



FORT SMITH WATER & SEWER DISTRICT
Board Meeting Minutes-Friday, June 20, 2025

-OPENING – ROLL CALL- Alan Shaw called the meeting to order @ 9:03, 2025, the meeting was held in person and via phone conference; call in number was 1-571-317-3112, Access Code: 764-243-541; Board members attending: Alan Shaw, Steve Saville, Jim Hyde, Jeff Buszmann and attending via phone: Tina Power; Employees attending: Josh McCraw and Sandy Kust; public attending via phone: Bonnie Evans.

-APPROVAL OF MAY 23, 2025, MEETING MINUTES- Motion by Mr. Hyde to approve the meeting minutes from May 23, 2025 as printed, 2nd by Dr. Shaw, motion carried unanimously.

-FINANCIALS/BILLS- Mr. Saville presented the treasurers report for June, 2025. Expenses: \$16,561.04 income: \$17,962.04; checking account balance: \$219,482.66, wastewater saving account: \$41,100.00, CDARS \$39,976.00; total checking, savings and cd accounts: \$300,558.66. Motion by Mr. Saville to pay the bills and accept the treasurers report, 2nd by Dr. Shaw, motion carried unanimously.

Audit preparation and Single Audit: An audit will need to be completed for FY23 & FY24 due to the District exceeding \$750,000 in income. Sandy has submitted the financial reports to various accounting firms and has 3 that will be submitting proposals; currently only 1 proposal has been submitted. Once proposals are submitted, they will be sent to the funding agencies for approval. The audit must be completed by April 2026.

-DELINQUENT REPORT- Currently there are 9 accounts that are past due, totaling \$4,287.33; the water is turned off on 7 accounts and 2 accounts have been sent turn off letters. A letter will be sent in July to all delinquent accounts that delinquent amount will be put on taxes if payment is not made by August 31, 2025.

-WASTEWATER PROJECT

1. **PROJECT PUNCH LIST AND AERATORS:** Josh McCraw stated everything is completed on the punch list, and has received approval for another sink hole that happened and Query Excavating will fill and even out and bill Western Municipal directly. The aerators have been fixed and installed, however 1 of the aerators is bouncing badly and Newterra is looking into why this is happening, the 3 other aerators are working great. Josh continues to monitor the aerators daily to ensure working property and will take them out during cold weather months so they do not freeze.

OPERATOR REPORT- Josh stated everything on the water/wastewater system is going well and he set up the spray irrigation system and it is ready to use. Josh said the cheatgrass is taking over at the lagoon site and the alfalfa is not really coming up because of this, Josh is trying to find a farmer that will take over the area that needs to be cut and hopefully they can replant the alfalfa seed.

Estimate on equipment needed for wastewater system maintenance: Josh provided a list of equipment and supplies needed to measure the ph and dissolved oxygen in the lagoons, total cost is \$4,989.45 from USA Blue Book. These measurements will be necessary for reporting to MT DEQ. Motion by Mr. Buszmann to purchase the equipment and supplies from USA Blue Book estimated at \$4,989.45 needed for these measurements, 2nd by Mr. Hyde, motion carried unanimously.

Letter to customers regarding installation of meters that read daily and inform customer of leak: A letter will be sent out with the billing informing customers of the opportunity to purchase a new online service called Eye of Water, which will give customers tools to help use water more efficiently by seeing how much water is being used and if there are any leaks. The cost per customer is \$325.00 which includes the equipment and installation and then a monthly subscription fee of \$1.25 which would be added to the water/sewer bill. Customers will have the opportunity to immediately see they have a leak and will be responsible to report the leak to the Water Operator instead of seeing the cost of the leak at the end of the month, with the availability of this new program, the board will no longer forgive 50% of the amount owed for water usage due to a leak. Information on Eye of Water can be found @ <https://helpeyeonwater.com>.

Insurance: Sandy completed the application for insurance with 1st West Insurance, currently the District pays \$27,313.00/year for Property, Auto, General Liability, and Directors Insurance, the new proposed rate will be \$27,554.00/year, however by raising values of wastewater components by 10% and raising the property deductible to \$5,000, taking full coverage off pickup and having liability and lowering the Directors and Officers limits from \$3,000,000 to \$2,000,000 the yearly cost \$26,051 and saving of \$1,503/year.

NEW BUSINESS:

Election of Officers: Dr. Shaw stated the election of officers needs to take place as board members have changed.

Motion by Dr. Shaw to have Steve Saville continue being the Secretary/Treasurer of the board, 2nd by Mr. Hyde, motion carried unanimously.

Motion by Dr. Shaw to have Jim Hyde be the Vice Chairperson of the board, 2nd by Mr. Buszmann, motion carried unanimously.

Motion by Mr. Buszmann to have Alan Shaw continue being the Chairperson of the board, 2nd by Mr. Hyde, motion carried unanimously.

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

Dr. Shaw stated a letter was sent to property owners, in the resort tax district boundaries, regarding information on the resort tax and a map of the boundaries. The volunteers will proceed with gathering signatures (about 45 signatures needed) for the petition, and present to the Big Horn County Commissioners, then the election is set to happen in November 2025, the ballot will have a spot to write in for 5 board members. Volunteers will continue to get enough signatures and inform folks how the resort tax will benefit folks outside of the Fort Smith boundaries. The vote will need to pass by 51% of the ballots returned. The website for the resort tax is: bighornriverresorttax.com

Committee is actively working to put together a volunteer fire crew and they will be part of the fire hydrant flushing in spring and fall. Katie Steele is on a steering committee with the City of Hardin and currently working on budgets about how grants will be spent and how to apply for mini grants.

JULY MEETING- Friday, July 25, 2025 @ 9am.

-PUBLIC COMMENTS- None

-ADJOURN MEETING- Motion by Mr. Buszmann to adjourn meeting, 2nd by Dr. Shaw, meeting adjourned @ 9:51AM