

**BATTLE GROUND**  
**CONSERVANCY DISTRICT MEETING**

**July 15, 2020**

This meeting was held via Zoom teleconference due to the state health emergency.

Present: Chairman Andrea Agree, Vice Chair Ron Holladay, Philip Baer, Pam Gramelspacher, Steve Hancock, and Carol Watson. Also: Georgia Jones (Financial Clerk).

Guests: Joe Kline, Laura Bowling, Buffy Rogers, Ron Evans, Steve Egly, Heather Roth, Bill Jones, Sarah Steele, Tom Eckman, Chanda Reigel

Andrea Agree called the meeting to order at 6:02 p.m.

**Nomination of Director to fill a vacancy**

Two freeholders submitted statements of interest and valid nomination forms for the seat in Historic Battle Ground; Joe Kline from Ward 2 and Rick Oliver from River Bluffs subdivision. Both applicants are eligible for election at the January 2021 annual meeting. Rick Oliver had a conflict and was unable to attend the meeting to respond to any questions from the directors.

**Motion** by Phil Baer to defer the appointment to August for time to have an interview committee meet with candidates before the election meeting, and report to the board. Second of Steve Hancock.

Andrea asked Phil if he would serve on the committee. Carol Watson also volunteered. Steve Hancock said he would serve if a third person is desired. There is general agreement that a few questions would be posed to the candidates and the committee share the information with the board. Call for the question, passed with unanimous vote. 6 Aye 0 Nay.

**Superintendent Report**

Dan Gemmecke said Tipmont is still installing fiber and the utility locate requests are still very high: 38 on Monday, 35 on Tuesday and 68 on Thursday last week. Another project locally is the state highway adding a third lane at State Road 43.

The motor at well #2 was hit by lightning. The motor was replaced and some of the cost is covered by insurance. A leaking valve at #2 wellhouse was replaced and a couple meters found to be failing were replaced.

A booster pump was engaged which had not been used in a while. There were some customers that noticed rusty water. The water mains from Shawnee Ridge and Hawks Nest out to Woods Edge were flushed.

The raw iron levels previously disclosed on the MROs (Monthly Report of Operation) were causing some confusion. Dan has been working with the state and following industry standard to make some adjustments to district MROs. IDEM doesn't list the EPA secondary standards in their rules. They are only listed in the U.S. EPA rules. Water is treated and tested as required by IDEM and EPA and meets or exceeds the standards. The iron level in the distribution system after treatment is not the same as the raw iron value before treatment.

The raw iron level is checked several times a month, but is no longer included on the MRO as it's not required. The values for ORA-CLE are included. This is the same practice as in Lafayette.

Here is the statement of the U.S. EPA on secondary standards;

*They [Environmental Protection Agency] set non-mandatory water quality standards for 15 contaminants. EPA does not enforce them, they are just guidelines to assist public water systems in managing drinking water for aesthetic, cosmetic, technical effects. These contaminants are not considered to present a risk to human health at the SMCL (Secondary Maximum Contaminant Level). Corrosion control is perhaps the single most cost-effective method a system can use to treat for iron. The secondary standards are on finished water.*

Dan checked and flushed several service lines for customers who called in for assistance. There are several more to do. The majority of the problems are on the customer's side. For example, in one location, the flow test at 55psi at 13 gpm confirmed the flow being delivered to the house. Something within the customer's house is plugged and only flowing about ½ gpm.

Andrea asked if the occurrence was isolated, Dan has not observed any clusters since the booster pump caused a spike in colored water.

#### **Financial Clerk**

There is a duplicate billing on Invoice 36 for \$33.27 in Accounts Receivable from October 2019 that should be removed from the books. The water was used for road construction on Warrior Drive.

**Motion** by Carol Watson to write off the duplicate invoice for water sales and tax on the travel meter. Second of Andrea Agree, motion passed with unanimous vote. 6 Aye 0 Nay

**Motion** by Ron Holladay to approve the register of claims June 18 to July 15 in the amount \$31,610.96. Second of Pam Gramelspacher, motion carried by unanimous vote. 6 Aye 0 Nay

Minutes of the previous meeting were distributed to directors for review in advance of the meeting.

**Motion** by Steve Hancock to approve the minutes of June 17 meeting as printed. Second of Andrea Agree, motion carried by unanimous vote.

Andrea presented corrections to minutes of April 15, which had included information that was not stated to the public in the meeting. The make and model of the tractor Dan recommended was not adequately shared at the public meeting. The clerk added the information to minutes for transparency, however Buffy Rogers raised the concern that this would be more transparently documented as an addendum. The minutes are amended to remove those details as a strikethrough and an addendum created to append to the minutes to provide the information.

**Motion** by Steve Hancock to approve the correction and addendum to the April 15 meeting minutes regarding the specific definition of the Kioti tractor and equipment. Second of Pam Gramelspacher, motion carried by unanimous vote.

Clerk Georgia Jones presented a draft 2021 budget showing adjustments to appropriations and adding a new line for transfers to cumulative maintenance. This line will identify the annual revenue transfer for capital projects in addition to the amounts needed for operations. The amounts are suggested and may be adjusted in the next few weeks after review by the Superintendent and Board. It is recommended to establish the 2021 salary ordinance for greater budget accuracy.

The August meeting of the Conservancy is after the date a decision would need to be made about restarting utility late fees or penalties.

**Motion** by Carol Watson to align with the Town of Battle Ground on the late fee waiver. Second of Ron Holladay, motion carried with unanimous vote. When Indiana cancels the health emergency and business is back to usual the utility late fee penalty will be applied only to the new bills.

### **Old Business**

**Invoice Cloud** - The software vendor Invoice Cloud will schedule a web meeting to show the utility how online account information could work and what the cost would be. Anyone interested should contact Beth Whitus for information about the meeting.

**Customer Call Log** - The utility call log was discussed. Andrea Agree would like to have a review of the customer service log reported at each board meeting. Carol Watson concurs. Phil Baer offered to help create a report. Steve Hancock agrees the topic should be a permanent item on the agenda to track customer comments and utility response.

**Motion** by Carol Watson to form a customer service committee for customer education and problem solving, to work with the [utility] office and report to the board on a monthly basis. Second of Ron Holladay, motion carried with unanimous vote.

**HR Manual** - Carol Watson reports the last two paragraphs will be completed in the next week or so, and then the document will be ready for final formatting. There were questions about timecards and paid time off that needed more attention. Directors will provide feedback prior to final adoption.

**Agreement with Town of Battle Ground** - James Miller shared with Andrea a draft of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to start the development of a custom document for the two utilities. Steve Hancock thought the agreement is important, and should be loosely stated to share and cooperate. All board members will review it for August.

**Tower Painting** - The Conservancy set aside money to pay for refinishing the surface on Tower #2. Because of the lead paint primer used on the dry surfaces (exterior) of the water tank, the tank will need to be curtained to contain the paint that comes off when blasting the rusted areas. This is driving the cost up significantly and it's hard to say how pitted and damaged the surface actually is. The tower is approximately 70 years old. The inside has been waxed a number of times and also needs to be cleaned. Because the cost is more than originally estimated, Dan asked the board to pass a resolution for an RFPQ, to gather data to look at all options and make the most responsible decision.

Steve Hancock asked if there was more than one painting estimate. Dan has two quotes and the painters were adamant that curtains must be used to protect nearby residents. The request for proposals and quotes, or RFPQ, will allow an informed decision about repainting or replacing.

### **New Business**

**Resolution** - To gather information for decision-making, the board must pass a resolution, "Adopting Indiana Code 5-23 and Taking Certain Other Actions Related Thereto." The resolution statements were paraphrased by the clerk to facilitate discussion. Andrea Agree emphasized the resolution does not commit the board to any course of action and is necessary to gather information to develop a correct plan with accurate costs.

**Motion** by to Steve Hancock to adopt Resolution 20-27 Adopting Indiana Code 5-23 and Taking Certain Other Actions Related Thereto. Second of Phil Baer, motion carried with unanimous vote.

## Guest Comment

Dan Gemmecke said the Celebration of Life for Kerry Smith will be Friday, July 17 at the Presbyterian Church in Oxford. Andrea and Ron Holladay have already presented Kerry's service recognition plaque to Loretta Smith on behalf of the board.

Andrea reported some questions submitted prior to the meeting. A few were answered during department reports. Others are represented here:

Audio recordings of meetings are archived for the purpose of creating minutes, but video is not due to the larger file size.

The additive Ora-Cle is still being used in the system.

In response to concern about bacteria on home water filters, Andrea stated that iron and manganese-loving bacteria are not dangerous but can cause an odor or taste that is not very pleasant. If water filters are changed according to manufacturer recommendations, bacterial growth on the filter will not be an issue.

Previous minutes referred to the concentrated iron in commercial filtration systems as "hazardous waste." Andrea mentioned this is likely a RCRA consideration. (Resource Conservation and Recovery Act) A large volume of iron sludge from a commercial system may contain trace amounts of other regulated contaminants due to the large volume of water filtered and would be treated as hazardous waste. A spent filter for home use is not subject to these considerations.

Ron Evans asked if there was a plan to resume distribution of water filters. In the past, the District purchased home filters which were sold to customers at cost. Steve Hancock said it took 5-8 years to distribute fifty units and the program ended prior to 2006. He asked if Ron thought the program should be started. Ron said he was not really sure. He believes more information about how to manage a home water system would be helpful. Steve and Andrea both commented on the need to change water filters regularly, based on water use in the home. Some filters last longer than others and many homeowners have different types which would make purchasing filters in bulk a challenge. All need to be changed according to manufacturer instructions. There is more information in the Frequently Asked Questions page of the website [www.water.battleground.in.gov](http://www.water.battleground.in.gov).

Ron Evans would like to see iron levels included on the MROs. Because it's not required, and was causing confusion, the superintendent has elected to not include this value.

Sarah Steele suggested that a member of the public be included in selecting the new board member. Steve Hancock pointed out that in a very short time the public will vote for the person they choose to continue on the board. Andrea is comfortable with the board making a selection at this time.

Andrea Agree mentioned that it is likely the board meetings will continue on Zoom and invited the public to reach out if questions remain that were not covered in the meeting.

Carol Watson thanked Andrea for her service to the district (as chairman) and emphasized that customers should contact the utility if there are any issues with water service.

**Motion** to adjourn by Phil Baer at 7:40 p.m.

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Georgia Jones, Financial Clerk

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Andrea Agree, Chairman of the Board