

LAPORTE COUNTY REGIONAL SEWER DISTRICT MEETING

Meeting

October 15th, 2020

9:00 a.m.

Time and Place:

The September 2020 LaPorte County Regional Sewer & Water District meeting was held on September 17th, 2020 @ the LaPorte County Annex Building, Community Room #3. Located at 809 State St., LaPorte, IN 46350.

Attendees:

Meeting was called to order at 9:00 a.m. by Tony Mancuso, those in attendance were John Carr, Marcella Kunstek, Mitch Bishop, Mark Danielson, Dalia Zygaski, and Jerry Jackson.

Approval of Minutes:

Marcella Kunstek made the motion to accept the minutes from the September 17, 2020 meeting. Mark Danielson seconded the motion, and all were in favor.

Public Comments:

No Public Comments.

Reports - Finance Staff:

1.) Financial Report

A.) Horizon Bank Checking had a beginning balance of \$29,552.95 as of September 1, 2020.

1. Deposits 3,103.29
2. Interest Paid \$1.20
3. Disbursements: \$3,380.52 in Operation Expenses

B.) Horizon Bank Checking had an ending balance of \$29,276.92 as of September 30, 2020.

2.) Toll Road Service Area Account

A.) Beginning balance as of \$294,574.72 as of September 1, 2020

1. Deposits \$56,977.00
2. Interest Paid: \$13.12
3. Disbursements: \$54,688.90

B.) Account Ending balance as of September 30, 2020 is \$296,875.94.

3.) Claims

Steve Carter, the Board's accountant, presented claims in the amount of \$15,042.99

Jerry Jackson made the motion to accept the finance reports as presented, as well as the approval of claims in the amount of \$15,042.99. Mitch Bishop seconded the motion, and all were in favor.

Steve Carter also discussed the Hoosier Fund Account is set up and that the initial transfer needs to be completed. He indicated they had discussed transferring \$200K and he would get with Tony after the meeting to get it taken care of. It was discussed that a second signature was needed on the account and Steve indicated that they wanted him to sign the application form which he went ahead and did - but that the Board does need a second board member on the account in case Tony is not available or goes off the board. Marcella Kunstek who is the Vice President agreed to meet with Steve Carter and get this taken care of as soon as possible.

Reports - Astbury:

Generator Repairs: H&G Services Quote \$3,995.00 – Discussion was had regarding the amount of said quote and it not being itemized. The Board would like to get the quote itemized. It was discussed if additional quotes were needed or if in the by-laws it required to get 2 or 3 bids. Marcella had given Chris Vogel names of contractors. Date on quote was from December 2019. Quote may not be good.

Aero-Mod PLC Internet Connectivity: Quote \$2,573.74 – Discussion was had that this was previously brought up and believed to have been reviewed to move forward. Mitch Bishop made the motion to approve the quote amount of \$2,573.74 for Aero-Mod PLC Internet Connectivity upgrade. Marcella Kunstek seconded the motion, and all were in favor.

D.A. Dodd – Bathroom: Quote \$1,288.00 - Discussion regarding the work that was already completed but we do not have an invoice for the work yet. The quote is for additional work still needed. Board decided to table the quote until the invoice for the initial work was received and additional information for the quote was received due to operator Chris Vogel not be in attendance to provide information.

Chris Vogel joined the meeting at 9:19 a.m. and the board was able to ask him questions regarding the quote. Chris indicated that when DA Dodd came out and replaced the flushing valve in the sink in the bathroom and they still were not getting enough volume of water for the toilet to flush. They tried to adjust the pressure reducing valve in the building and they believe that the pressure reducing valve is faulty and that is what if causing the toilet not to flush. Chris indicated that he believes the quote is reasonable because they have to take out a bunch of plumbing and put it back in. The board decided wait to make any decision on the quote until they find out what the current invoice amount is due.

Reports – JPR:

Billing/Collections/Lien – Jennifer pointed out that on the AR report she marked the accounts that were mailed collection letters and will be processed for Liens going forward if they do not reply. She also showed accounts that had made payment arrangements set up. Jennifer also mentioned that accounts that had made payment arrangements previously but had not stuck to them will not be allowed to make them again. There was also mention that one customer who was a renter indicated that they only wanted to pay once a year and had spoken to a board member and it was fine. Jennifer had told the property owner that it no longer worked that way and there were rules that needed to be followed.

Phase II Update:

Ken Jones from JPR gave an update as to the Phase II of the Sewer Project. He indicated that all the necessary documents for Contract signature for Tony have been passed by Barry and Ken is good with them. The Pre-Construction meeting is scheduled for next Thursday, and Tony will get the Zoom meeting information set up. The contractor will give us a construction schedule at that meeting and then we should be able to start a dialog with the property owners.

Public Notice as to the Intent to Extend Services IC 13-26-5-6.6. Ken discussed the Public Notice topic and believed that the 60 days would start when we received the notice the project was fully funded. That notice was received from SRF last week. Therefore, Ken believes the 60 days should start from that date. The requirement is that the notice be published 3 consecutive week and then mailed the packets to each property owner. Barry believes it is to be mailed by certified mail and because of the issues for the past year and half he thinks it is necessary to do it by certified mail.

Barry McDonnell indicates that the statue does not provide specific terminology for what the actual starting date of the 60 days is defined as. So it does not spell out if the 60 days starts on the day of the Notice to Proceed Date, the Closing Date, the SRF notice date, or what date to use for the 60 days so we actually have no specific idea to determine from the statue when the 60 days begins. Property owner packet information was discussed, and Marcella, Jennifer and Ken will get together and review the current packets get a draft of the information together for Barry and board to review. Barry believes the packet needs to be sent when the contracts are signed and everything is complete. Ken will go through the packet one more time before prior to reviewing with Marcella and Jennifer.

Connection fee information was discussed. Inspection fees were discussed. Homeowners will have to get a contractor to connect from their home to the main. City of LaPorte did the inspections for the previous Phase I project and Jerry said the board will need to discuss and determine how Phase II inspections will be done. Decision doesn't need to be made today but between JPR and the contractor contact with be made with the property owner so decisions can be made on where the connection will be made.

Completion date on the project is June or July 2021. The idea is so that the property owners have time to connect. We are hoping to get the construction schedule and see where they are and if they will even begin this year.

Jennifer commented on the packet mailing to the property owners and said that a lot of the property owners have PO Box numbers. We should probably do both regular and certified mail letters. Jennifer said from doing a lot of collections homeowners will not pick up the certified mail because they know what is coming. Barry agreed on this procedure.

New Business:

Website Proposal: - JPR provided a proposal for start-up and building a website from the ground up for a not to exceed amount of \$5,000.00.

Barry believes that we need to make sure that the website links with the County website and it works together.

Dalia – indicated that the proposal was not local and wanted to know if we could find a local quote. Mitch Bishop will send Jennifer the contact person for who prepared the County's website so Jennifer can get another quote for the District.

Generator Repairs: H&G Services Quote \$3,995.00 – Discussions were again brought up about the quote and the repair and Chris indicated he was sure about getting another quote and it would take another 2-3 weeks. Jerry said next time when the amount is this large, he wants to make sure there are 2 quotes but that he does not want to wait any longer on this now.

Jerry Jackson made the motion to approve the quote for H&G Services in the amount of \$3,995.00. Marcella Kunstek seconded the motion, and all were in favor.

Marcella Kunstek asked about all the Astbury invoices and if that was normal to receive all of them and the big amount for the chemicals, etc. Tony confirmed it was and Jerry mentioned that the NPDES permit was an important one which was done every 5 years to keep the plant running. Barry and Jennifer confirmed that they verified on the contract that it was a separate line item under their contract. Jerry commented that it was down to the wire to get that in for renewal and was looking for it.

Continued discussion on the generator from Mitch Bishop wherein he indicated that about a year ago we had a company – he said H&G was then Mark West Electric was another one. H&G is our regular maintenance guy – Jerry confirmed. Mitch said that the contract says it replaced belts – on the quote it says replaces belts. Mitch is wondering why would we pay twice?

Mitch says that there are 2 items on their quote that says is covered on their general maintenance contract. The board asked that Jennifer contact H&G contact them regarding the general maintenance contract vs the quote they gave us and what the difference is for the belts, etc. Jerry said he will find a copy of the contract – question was asked if the quote was paid for the contract for all the generators. Chris said that the routine maintenance was performed on the generators.

Dalia asked about the ground maintenance invoice from Astbury. She indicated that in August the invoice was for every week and that was a very dry month. She was wondering why they mowed every week. Jennifer indicated that she did not know why because the last meeting was September 17th and after that they were to only mow on an as-needed basis. Chris said that he spoke with them and in August they did mow every week because in August out there the grass was still growing every week. Mark Danielson said that Chris was keeping an eye on it and if Chris thought it needed to be mowed then they trusted him and he had the capability to call them and tell them not to come that week if it wasn't necessary and he confirmed.

Solar Panels:

Jennifer discussed having the solar company still wanting the electric bill and Steve is going to help her provide them with the invoices he has in his possession. She is going to have them give a presentation at next month's meeting. Jennifer also believes she might know of a name of a second company that can provide some solar information. Marcella also thinks she can find a name of a company and will get it to Jennifer to look into.

Old Business:

Barry wanted to remind the board that the Notice of Rate Change that Jennifer mailed to the existing and future rate payers triggered the statutory 30-day period that the property owners could file an appeal. Specifically, that they could file an appeal to what they call the sewer district

authority. Which is kind of a non-existent authority, but when you read the statute it would trigger the authority assuming into existence. In our county the sewer district authority would be the county commissioners. That time frame by my calculation is close to running out. So I just wanted to mention it to the board that there is still a change that we may have to deal with that but at this point Barry has not been notified of any appeals. The appeal would have to be filed with the commissioners and then the commissioners would have to file a hearing and make the decision one way or the other if the rates were necessary or not. At this time neither Tony nor Mitch have heard anything regarding an appeal being filed.

Jerry Jackson had a request from a property owner at 2677 E. SR 2 to connect into the sewer system. I quoted them \$78.40/month – whatever our rate is currently. He just wanted to make sure the board was aware. He also said there is another connection that is out there. Jerry has already spoke with the contractor doing the connection on SR 2.

Next Meeting: The next meeting will be held on November 19, 2020 at 9:00 a.m. by Zoom. Tony will get the zoom set up and sent out to everyone.

Adjournment: Motion to Adjourn at 10:11 a.m. was made by Mitch Bishop, seconded by Jerry Jackson, all in favor.