

**BRUNSWICK REGIONAL WATER & SEWER H2GO
REGULAR BOARD MEETING
TUESDAY DECEMBER 15, 2020**

OFFICIAL MINUTES

CALL TO ORDER:

Chairman Ronnie Jenkins called the meeting, located at H2GO via Zoom, to order at 6 p.m.; a quorum was present via ZOOM. The assembly was led in the Pledge of Allegiance.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Members present from the Board of Commissioners were members Ronnie Jenkins, Chairman, Steve Hosmer, Vice Chairman, Rodney McCoy, Secretary, Bill Beer, and Barry Laub, present from H2GO was Bob Walker, Executive Director, Scott Hood, Finance Director, Tyler Wittkofsky, Public Information Officer, and Deana Greiner, Deputy Clerk to the Board.

DISCUSSION/ADJUSTMENT OF AGENDA:

Chairman Jenkins opened the floor for any adjustments to the agenda. A deed of dedication for Compass Pointe Phase 20 Section 3 Lots 171-184 and 221-231 was added to the Executive Director's Report. Under New Business discussion for extending water lines down James Way was added. **Commissioner Hosmer made the motion to approve the agenda as amended; a vote was called and the motion was carried unanimously.**

CONSENT AGENDA:

Commissioner Laub made the motion to approve the consent agenda consisting of the October 26, 2020 Special Board Meeting Minutes, the November 9, 2020 Special Board Meeting Minutes and the November 17, 2020 Regular Board Meeting Minutes as presented; a vote was called and the motion was carried unanimously.

COMMISSIONERS REPORT:

Commissioner McCoy mentioned that he reads different professional articles from time to time; he explained that he had come across one that talked about a new process for treating PFOA compounds. Mr. McCoy said it used something called forever chemicals that destroy the compounds; he said he found it interesting.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Chairman Jenkins opened the floor for public comments.

None of the patrons present spoke.

OLD BUSINESS:

Sensus Smart Meter Customer Portal: Mr. Walker said that previously the board had asked for more information regarding this; he expressed that staff recommended the program and felt it would be well received by customers. Commissioner Laub expressed his concerns; he was concerned that it would be well received at first and then later not so much. Commissioner Hosmer asked if there was any data that showed any cost metrics vs customer service time. Commissioner McCoy expressed that he like the idea but understood it would be expensive. After a brief discussion of opinions; the board still wanted more information. **Commissioner Hosmer made the motion to table this item until for information regarding the comparison of cost versus customer service time could be given. A vote was called and the motion was carried unanimously.**

NEW BUSINESS:

Families First Corona Virus Response Act-Interim Personnel Policy Adjustment: Mr. Walker explained that the Family First Corona Virus Response Act that provided employees 14 days of leave time due to the corona virus was set to expire at the end of the month. Mr. Walker suggested that the board extend this policy within our personnel policy for a set period of time since we were still in the middle of a pandemic. It was said that when an employee was out due to corona that they are given 14 days of leave; it was said once that time is used the employee will have the option to use their sick and vacation time. It was said that the Pandemic FEMA gave an employee 60% of their pay if they were out for an extended time and had no more leave time available. Mr. Walker explained that each time an employee is out that we contact the health department for directions. After a brief discussion, **Commissioner Hosmer made the motion to approve extending the Families First Corona Virus Response Act for 6 months. A vote was called and the motion was carried unanimously.**

2021 Schedule of Regular Board Meetings: **Commissioner Laub made the motion to approve the 2021 Schedule of Regular Board Meetings as presented; a vote was called and the motion was carried unanimously.**

James Way Water System: Mr. Walker explained that he has been approached by some residents who live down James Way; he said the road is off of Woodridge, which is off of Goodman Road. Mr. Walker said there are about 16 homes; he explained that there is a 12 inch line that could be looped around to provide water. Mr. Walker said that this project would be done like we have done in the past with a special assessment. Mr. Walker explained to the board that he presented the numbers to the residents in terms of their cost with a special assessment; he said they were looking at around \$115,000 for a two inch line or \$190,000 for a six inch line. It was said that residents would be charged around \$50 a month plus fees with the two inch line and \$86 a month plus fees with the six inch line. Mr. Walker said that once he gave this information to the residents they asked if the board could gift it to them rather than do the special assessment. Members of the board asked if there were any grants or subsidy programs that could be applied for. The board understood the cost and how it could affect the residents; however the board did not want to set a precedent for other areas. Mr. Walker said he could get with the residents and research further on any grants or subsidy that might be available. It was said that maybe we could find a grant to extend lines in other areas as well as this one.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT:

Release of 7/21/20 DR Horton Cash Bond, Seabrooke Phase 3A: Mr. Walker stated that this phase of Seabrooke had been completed; he said we approved the deed of dedication in October and we needed to release the Cash Bond back to them. **Commissioner Beer made the motion to release the 7/21/20 DR Horton Cash Bond for Seabrooke Phase 3A as presented. A vote was called and the motion was carried unanimously.**

H2GO COVID Operations Update: Mr. Walker explained that he has directed the maintenance crew to limit one person per truck; he explained that we work to follow the CDC and the Health Department guidelines when it comes to staff operations. Mr. Walker explained that we have continued the practice of not disconnecting customers for non-payment. It was said that customer service actively contact customers who do not pay and work with them on setting up payment plans. It was also said that when customers are unable to pay we direct them to local organizations that can help. It was said that normally we would see about 75 turn offs a month; it was said that non-payment accounts made up roughly one percent of our customer base. The board decided that we could monitor this issue on a month to month basis to see when we could go back to charging penalties and disconnecting customers for non-payment.

RO Water Project Update: Mr. Walker reported that with Contract 3, the Concentrate Line/River Diffuser, that they were planning to run pipe to the river on January 4. Mr. Walker reported that with Contract 2, the Raw Water Lines, things were being pushed back to January; he said the last hurricane in Louisiana caused certain material prices to spike and they were wanting to wait to see if those prices would come back down. Mr. Walker reported that with Contract 4, the RO Plant, that the erosion inspection was done today and they were moving dirt. Mr. Walker said they have plans to build up the road after construction is complete; he explained that the other parcel owners along the road will help fund the road upgrades. Mr. Walker said once all this is complete that the Town of Belville had offered to take over the road. Mr. Walker reported that with Contract 1, the Wells, that work will start this week; he explained that they will camera the wells to determine what needs to be done.

Compass Pointe Deed of Dedication Phase 20 Section 3 Lots 171-184, 221-231: Mr. Walker presented to the board a deed of dedication for Compass Pointe Phase 20 Section 3 Lots 171-184, 221-231; he said all was complete and everything looked good. **Commissioner Hosmer made the motion to accept the deed of dedication for Compass Pointe Phase 20 Section 3 Lots 171-184, 221-231 as presented; a vote was called and the motion was carried unanimously.**

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR'S REPORT:

Mr. Walker stated that he gave Mr. Lane the night off to be with family.

FINANCE OFFICER'S REPORT:

Check Register for November 11, 2020 thru December 9, 2020: No comments were made regarding the check register.

Data Sharing Agreement: Mr. Hook explained that this data sharing agreement had to do with the HOPE Grant that the state put in place to help pay utility bills and rent for those who qualified. Mr. Hook explained that the State was wanting to do bulk distributions to the various utility companies; he said they were wanting to send one payment for several customers. It was said that this agreement would allow the company to verify customer's accounts with us so that payments could be made. It was said this agreement is to cover for data breaches if one would occur. **Commissioner McCoy made the motion to approve the data sharing agreement as presented; a vote was called that motion was carried unanimously.**

PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICER'S REPORT:

Awards Recognitions: Mr. Wittkofsky reported to the board that H2GO has been recognized as a Special Districts Program Award Winner for 2020. Mr. Wittkofsky explained this award is given by the Government Technology Magazine and AT&T; he explained that the Special Districts Awards Program is designed to recognize innovation and leadership within special district agencies across the country. Mr. Wittkofsky said that out of hundreds and hundreds of nominations that only 46 awards were given. Mr. Wittkofsky explained that H2GO was recognized in the Technology Innovation for Citizen's category; he explained that this category recognizes special districts that have utilized technology to improve service delivery to citizens. Mr. Wittkofsky said we were recognized for installing the new advanced metering technology in the beginning of 2020, before the pandemic began; and while working through the pandemic, H2GO contractors remained dedicated to installing these meters to ensure the highest quality of service to their customers. Mr. Wittkofsky said that in today's webinar the organization spoke highly of our work in installing the new metering system.

ATTORNEY'S REPORT:

Mr. Coble stated that he had nothing to report in open session.

INFORMAL DISCUSSION:

Mr. Walker reported to the board that the staff collectively thanked the board for their approval of this year's Christmas Bonuses. Members of the board expressed their thankfulness for the staff and the hard work everyone does to make this utility run smoothly.

EXECUTIVE SESSION TO CONSULT LEGAL COUNSEL PURSUANT TO NCGS 143-318.11 (a)(3) AND TO DISCUSS CONTRACT NEGOTIATIONS PURSUANT TO NCGS 143-318.11 (a)(5)

Commissioner Beer made the motion for the board to enter into executive session to consult legal counsel pursuant to NCGS 143-318.11 (a)(3) and to discuss contract negotiations pursuant to NCGS 143-318.11 (a)(5). A vote was called and the motion carried unanimously.

Commissioner Hosmer made the motion for the board to re-enter open session. A vote was called and the motion carried unanimously.

It was said there was nothing to report out of executive session.

ANNOUNCEMENT OF NEXT MEETING:

It was announced that the board would meet again for a regular board meeting on January 19, 2021

ADJOURNMENT:

Commissioner Beer made the motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:20 p.m.; a vote was called and the motion carried unanimously.

Ronnie Jenkins, Chairman

Rodney McCoy, Secretary

Deana Greiner, CMC
Deputy Clerk to the Board

Date of Approval