



## **FORT SMITH WATER & SEWER DISTRICT Board Meeting Minutes-Friday, March 28, 2025**

**-OPENING – ROLL CALL-** Alan Shaw called the meeting to order @ 9:30, 2025, the meeting was held in person and via phone conference; call in number was 1-872-240-3212, Access Code: 211-783-197; Board members attending: Alan Shaw, Katie Steele, Jim Hyde, and attending via phone: Tina Power; Board member Steve Saville did not attend the meeting; Employees attending: Josh McCraw and Sandy Kust, employee attending via phone: John Mangan; public attending via phone: Jeff Buszmann.

**-APPROVAL OF FEBRUARY 27, 2025, MEETING MINUTES-** Motion by Ms. Steele to approve the meeting minutes from February 27, 2025, as printed, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Dr. Shaw, motion carried unanimously.

**-FINANCIALS/BILLS-** Sandy Kust presented the treasurers report for March 2025. Expenses: \$11,515.51 income: \$16,149.91; checking account balance: \$134,769.32 + CDARS \$29,976.00; total: \$164,745.32. Motion by Dr. Shaw to pay the bills, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Ms. Steele, motion carried unanimously.

**-DELINQUENT REPORT-** Currently there are 6 accounts that are past due, totaling \$2,182.79; the water is turned off on 4 accounts and 2 have been sent turn off letters if not paid by March 28, 2025.

Account # 251 had a leak on the property and is asking for forgiveness on the sewer portion of the bill. A motion was made by Ms. Steele to give an adjustment of 50% of bill and this will only be given once, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Dr. Shaw, the motion carried unanimously.

Josh is going to check with Nodding Water Works on the cost of the meters, antennas and monthly fee that will read meters daily. Ms. Steele stated it is not the Districts responsibility to read meters daily and if a customer wants this the customer could pay for the meter, antenna and monthly fee. Ms. Steele stated a policy needs to be developed to address when a customer has a leak, so all customers are treated the same.

### **-WASTEWATER PROJECT**

- 1. PROJECT CLOSE OUT/UPDATE ON ROAD CONDITIONS/RECLAMATION OF LAGOON:** Dr. Shaw stated the reclamation of lagoon is completed, however there is a pile of dirt, sand bags, and trash bags located at the old lagoon and this should be cleaned up by the contractor, Bozeman Trail will be restored this spring, the remaining roads and sink holes in the District will be looked at during the final walk through to identify the restoration that will still need to be completed, and the seeding of the alleys will take place this spring also. The final walk through of the wastewater construction project will be on April 25, 2025 @ 11AM.

2. **AERATORS:** Josh McCraw stated three of the four aerators are not working. RPA Engineering has been contacted and will be on site with an electrician on April 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> to conduct an inspection. The aerators have not worked correctly since installation as consistently surging and blowing breakers. The aerators are under warranty, but an inspection needs to be conducted to see if the aerators had a mechanical problem or were not installed properly.

**OPERATOR REPORT-** Josh stated the property pins have been located on the property that houses the pump house, well, generator, shed and storage building and has put in tee posts and a cable along property line as this will keep the public from parking on District property. Josh took the yearly samples into Energy Laboratories in March as the District can get a discount if samples are taken in the first quarter of the year. The leaks are currently being repaired at account #244 and #251. Josh and John also purchased a boat and life jackets as will be needed for the inspection of the aerators and when maintenance needs to be conducted at the lagoon. Josh would like to move the storage shed the District owns to the lagoon site area and store the boat in shed. Dr. Shaw stated life jackets are required when accessing the lagoon. Josh stated he will not make phone calls with the engineering firm anymore when problems arise, as wants the board to address the engineers so he cannot be held liable if something were to go wrong, as was told by engineers to run aerators 24 hours a day even in extremely cold conditions and now the aerators are not working. Josh will call the board president when a problem arises and if directed send an email to engineer and board members so there is documented proof.

**ELECTION OF BOARD MEMBERS:** The District will not have an election as only 2 property owners filed for the 2 board positions available. Jeff Buszmann and Katie Steele both filed. Jeff Buszmann will be on the board in May 2025 and Katie Steele will remain a board member, both will be for a 4-year term.

Katie Steele stated she will be resigning from the board in May 2025 as feels she needs to step away for a couple years, but will stay active with the board.

Dr. Shaw will write a letter stating a board position will be open and interested people reach out to him directly, the letter will be sent out with the bills.

**OLD LAGOON SITE/ANNEXATION and STORAGE FACILITY PROPERTY:** The property owner of the storage facility has the right of 1<sup>st</sup> refusal to purchase if the board decides to sell this property, if the board decides not to sell then this would be void to property owner. The District does not owe anything on this property and has decided to hold onto it for a while longer and see what happens if the resort tax is enacted.

The property owner for the storage units requested and has been sent the application for annexation.

**FORMAL APPRAISAL FOR DISTRICT PROPERTY (BLOCK L LOT 2) AND RECLAIMED LAGOON:** Dr. Shaw stated an appraisal will not be conducted on these properties and the District will move forward with selling the property at Block L Lot 2 and hold off on selling the lagoon property. Mr. Saville has contacted 2 realtors, Rick Sedar and Ty Fisher and both stated property could be listed at \$120,000. The board discussed and wants to list the property at \$150,000 and talk to both realtors about commission fees. The property will be listed as having a sewer tap but no water. Ms. Power stated she has knowledge of realtors and will visit with Mr. Saville regarding the listing price and commission fee.

## **NEW BUSINESS:**

### **COMMUNITY GRANTS THAT WERE USED FOR THE WASTEWATER PROJECT:**

The District received \$31,500 in grant funds from various donors that were used for the wastewater construction project, and in addition the board would like to transfer \$31,500 from the Fort Smith WSD check account into a saving account to prepay on the wastewater loan principal. A motion was made by Dr. Shaw to take \$31,500 from the District regular checking account and transfer into a saving account to prepay the loan principal, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Mr. Hyde. Dr. Shaw will set up the savings account needed for this transfer.

**UPDATE ON COMMUNITY MEETING AND RESORT TAX:** The Fort Smith Water & Sewer District has nothing to do with the resort tax and community meetings, but updates were provided at the meeting.

An attorney is getting the resort tax going and is anticipated on being fully implemented in December 2025. Katie Steele is working on a timeline for the resort tax. Katie also stated the community is interested in becoming a Fire District area.

The steering committee was awarded \$2.5 million, and Hardin will be putting in a visitor center and a bunch of mini grants will also be available.

**MARCH MEETING-** Friday, April 25, 2025 @ 9am.

**-PUBLIC COMMENTS-** Bonnie Evans stated she is disappointed with all the potholes around town and the road going to the lagoon was reclaimed very well as garage and pile of dirt are still there and the contractor should have to clean this area up and fill in potholes and restore the roads to pre-construction condition.

**-ADJOURN MEETING-** Meeting adjourned at 10:31AM