

SEELEY LAKE SEWER DISTRICT
MONTHLY BOARD MEETING
May 17, 2018

Attendance:

Mike Boltz	President	PRESENT
Mike Lindemer	Vice President	PRESENT
Bob Skiles	Director	PRESENT
Mark Butcher	Director	PRESENT
Davy Good	Director	PRESENT
Greg Robertson	Missoula Co	PRESENT
Felicity Derry	Secretary	PRESENT
Kim Myre	Missoula Co	PRESENT

OPENING:

The meeting was brought to order at 5:17pm by Mike Boltz at The County Offices, located at 3360 Highway 83 N, Seeley Lake.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

None

CORRESPONDENCE:

Department of Commerce

Felicity Derry informed the Board that this was for their information. The TSEP grant had not been awarded to the District.

Missoula County Finance

Felicity Derry informed the Board that this was the letter regarding the check that the Pathfinder had lost.

MINUTES:

April 19, 2018

The minutes for the board meeting held on April 19, 2018 were presented to the Board for review.

May 3, 2018

The minutes for the public hearing held on May 3, 2018 were presented to the Board for review.

Davy Good moved to accept the April 19, 2018 & May 3, 2018 minutes as presented. Mark Butcher seconded the motion, which was then passed.

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INVOICES:

April 2018

Felicity Derry reviewed the invoices for the Board.

Davy Good moved to approve and pay all of the April 2018 invoices as presented. Mark Butcher seconded the motion, which was then passed.

Discussion followed on the Beal Law Firm bill regarding the expense of the Pathfinder request for information.

Beth Hutchinson said that it was a common request and the attorney was acting in the Board's interests. Picking on the newspaper for doing its job was inappropriate. Bob Skiles said that he was asking a question. He thought it was a lot of money for that request. He was questioning the amount, and to not pick on him. He did not want any more bad things being said about him and that went for Troy Spence also. Troy Spence replied he had been mentioned once. Michael Boltz said that people should state their name or he would close the meeting. Michael Boltz said that it was his opinion that it was a waste of money. Nathan Bourne had been at every meeting, what else did he need?

Nathan Bourne replied that he was looking for board decisions being made outside of the meetings, which had been an accusation for years. He was looking for evidence of how decisions were being made. The decision to switch the assessment methodology last summer from commercial businesses paying more to a flat rate had not been discussed at a meeting. He noted that the Board had been saying for years that all of the decisions were being made without the Board and they did not have a choice. Greg Robertson had emailed the Board asking their opinion of changing it. The Board did not respond so Greg Robertson emailed Felicity Derry to contact the Board to ask their opinion of the change. Felicity Derry emailed Greg Robertson back that she had talked to the Board and it was ok to make the change. That decision was made outside of a board meeting. He had submitted a public information request. It was a legal request. He did not realize that the District's attorney would be reviewing it. He had been told that the County Attorney would review it. Some of the emails were not released. He had not asked for that, so there were a couple hundred dollars of charges for that.

Mike Lindemer said that the Board had done everything they could to make it as inexpensive as possible. Rural Development (RD) had put the District in the current position and the delay had cost an extra \$2million. Some of the information that Troy Spence was getting, and maybe Beth Hutchinson, as well as the letters to the editor was not correct. There was a timeline to get the assessment in. There had been a discussion at a meeting. Greg Robertson had to review it. There were several different alternatives and it was decided to change the method back to the old method. The Board was trying to make it fair for the community. He was not looking to improve or expand his business. The Board was trying to make it as inexpensive as possible, the sewer would come. It was their responsibility to not leave the tab for their children. He hoped that the new board members would put their heart into it. RD had a strict timeline.

Public asked what the timeline was. Greg Robertson replied that there were certain milestones that had to be met in order to meet start up conditions. The District was currently on track to go to bid in the fall.

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Mike Lindemer said if there were ten trailers on one lot, you would pay one fee. The numbers given to the public were the highest they could be. Once the bids were received the numbers could be lower. Other funding was being pursued and there were five nonprofit organizations that would help lower income people. They would be able to apply for the funding to help them pay for it. The Board was doing everything they could to make it affordable. There were a couple of businesses that could not let the public use their restroom. There were multiple systems in the ground that were over 30 years old. If they failed they would have to bring in new dirt as well as a groundwater test which could cost \$10,000 to \$20,000.

Mike Lindemer noted that the run off was going into the lake. If there was a sewer the effluent would be treated and would be better than what came out of a septic tank. He had put his heart and soul into it. He hoped they would educate themselves and listen. The project needed to move forward. Some people were opposed. If you looked at the research and what was happening, something needed to be done. There were plenty of people that wanted to help those that could not afford it. Greg Robertson had been working on something through the county also. The Community Foundation was behind the project. It was not just to benefit businesses. It was a benefit for the entire valley. Mike Lindemer requested that the new board members take that into consideration when making their decisions. Multiple options had been reviewed.

Beth Hutchinson thanked Mike Lindemer for his thoughts. They had made it as clear as possible that it was not their intention to knee jerk everything out of order. They had other things that they were compelled to do for which they had tremendous support. It was important for her to show respect for the work that had been done. The process was the largest concern. It was easy to get casual about things. Another issue was when there was a controversial situation like this it was critical to bend over backwards to reach out to the constituents that were confused or felt neglected. A large part of their work would be to go door to door and talk to real people so they understood things and could give their support to the best solution. It might end up being this project or another. They had no agenda. They had been accused of a variety of things also. She did not get upset but did more research and tried to clarify things. Their intent was to have peaceful meetings.

Mike Lindemer said that he wanted to make it clear that they had put their heart and soul into it. They had viewed different treatment plants. Some of the information out there was wrong. He would really like them to sit down with Nathan Bourne to make sense out of things and put it in terms that people could understand. It was very complicated and that was a challenge. Nobody had been paid, it was a lot of time and it would be time that he could not get back. Seeley was in trouble.

Beth Hutchinson said that he had been immersed and thought that was where it was. Other people did not think it was such a desperate situation. Bringing the community back into common understanding was really important. Eight or nine years ago she had made a proposal to the Board offering to translate the technical stuff. She did not get much response. Things like that slipped through the cracks. Communications needed to be improved. Mike Lindemer said he had talked to many people trying to get them to attend meetings. Tonight, was one of the largest turnouts ever. There were people from both sides. He congratulated them and hoped that they made the right decisions and moved forward. He was not a professional, he did research and got information from the professionals. The Board felt they had made the best decisions.

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Beth Hutchinson said it was good to have pride in what they had done. Davy Good said that he agreed that the Board had failed to get enough information out to the people. Bob Skiles said that the biggest communication gap was that nobody showed up to meetings. Mike Boltz added that Walter Hill had showed up to every meeting and knew everything. If other people showed up the same would be true. Beth Hutchinson said that might be true but it was unrealistic. As a public servant, to have peace and harmony but more was expected. It was hard and frustrating. After attending meetings lots of people wondered why they came. It was water over the dam. They had to start from a new position that the major concern was the people. People had to be able to support what they were being asked to pay for. It would be a busy four months ahead trying to gather together information so people could talk amongst themselves and recognize that they were not pitted against each other but had a common desire for wastewater treatment.

Mike Lindemer said they had been on the Board for so long and had put so much into it. It was not to benefit the Board but for the community. It was a tight timeline. There was other funding to help the less fortunate people to pay the bill.

Beth Hutchinson said that they needed to know how many people that was in order for the funding to be adequate. You said you were doing it for the community, that was your interpretation. They did not have an interpretation of what the community needed, except that wastewater treatment was very critical. They were reaching out to the community to help them understand what the community perceived they needed. She wanted to honor the fact that they had put in a number of years, and Bob Skiles had. There were two new people and that the people still on the Board have a modicum of energy because they knew they would have to work hard and listen to lots of different opinions and get on with it.

Mike Lindemer thanked and congratulated Beth Hutchinson and hoped she made the right decisions.

MANAGER'S REPORT:

Greg Robertson informed the Board that despite the change of the Board members the project was moving forward until they were told to stop. Work continued on the interim financing through the State Revolving Fund (SRF). Interim financing was needed because of the way the finance package was structured with RD. The right of way research had been completed and discussions were ongoing with the landowners. Great Western Engineering (GWE) continued to work on the design. Their timeline was to have the plant specifications and estimates ready around September. That included approvals from DEQ. That would put bidding around October. It was not the best bidding climate as contractors were busy trying to finish before winter. The bidding might be delayed until it quieted down to get a better price. The goal was to get as many competitive bids from qualified bidders as possible.

Mike Lindemer asked when people would start to pay once Phase I was completed and it was up and running. Greg Robertson replied that the assessment would not be spread until all of the costs were known. The notice and protest stated the maximum that a property owner could be assessed. The Board could not exceed that amount. Most projects came in less than the estimate. Once the project was completed then the assessment would be on the next tax roll period. There would be two seasons of building, so it would be 2021 when the assessment hit the books. Mike Lindemer noted that there would be three years to help find other funding.

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Mike Boltz said that there were still numbers flying in the paper. What was the price, about \$73? Greg Robertson replied it was about that. Mike Lindemer said that they were trying to keep it as inexpensive as possible. However, the delay had cost the community an extra \$2million.

Jim Erven, Health Department introduced himself. He wanted to talk about the flooding and its impact on onsite septic systems. Onsite septic systems could dispose and treat wastewater for pathogens. When they were underwater they did not do that. The systems on the lake shore that were under water and the high groundwater by the airport and around town meant they were not effectively treating wastewater. As they remained in use there were extra contaminants being contributed to the groundwater. Possibly into wells. The sewer would have benefits far beyond nitrates by cleaning the groundwater and potential drinking water supplies. Anybody having issues with septic systems should limit their use. Proper maintenance before and after a flood was really important as flooding could ruin a system. If anybody had questions contact the Health Department. Beth Hutchinson asked if they would put out a fact sheet. Jeana Miller, Health Department said that it would be online tomorrow.

Mike Lindemer said that the current site location did not have an issue with contaminating as it collected sewage and treated it. The effluent would be safe even with high groundwater such as there was now. Jim Erven replied that he did not think that area had been impacted with high groundwater. Mike Lindemer asked if Vince Chappell had been testing out there and how high the wells were. Vince Chappell replied that he had been out there yesterday. The wells were a minimum of four to five feet higher than normal with depths of 26' to 36'. He had seen no groundwater standing on the property. Mike Lindemer said that discharging the water at the current proposed location was a safe situation. Jim Erven said that it would be a major improvement. Jeana Miller added that it was not just that it was a better site with less groundwater saturation it was a treatment plant so the disposal was much better. It would be removing bacteria and viruses, whereas septic systems were not. They were making a recovery packet for people that had been affected by flooding with lots of good information.

OLD BUSINESS:

Board Election

Previously covered.

NEW BUSINESS:

Resolution#05172018a & #05172018b

Felicity Derry informed the Board that the resolutions were to approve the update to the 2012 PER and to submit a TSEP grant application.

Davy Good moved to approve the update to the 2012 PER and submit the TSEP grant application, Mark Butcher seconded and the motioned, which was then passed.

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The Board voted as follows on Resolution #05172018a:

Board Member	Yeas	Nays	Absent
Mike Boltz	X		
Mike Lindemer	X		
Bob Skiles	X		
Mark Butcher	X		
Davy Good	X		

Resolution#05172018a was passed to adopt the update to the 2012 PER and accept the recommended funding scenario for wastewater system improvements.

The Board voted as follows on Resolution #05172018b:

Board Member	Yeas	Nays	Absent
Mike Boltz	X		
Mike Lindemer	X		
Bob Skiles	X		
Mark Butcher	X		
Davy Good	X		

Resolution#05172018b was passed to authorize submission of the TSEP application.

FY2019 Assessment Resolution#08162018

Mike Boltz noted that this resolution needed to be adopted. Felicity Derry asked if there were any questions regarding the fee assessment. There were none.

Mark Butcher moved to adopt Resolution#08162018 to set the assessments. Davy Good seconded the motion, which was then passed unanimously.

Well & Lake Monitoring

Vince Chappell noted that the results were for March 2018. With the way the groundwater was flushing he did not know what to expect in the next couple of months. The well depths were normally 36', they had started dropping in January. That measurement was the level down to the water, so the water was coming up. The wells were higher than normal. The pH was affected and was lower than normal. Well#1 had a nitrate level of 9.39mg/L, which was consistent with last year. The chloride level was up slightly. Well#2 was usually 50' and was 48' in March. The pH was down to 5.71. In March 2017, it was 6. The nitrate level was higher than last year and the chloride level was up significantly. Well#3 could not be tested as there was a vehicle parked in the way. The pH was 1.5 higher at Riverview bridge than last year. The nitrate level was about the same and the chloride level was up one point. The bacteria level was lower than last year. Bacteria tests were done on all three wells. There was no result as the County lab was closed on Friday. Mike Lindemer questioned the

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frequency of the testing. Vince Chappell replied that it was performed every three months. Mike Lindemer questioned if they should test it more frequently during the flooding. Vince Chappell suggested that he could test once a month until July or August. Jim Erven said that it might be interesting data. They knew that the problem existed, having a couple of extra months would not change the fact that the nitrates were ridiculously high. Beth Hutchinson said that it would be interesting and that the Board had a better idea of the financial picture. There were two new factors entering in, the flush of the wildfire area and the other the flooding from the airport area coming downhill. It could provide interesting information to add confusion. Mike Lindemer concluded to keep the testing the schedule the same.

Vince Chappell said that the Seeley Lake bay had no detect for nitrates. The chloride level was high. Coliform was at 20, while last year it was at 591. The groundwater was already flushing through and pushing the water out of the lake in March. The next couple of tests could be cleaner or much worse. March was showing the clean side of things. The next tests would be interesting. The wells at the airport test site came back normal. There were no problems, within the parameters of the discharge permit. Well#1 depth was normally 40' it was at 38'. Well#2 was normally 25' it was at 25.5' and the same thing with well#3. They were not getting influenced by the groundwater coming through. That was a good place for the plant.

Mark Butcher asked how much water did the Water District's plant pump. Vince Chappell replied that a typical day was about 130,000 gallons per day. As it warmed up it went to about 180,000 gallons per day. Mark Butcher questioned if the site should absorb it without a problem. Vince Chappell replied that he was not a geologist.

Beth Hutchinson noted that Mike Boltz had requested the testing on the Lions Club pond. If the testing continued for another three rounds to see what happened and maybe drop the testing after that. Mike Lindemer said that it would be a Board decision later on. The Board wanted to test the bodies of water in town to get trends. Beth Hutchinson questioned if three more rounds would be enough.

Vince Chappell said that there was only one year of data for the Lions Club pond. It was showing higher results than the lake and the river. It was a direct impact of septic systems in the area flushing through. The bacteria count was 185, last year it was 6,130. Mike Boltz asked why the testing should stop. Beth Hutchinson replied that it was fairly clear and ongoing testing would probably not show it getting any better. Mike Lindemer said that when the system came through it would show the change. Vince Chappell said that the pH was down to 4.5, it should not be that low. The nitrate level was about the same at 0.05mg/L. Nathan Bourne asked what would cause the pH to drop. Vince Chappell said that septic systems and groundwater would impact it.

Nathan Bourne noted that the Lions Club added water and questioned how much. Vince Chappell said that the Lions Club called the Water District in late December to add about 200,000 gallons of water to the pond to raise the water level above the weeds. It would not be enough to affect it. You could equate it to a cup in a ten-gallon bucket. The Water District added the least amount of chlorine possible to the water. It would not affect the pond.

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FINANCIAL REPORTS:

February 2018

Felicity Derry reviewed the February 2018 financial reports for the Board, noting that it had been a fairly quiet month with the usual transactions.

Mike Lindemer added that the one of the letters to the editor was that the District paid money for the educational program. That was not true. Citizens Alliance Bank had paid for that. The Board was being frugal with money. It was a misconception, do not be mad at the Board, be mad at RD who put the District in the position. Beth Hutchinson said that they knew that and nobody should be mad at anybody. They wanted to make sure that people were informed. Mike Lindemer said that people would not accept information from him.

Davy Good moved to approve the financial reports for February 2018 as presented. Mark Butcher seconded the motion, which was then passed.

March 2018

Felicity Derry reviewed the March 2018 financial reports for the Board, noting that it had been a fairly quiet month with the usual transactions.

Davy Good moved to approve the financial reports for March 2018 as presented. Mark Butcher seconded the motion, which was then passed.

Walter Hill said that he was grateful for the time and effort that the Board had spent and was impressed how far it had come. He hoped it would not be turned off, which would lose \$10 million. We were so close to having a functional sewer system and the Board had done it. He spoke for a lot of people. He had been asked to serve on the Sewer Board Advisory Council, and he was the last one. He was going to resign from that. He wanted to thank Greg Robertson who was obviously overpaid at \$1 a year. He had gone through many difficult things. He did not know a couple of the new Board members as he had not seen them there before and they had a challenge ahead to get educated. It was a pleasure working with everybody and applauded them for the mighty effort.

Mike Lindemer questioned the procedure for the next meeting. Beth Hutchinson said that they would be sworn in by the county soon as possible.

Mike Boltz asked if there would be any classes coming up with the County. Greg Robertson said that the County usually did board training, it was very useful. Mike Boltz said to keep the communication lines open. He expected to be called back when he called them.

NEXT SCHEDULED MEETING:

The next Board meeting was scheduled for June 21, 2018.

ADJOURNMENT:

Mike Boltz adjourned the meeting at 6:33pm.

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Attest:

Mike Boltz, President

-And-

| SEAL |

Felicity Derry, Secretary