

# **Hart County Water and Sewer Authority**

## **Board of Directors Meeting August 15, 2022**

The Hart County Water and Sewer Authority met on August 15<sup>th</sup>, 2022, in the Hart County Cooperative Extension Service Building. Chairman Wade Carlton called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm. Present were Board Members Larry Haley, Bennie Harper, and Marvin Justice; Director Pat Goran; Attorney Kim Higginbotham; Board Secretary/Treasurer Holly McBrayer; Hart County residents Buck and Rita Chapman; Board Member Patti York participated via phone.

### **Welcome**

### **Approval of Agenda**

Mr. Haley motioned to approve the agenda. Mr. Justice seconded the motion which passed 5 – 0.

### **Public Comments: remarks by invited guests**

Mrs. Chapman stated that they had been attending the public comprehensive plan meetings and were interested in water service for the Reed Creek area. She also expressed their support of a county wide public water system. Mrs. Chapman spoke of their desire to see more funding from Hart County such as a higher amount of SPLOST dollars allocated to the HCWSA for system expansion.

### **Approval of July 18<sup>th</sup> regular meeting minutes**

Mr. Justice motioned to approve the July 18<sup>th</sup> regular meeting minutes. Mr. Harper seconded the motion which passed 5 – 0.

### **Financial report**

Mr. Goran presented the financial report. He noted that the retail water sales were the highest on record. Mr. Goran stated he has purposely been buying more water from the City of Hartwell due to continuing taste and odor issues with water purchased from the City of Lavonia. He also noted the increase in booster pump electricity costs which were directly related to purchasing more water from Hartwell and overall higher system demand.

Mr. Goran recommended transferring anywhere from \$250,000 to \$500,000 from the HCWSA operating account to the HCWSA Georgia Fund 1 account due to its higher interest rate. Mr. Justice motioned to transfer \$500,000 from the HCWSA operating account to the HCWSA Georgia Fund 1 account. Mr. Harper seconded the motion which passed 5 – 0.

Mr. Goran stated that HCWSA currently has over 1 million dollars in SPLOST funds available and almost 1.6 million dollars in unencumbered Authority funds. He explained that having too much money on hand can adversely affect grant or loan application approval. He suggested utilizing currently available funds for system expansion such as the Reed Creek area.

No action was taken.

## **Old Business**

### **2020 Community Development Block Grant project update**

Mr. Goran informed the Board that all main lines had been installed and most customers had been connected. He stated that “Last Chance” letters would be sent to any residents who had not yet signed up for service. Mr. Goran said that he expected the grant to be closed in either September or October.

## **New Business**

### **Review of current tap costs, fees for customers and developers**

Mr. Goran provided an update of tap costs comparison and said that HCWSA had not increased tap fees since October 2008. After some discussion, Mr. Justice motioned to increase the ¾” tap fee to \$1,700, the 1” tap fee to \$2,000, and fee to developers for the future installation of a meter to \$500 effective October 1, 2022. Mr. Harper seconded the motion which passed 5 – 0.

### **Preliminary discussion of fiscal year 2023 operating budget, potential customer rate increase**

Mr. Goran stated that the fiscal year 2023 budget would be on the agenda for the September meeting. He stated that the cost of goods sold (water purchased) is the largest expense by far and that the City of Royston had recently increased their wholesale rate. Mr. Goran also said that almost all expenses had increased since the time of our last rate increase. He explained that the HCWSA base fee seemed in line with neighboring municipalities, but the overage charge was significantly lower and suggested discussing a potential overage rate increase at the next meeting.

Mr. Goran asked the Board for any comments at that time and for the Board to contact Ms. McBrayer or him with any thoughts prior to the next meeting.

## **Director’s Comments**

Mr. Goran questioned if the Board would like to continue to encourage social distancing and wearing face masks during Authority meetings. The Board consensus was affirmative.

Mr. Goran informed the Board that he was a member of the Hart County comprehensive plan steering committee.

Mr. Goran presented a water service request for Bratcher Road. Mr. Goran stated that he expected the project would cost less than \$50,000 and understood from the requestor that five residents would be willing to sign commitments. He recommended proceeding with the project contingent on receiving enough commitment letters to meet the \$10,000 cost per committed customer criteria and obtaining the necessary easements since this is a private road.

After some discussion, the Board agreed to discuss this request at the next meeting and requested a cost estimate and related maps to review.

Mr. Goran stated that applying for a CDBG 2023 grant is under consideration. Mr. Goran stated that potential target areas include the Mount Olivet area, extending the Cokesbury Highway line to the east, and the Nuberg community. He said that suggestions from Board Members for potential low to moderate income areas are welcome. Mr. Goran said that Authority staff are planning to meet with Allen-Smith, HCWSA’s grant consultants, before the next meeting to discuss this further.

## **Members' Comments**

Mr. Haley reported issues at the intersection of Akins Lunsford Road and Royston Highway. Mr. Goran will follow up.

Mr. Harper suggested reconsidering the Friendship Road Loop proposed project therefore utilizing a portion of the unencumbered Authority funds. Mr. Carlton suggested waiting until after the County had done county wide hydrant testing.

Ms. Higginbotham expressed her gratitude to Mr. Goran for his assistance and contribution for the bond interview/investor meeting for the new Hart County Jail.

## **Upcoming Meeting – September 19<sup>th</sup>, 2022, and October 17<sup>th</sup>, 2022**

## **Adjournment**

Mr. Haley motioned to adjourn, and Mr. Harper seconded it. The motion passed 5 - 0.

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Wade Carlton, Chairman

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Holly McBrayer, Secretary