be careful what they said and how they said it moving forward towards the bond election. Tom Morris requested that everybody be respectful during the meeting.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Colleen Krause felt that Walt Hill's comments about the sewer bond election at the Hospital Board meeting were inaccurate and distorted. Colleen Krause then proposed that Pat Goodover and Beth Hutchinson provide written answers to a set of pertinent questions relating to the sewer and bond election, which would be placed in the Pathfinder.

Discussion followed regarding the Board's approved statements being on the website and that this item was not on the agenda. Pat Goodover added that usually the President would respond on behalf of the Board.

Nathan Bourne questioned how the Board would proceed if the bond election failed. Discussion followed that the question had not been addressed by the Board and so, there could be no response at this time.

Colleen Krause questioned that the Board had not discussed both sides of the bond election. Discussion followed with regards to Mr. Larson’s proposal to utilize the for and against approach with regard to the bond election. The bond counsel had felt that was not the appropriate position for the Board to take with the bond election, as that was used for initiatives. Discussion followed that the Board had discussed the bond election and educating the public.

Discussion followed on Walt Hill’s comments regarding the bond election while acting as a Hospital District’s board member during their board meeting. Tom Morris called the meeting back to order, as this item was not on the agenda. If further discussion was needed on this topic, it could be placed on a subsequent agenda.

CORRESPONDENCE:

Janet Erickson (Appendix B)

Tom Morris read the letter from Janet Erickson. Pat Goodover suggested holding off on a formal response until after the Executive Session.

Cincinnati Insurance (Appendix C)

Jean Curtiss summarized the letter for the public.

MINUTES:

December 17, 2020

Beth Hutchinson reviewed the amendments to the minutes. Pat Goodover moved to approve the minutes for the December 17, 2020 meeting as amended. Tom Morris seconded the motion. There was no discussion. The motion was carried unanimously.

Tom Morris	Aye
Beth Hutchinson	Aye
Pat Goodover	Aye
Walt Hill	Aye
Jason Gilpin	Aye

FINANCIAL REPORTS:

Invoices – December 2019

Felicity Derry reviewed the invoices for the Board. Jean Curtiss added that it was expected that RRGL would reimburse the District for the bond election mailing.

Tom Morris moved to approve the invoices for payment as presented. Jason Gilpin seconded the motion. There was no discussion. The motion was carried unanimously.

Tom Morris	Aye
Beth Hutchinson	Aye

Pat Goodover Aye
Walt Hill Aye
Jason Gilpin Aye

October 2020

Felicity Derry reviewed the financial reports for October 2020.

November 2020

Felicity Derry reviewed the financial reports for November 2020.

WELL & LAKE TESTING REPORT:

Vince Chappell had sent his apologies that he could not attend the meeting. Tom Morris requested that this item be added to the February agenda.

Jason Gilpin moved that the Board enter into the Executive Session for legal strategy. Pat Goodover seconded the motion. There was no discussion. The motion was passed unanimously.

Tom Morris Aye
Beth Hutchinson Aye
Pat Goodover Aye
Walt Hill Aye
Jason Gilpin Aye

All of the Board Meeting attendees who did not attend the Executive Session were placed in the Zoom meeting waiting room while the Executive Session took place.

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

The Board entered into the Executive Session at 6:36pm. The Executive Session concluded and the Regular Board Meeting resumed at 7:24pm.

The public rejoined the meeting from the Zoom waiting room.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

Lawsuit

Tom Morris reported that during the Executive Session the Board had reviewed the litigation strategy with the attorney. The District's response would be filed by the deadline, at which point it would be available to the public.

Memo – Background Information

Jean Curtiss reviewed the document and noted that it had been included in the Regular December Meeting Board packet, but had been overlooked when reviewing the memo, for which it was footnote#1.

Beth Hutchinson moved that we not pursue putting this document on the website because it is very selective about what it includes and it leaves out a lot of the community’s point of view and I feel that at this time it might cause more issues than otherwise and that it’s going to take longer to get it into balance than we actually have. So, I move that we table this history and that on the website we put, “this document is not currently available”.

Pat Goodover felt that the Board had been criticized for not getting enough information out there. The document was a nice concise way of disseminating the information and therefore would oppose the motion. Walt Hill did not see any advantage to tabling the document and felt that it should be included as presented. Tom Morris called for any other discussion.

Beth Hutchinson restated her motion. Beth Hutchinson moved that we postpone dealing with this draft on the history background and that we put on the website that the document is not currently available. There was no further discussion. The motion failed.

Tom Morris	Nay
Beth Hutchinson	Aye
Pat Goodover	Nay
Walt Hill	Nay
Jason Gilpin	Nay

Tom Morris noted that some information was missing from the document; however, it included core history that helped people see the direction that the District was headed. It was a supporting document and when information was promised to the public it should be provided.

Tom Morris moved to post the background history as is it had been presented to the Board. Pat Goodover and Walt Hill both seconded the motion. There was no further discussion. The motion was carried.

Tom Morris	Aye
Beth Hutchinson	Nay
Pat Goodover	Aye
Walt Hill	Aye
Jason Gilpin	Aye

MANAGER'S REPORT:

Jean Curtiss noted that the TSEP grant application for phase II, in the amount of \$750,000, had ranked number eighteen. Seventeen projects had been funded. Jean Curtiss had testified on behalf of the Board before the committee and felt that it went well.

Both Jean Curtiss and Felicity Derry attended a meeting with the Elections Office, the County Attorney and Dan Semmens regarding the bond election. There was clarification that the Elections Office and the County Attorney would decide who would qualify for a ballot. Jean Curtiss reviewed the rule for a non-profit to qualify for a ballot.

Discussion followed regarding a member of the public who had received a letter requesting deed and property boundaries and whether it was a scam. It was confirmed that the letter had not originated from the Seeley Lake Sewer District.

Tom Morris clarified that he had not been prepared to speak for the Board at the TSEP hearing and thanked Jean Curtiss for testifying on the Board's behalf before the committee. Jean Curtiss had also sent a letter to the chair of the committee Mike Hopkins, as well as to Shannon O'Brien and Ellie Boldman.

NEXT REGULARLY SCHEDULED MEETING: February 18, 2021

AGENDA ITEMS FOR NEXT SCHEDULED MEETING:

Tom Morris had received a request from a Board member for an Executive Session regarding an administrative item. Tom Morris requested that discussion regarding the 2022 budget also be added to the agenda.

Walt Hill commented that the ballot was for either funding the project or not funding it. It was not an election to decide whether the sewer was wanted or not. It had been made clear that doing nothing was not an option. Walt Hill believed that Seeley Lake would have to have a sewer and the GO bond was the best way. If the GO bond was voted down Seeley Lake would be left with the problem of funding the sewer themselves, unless there were additional federal funds.

Beth Hutchinson noted that was Walt Hill's opinion. Nothing had been said about forcing a sewer, only addressing the issue. There had been concerns from the community that Walt Hill's comments were confusing and not factual. Beth Hutchinson and Walt Hill discussed what information had been felt to be incorrect.

Tom Morris appreciated both sides of the conversation; however, it was not on the meeting agenda. It could be put on the agenda for the next meeting, but questioned how it could be helpful. The Board had voted to go ahead with the bond election. Tom Morris requested that the Board work as a unified board.

ADJOURNMENT OF MONTHLY BOARD MEETING:

Tom Morris moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:50pm. Walt Hill seconded the motion.

Attest:

Tom Morris, President

Felicity Derry, Secretary