

**SEELEY LAKE SEWER DISTRICT
REGULAR BOARD MEETING
July 18, 2024**

Tom Morris	President	PRESENT	Troy Spence	Director	PRESENT
Pat Goodover	Vice President	ABSENT	Tyler Smith	Director	PRESENT
Cheri Thompson	Director	PRESENT	Felicity Derry	Secretary	PRESENT
Bill Decker	Manager	PRESENT			

Public Attendance – Appendix A

CALL TO ORDER:

The meeting was called to order at 6:00pm. The meeting was held at the Barn, 2920 Highway 83, Seeley Lake, MT and via Zoom.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

Tom Morris moved to approve the agenda and move forward. Tyler Smith seconded the motion. There was no discussion. The motion was carried.

Tom Morris	Aye
Pat Goodover	Absent
Cheri Thompson	Aye
Troy Spence	Aye
Tyler Smith	Aye

PRESIDENT’S COMMENTS:

Tom Morris requested that everybody be respectful of each other’s time and opinions, and to try to keep the meeting moving forward.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

None.

CORRESPONDENCE:

None.

MINUTES:

June 26, 2024

Tom Morris reviewed two minor amendments to the minutes.

Tom Morris moved to accept the minutes as amended for the public hearing & regular meeting (June 26, 2024). Cheri Thompson seconded the motion. There was no further discussion. The motion was carried.

Tom Morris	Aye
Pat Goodover	Absent
Cheri Thompson	Aye
Troy Spence	Aye
Tyler Smith	Aye

FINANCIAL REPORTS:

Invoices

Tom Morris reviewed the invoices.

Tom Morris moved to pay the invoices. Tyler Smith seconded the motion. There was no discussion. The motion was carried.

Tom Morris	Aye
Pat Goodover	Absent
Cheri Thompson	Aye
Troy Spence	Aye
Tyler Smith	Aye

FINANCIAL REPORTS:

April & May 2024

Felicity Derry noted that a small amount of fee assessment had been received.

MANGER'S REPORT:

Bill Decker noted that Congressman Zinke's earmark, for \$10 million, was working its way through the approval process and should be voted on during the last week of July.

Bill Decker had attended a meeting regarding closing out the Reclamation and Development Grant (RDG).

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

Action Plan for 2023-2024 - Committee Reports

Pathfinder Article & Email Newsletter

None.

WET/Project Update

Steve Anderson noted that WET was finalizing the well drilling report for the RDG grant close out. WET had received the design documents for the previous project. This had enabled WET to do some conceptual sizing and design. Steve Anderson then outlined the acreage required, along with the number of lift stations needed, noting that the site selection was a critical first step.

Steve Anderson recommended that WET's work should be an addendum to the PER and they were seeking funding for that work.

Tyler Smith suggested that the drain field should be dual use, such as a soccer field, or something that the community could get some use out of. Steve Anderson added that community support was vital, and WET would listen and take everything into account.

Steve Anderson reviewed how the topography would affect the wastewater flow at the hump, high spot, along the highway for Cheri Thompson.

Tim Kellihoe asked where the hump was. Tom Morris clarified that it was by the health center. Tim Kellihoe noted that the system would take care of the people in the town and that the site selection needed to take place before anything else could be done, and wondered when that would happen. Steve Anderson reviewed possible options, adding that there currently was no timeline for the purchase.

Bill Decker added that this project was based on the old project and the property selected in the previous project was still available. Tyler Smith added that while some elements of the project would not change, if a different parcel of land could be purchased at a lower elevation, while it would be more expensive, it would reduce the number of lift stations needed and in turn the higher initial cost could be offset by the savings in pumping and infrastructure.

Gary Chilcott added that the operation & maintenance budget for the previous project was \$200,000.

Bill Decker added that he had talked to his previous employer, a water & sewer district for 543 homes with more infrastructure that the Sewer District was proposing and their annual budget for electricity was \$75,000.

Monitoring Well Sampling

Jeanna Miller noted that Missoula County was sampling the wells and collecting data. The Water Quality District folks were in Seeley and had taken some samples in the Boy Scout Road area.

Cheri Thompson asked if the transducers had shown the flow yet and would the data be mapped.

Jeanna Miller noted that the transducers measured the static water level at that point. It was constant data, which was basically a giant spreadsheet. The data would be distilled to tell a story. The nitrate samples would give an extra layer of data to the groundwater flow.

Tim Kellihoe asked if there was a regular basis for sampling and if a monthly report could be released to alleviate any perception of hiding anything? Jeanna Miller replied that the Sewer District had years of quarterly testing data for the original monitoring wells. The goal was to sample the wider network of monitoring wells monthly; however, these wells were a smaller diameter, making it harder to get the sampling equipment down them. Therefore, the monitoring wells might not be sampled every month. Jeanna Miller wanted to clarify that the Health Department would never hide data. There would be no motivation or reason to ever want to do that. The raw data was not easily digestible. The goal was to create a tidy package that would explain in a way that was really accessible to everybody. The Sewer Board was moving in the right direction. Having a better picture of what the aquifer was doing seasonally would be helpful. Tom Morris added that Missoula County had volunteered to do the sampling to save the District money and they were only two months into the study.

Grants & Funding

Steve Anderson noted that he had a meeting with Missoula County and the State of Montana Disaster Emergency Services (DES) folks. The initial request was being processed and those funds would be used for the addendum to the PER. This would get the District in the pipeline for larger funding opportunities. WET was also exploring grants through the Department of Commerce. Steve Anderson estimated that the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) grant would be approximately \$150-\$200,000. Community support was crucial for these grants.

Tom Morris noted that the RDG grant was being closed out.

Response Letter to the Community

Tom Morris noted that this was a response to a letter to the editor, which had stated that there was not a nitrate problem. Tom Morris read the draft letter.

Bill Decker thought that it was informational and not too preachy. Tom Morris added that it was very informational and factual. Troy Spence said it was good to him. Tyler Smith had no comments. Steve Anderson added that the information included had been taken from his report.

Tom Morris moved to send the letter to the Pathfinder. Troy Spence seconded the motion. There was no further discussion. The motion was carried.

Tom Morris	Aye
Pat Goodover	Absent
Cheri Thompson	Aye
Troy Spence	Aye
Tyler Smith	Aye

NEW BUSINESS:

Build a Network to Share Information

Bill Decker commented that Missoula County was setting up a community page for Seeley Lake. Jeanna Miller replied that they were still finalizing the page and it was not quite up yet, but would be able to talk about it at the August meeting. Hopefully it will be an outlet for people who have questions. There was discussion on counting how many people visit the site and sending this information to the Board.

Cheri Thompson noted that a local person, outside of the District, felt that with so many opinions and rumors floating around, that it would be helpful if the District could put together an email list, which could then be used to send a synopsis to the citizens of Seeley Lake after each meeting, to address where the District was in the process. Just a simple communication to try to combat the rumors.

Discussion followed on how to compile an email list. Cheri Thompson noted that her person had volunteered to collect the email addresses and would like permission from the Board to do this. Jeanna Miller added that people could also sign up on the Missoula County Voice site.

Tom Morris noted that the District was a government agency and did not approve the minutes until the next meeting. What we would release to the public could be hearsay, as it had not been approved, unless it was an agenda item at each meeting. Cheri Thompson suggested that it could be the unamended WET report or there could be a 30-day lag. The idea was that people outside of the District, who did not attend the meetings, wanted to know more and get the facts.

Cheri Thompson moved that I would like to assemble an email contact list of persons interested in receiving pertinent Sewer District information (to include anybody that had signed up on the website). Once the list was compiled then we need to decide what we disseminate. Tyler Smith seconded, with discussion that anybody that had signed up on the website be included. Cheri Thompson was fine with that amendment. There was no further discussion. The motion was carried.

Tom Morris	Aye
Pat Goodover	Absent
Cheri Thompson	Aye
Troy Spence	Aye
Tyler Smith	Aye

Bank Account Debit Card & Spending Policy

Tom Morris reviewed the spending policy in the board packet. There was discussion if the policy had been sent to the attorney.

Tom Morris moved to send the policy to legal for review. If legal says it is good, then we can acquire the debit card. The motion was discussed. Tyler Smith seconded the motion. There was further discussion regarding documentation outlined in the policy. The motion was carried.

Tom Morris	Aye
Pat Goodover	Absent

Cheri Thompson Aye
Troy Spence Aye
Tyler Smith Aye

Bank Account Signatories

Felicity Derry reviewed the procedure for each account to add and subtract signatories. Tom Morris noted that because not all directors were present at the meetings, usually all directors were signers.

Tom Morris moved that all directors will be check signers. Tyler Smith and Cheri Thompson seconded the motion. There was no discussion. The motion was carried.

Tom Morris Aye
Pat Goodover Absent
Cheri Thompson Aye
Troy Spence Aye
Tyler Smith Aye

NEXT REGULARLY SCHEDULED MEETING: August 15, 2024

AGENDA ITEMS FOR NEXT SCHEDULED MEETING:

Tom Morris noted that the following items should be added to the August agenda: Action Plan – Committee Reports – Pathfinder Article, Monitoring Well Sampling, WET Update, Grants & Funding, Network to share information, Spending Policy and Communications - Discussion & Action.

ADJOURNMENT OF MONTHLY BOARD MEETING:

Tom Morris moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:21pm.

Attest:

Tom Morris, President

Felicity Derry, Secretary

