Commission of Public Works meeting, November 25, 2024

Regular monthly business.

Commissioners present: Trey Stephens, Donnie Cooper, Jackie Keenan, Roy Shaw and

 Gerald McMurray

Employees present: Danny Lowe, Ken Phillips and Christy Lowe

Visitors present: Judy Graham-Dowd

 Place: New Ellenton Commission of Public Works

 100 South Main Street

 New Ellenton, SC 29809

Time: 7:00 PM

Chairman Mr. Trey Stephens presiding.

Mr. Trey Stephens opens with the Pledge of Allegiance and Ken Phillips said the prayer.

Mr. Trey Stephens welcomes everyone and asks that he or she state their name for the record.

Mr. Trey Stephens opened the floor to guest comments and questions.

Judy Graham-Dowd asked about the fencing that will go around the tank. Danny Lowe stated there will be a security fence around the tank but not the entire area. Mrs. Judy stated that she was impressed with the dedication and the loyalty of the CPW employees to new Oak Hill customers during the hurricane. Mrs. Graham-Dowd stated that she has heard good things concerning the transition of Oak Hill with CPW.

Mr. Trey Stephens states that approving the Financial Report for October 2024 is on the agenda and asks for a motion and a second. After discussion, Vice Chairman Donnie Cooper made a motion to accept the Financial Report; it was seconded by Secretary-Treasurer Jackie Keenan and carried.

Chairman Trey Stephens states that approving the minutes for October 28, 2024 is on the agenda and asks for a motion and a second. Commissioner Gerald McMurray made a motion to accept the Minutes as written; it was seconded by Commissioner Roy Shaw and carried.

Mr. Trey Stephens asks for any questions or comments. (none)

OLD BUSINESS

Director Danny Lowe stated the Chime Bell Church Rd. project is 80% complete. The bid opening for Florida Ave/Fern Dr/ Club Dr. will be at 2pm tomorrow if anyone is available, they are welcome to attend.

Mr. Lowe reported that we have filed a claim with our insurance company for damages and expenses incurred due to Hurricane Helene for approximately $19,000. Danny stated once we find out what our insurance company will cover, then we will file a claim with FEMA.

Danny stated we sent out over 700 lead and copper letters to CPW customers per the new rule for EPA. This will be an annual letter/report all water departments have to comply with per EPA. The majority of the letters sent out were to customers who a listed as “UNKNOWN” for lines on the customers side of the meter. Mr. Lowe stated we are going to work on getting that number lowered during the winter months which are usually slower by sending out the technicians to determine what is on the customers side.

Danny Lowe gave an update on developers who have approached CPW. The development on Summit Dr. has started installing the infrastructure, the developer on Old Whiskey Rd. has paid for Tap Fees, signed the Developers Policy Agreement and have received our specifications so they are working on the engineering now; Danny stated he hasn’t heard anything from the development across from KJ’s, he has emailed them the Developers Policy Agreement and that was the last communication with them. Danny also stated that he has a guy call him today about 125 acres off Talatha Church Rd. by Noah’s Ark and then a developer contacted him about property by the driving range on Whiskey Rd.

 Danny Lowe reported the water loss was 3.88% for the month of October.

Ken Phillips gave an update of field activities for October.

Danny Lowe stated the field technicians will be attending a Trenching & Shoring class tomorrow.

Danny Lowe reported that we sent 2 employees to the Operators Conference

Christy Lowe reported the new computer workstations have been installed by Intellisystems.

Christy Lowe presented a draft copy of a New Ellenton CPW newsletter. It is a work in progress and will be added to and completed by the end of the year.

Vice Chairman Donnie Cooper inquired about a fire hydrant on Chime Bell Church Rd. that is closed to The Red Barn that is behind a fence, asking if we could notch it our so it can be accessible. Danny Lowe stated that he will get it taken care of.

Chairman Trey Stephens asked if we had any customers who had a higher water bill due to leak from the hurricane. Office Manager Christy Lowe stated that there were a few and adjustments were done for them. Mr. Stephens asked if the number of disconnections were higher due to not doing them last month. Mrs. Lowe stated they were higher than normal.

Jackie Keenan asked if they needed to let Christy know about attending the conference in February. Christy Lowe stated she needs to know by the end of the week to make reservations as they fill up quickly.

Christy Lowe presented a power point presentation on a new online payment system that would provide a modern and more customer-friendly way of receiving and paying the bill. This new system would eliminate paper checks being mailed to CPW when customers use the Online Bill Payment option with their bank. CPW receives approximately 600 plus checks in the mail from customers who pay their bill online through their bank as this is a service CPW is not currently set up to receive electronically. Some of these checks are not received until after the due date because of the delay from the Post Office which in turn results in customers receiving a late charge on their bill. It also offers guest check out and other payment options such as Apple Pay, Pay Pal, pay by text, etc. Customers can also choose to set up their own auto draft information and view their bill online as well. It is a 5 year contract. After discussion, Commissioners decided not to go with this payment option at this time.

Mr. Trey Stephens asks is there any more old business. (none)

NEW BUSINESS

Danny Lowe stated that he has had a few people on Chime Bell Church Rd. where we are extending the line who are interested in tapping into CPW’s water system. Mr. Lowe suggested that CPW offer the customers in this specific area a one-time reduced Tap Fee rate to make up for the inconvenience they experienced during the installation of the new water line. After discussion, Vice Chairman Donnie Cooper made a motion to offer customers on Chime Bell Church Rd. in the area where new lines where installed, a one time reduced tap fee of $1,125 with a deadline of March 31, 2025

Danny Lowe presented a response letter to Amy Hibbitts with Hibbitts Drug concerning notification of leaks from CPW. Chairman Trey Stephens composed a letter to Ms. Hibbitts stating that CPW would make every effort to contact her with the new contact phone number she has provided if a leak is detected but CPW would not turn the water off at her business without speaking to her first.

Trey Stephens reminded everyone that the New Ellenton CPW Christmas party will be held on December 17th for employees and Commissioners plus one guest to attend. Mr. Stephens also stated the New Ellenton Christmas parade will be held on December 7th at 12pm and CPW will have a decorated truck in the parade and throwing out candy.

Donnie Cooper made a motion to go into Executive Session; Jackie Keenan seconded it and carried. Time in Executive Session: 7:58pm. Jackie Keenan made a motion to come out of executive session at 8:01pm; it was seconded by Roy Shaw and carried.

Donnie Cooper made a motion to adjourn; Jackie Keenan, all vote, so moved.

Attested by,

Director Jackie Keenan

Danny Lowe Secretary-Treasurer

Trey Stephens Gerald McMurray

Chairman Commissioner

Donnie Cooper Roy Shaw

Vice Chairman Commissioner