

DRAFT MINUTES
SHEPHERDSTOWN, WEST VIRGINIA
WATER & SANITARY BOARDS

December 1, 2022

Attendees: **Water Board** – J. Auxer (Mayor), J. Bresland, S. Kemnitzer (Chair), M. Godfrey, S. Knuppel
Sanitary Board – J. Auxer (Chair), H. Heyser, B. Keller
Town Staff – C. Coe, K. Shipley, F. Welch, C. Painter, R. Oviatt, B. Bennett
Engineer – J. Ekstrom
Town Council- C. Stroech (Water Board)

1. CALL TO ORDER.

The Water and Sanitary Boards meeting was called to order by J. Auxer at 12:30 pm.

2. MINUTES FROM PRIOR MEETING.

The proposed minutes of the October 27, 2022 were cited; H. Heyser motioned to approve, seconded by B. Keller and unanimously approved.

3. VISITORS-Clean Water West Virginia

J. Auxer introduced the representatives of the WV utility: B. Crislip and R. Lancaster. This was a follow up visit to the Shepherdstown Board(s) after presentations in April 2021 to enter into agreement with the Town for the purposes of using its utility mailing list to market its homeowner water connection insurance. This was subsequently agreed to. This meeting was to explain its continued commercial interest to invest in water utilities and described its on-going purchase of Jefferson County Water Services in/around Kearneysville. This will add an additional 4,000 customers to its existing 500,000 client base across WV. There was no action generated as a result of their comments made to the Board(s).

VISITORS-Jefferson County Board of Education Project Report

J. Auxer introduced the representative of JeffCo schools: Ms. D. Joy. She proceeded to clarify that the Board of Education will definitely be submitting an application for a water and sewer connection for the eventual new school being built just outside of Shepherdstown. She also clarified some confusion within their Board about both their process and the Town's requirements. There was a subsequent discussion on how to make the requisite application(s) and a reiteration by the Water and Sewer Boards to move expeditiously on the school system's behalf but that a complete application was needed. It was noted that obtaining the necessary easements (for the water and sewer lines) was a complicating factor for the applicant, significantly slowing the process. Members of both Water and Sewer boards offered more detailed information and it was concluded that the Town will provide further helpful information regarding easements and any reassurances to landowners about the value of granting these. Ms. Joy was clear in stating that the intention of the School Board was to cede full authority of operating/maintaining the lines to the Corporation of Shepherdstown once complete.

VISITORS- Jefferson County Health Department COVID Testing in Wastewater

J. Bresland introduced Dr. Reedy from the County Health Dept. and the general subject of testing wastewater sources for COVID (and other diseases). The State of WV has been using new technology to test for COVID via a federal grant to WVU, largely around Charleston, Morgantown, but now being extended to Charles Town as well. F. Welch was quite familiar with the program having participated in a Statewide ZOOM conference call. Dr. Reedy recommended that Shepherdstown avail itself of the grant funding to test for COVID. This matter was forwarded to the scheduled special Sewer Board meeting for a decision at the suggestion of the Mayor.

4. Financial Statements

The financial statements were reviewed and generated the following comments from across both boards:

- The new statements represent a very clear step forward in the financial reporting,
- Some of the column headings need to be clarified as to Year or YTD, etc.,
- Regarding questions posed (S.Knuppel and S.Kemnitzer) regarding the water and sewer bonds, it was noted that a fact sheet on all outstanding bonds was in preparation and would be made available soon. The intention will be to update these sheets quarterly or semiannually.
- Financial statements will get more timely as staff become more experienced and the backlog of reporting is worked through
- The Mayor and J.Bresland noted the need to further train Board members themselves on reading/interpreting financial statements. **This was made an action item for J. Auxer.**

5. FLOW AND QUALITY REPORTS.

5.a WATER

C. Coe reported that all tests were nominal and within expected ranges, all systems were operating normally. He further noted that he was leading the effort to complete a set of 1,000 on Town Run as a prelude to full approval from the State for use of the secondary source. J. Ekstrom noted that the water plant improvements are nearing completion; contractors completed wiring and panels for the return sludge pump controls and that sediment tank sludge will now be handled far more efficiently. However, completion still awaits ordered parts and pieces, a considerable supply chain issue that is affecting all projects.

5.b. SANITARY

K. Shipley noted that likewise, all wastewater tests and systems were well within compliance. F. Welch indicated that Nitrogen discharge to the Potomac river post-treatment was practically zero, a real testament to the efficiency of the system. Progress continues with the purchase/installation of a new sludge press. Both staff noted that there will be significant savings as they start implementation of the new wastewater sludge dewatering and disposal arrangements. K Shipley will prepare a full calculation to share as he gets more direct data.

6. UNFINISHED BUSINESS.

6.a FIRE HYDRANTS

The Hydrant at Cress Creek has been repaired; seven further hydrants are awaiting contracting to complete repairs.

6.b. WATER DISTRIBUTION SYSTEM IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

J. Ekstrom reported that he was impressed and enthusiastic about the quality of the Army Corps of Engineers' collaboration stating further "things seemed to be moving quickly for this kind of project overall". The Corps has already engaged an environmental firm that will ensure project compliance. Asked about how the Town or the Corps will handle cash flow for work, he indicated that the next step of the process was to sign a PMP (Project Management Plan) agreement with the Corps, and until those details are spelled out, he cannot answer that specific question.

6.c. PFAS

There was a quick review of new limits for PFAS being proposed by the EPA. Considerable concern was raised about the benefits/costs of such low limits as well as the inability of commercial labs to reliably complete such tests. Only one so far licensed facility exists in the US (in St. Louis). S.Kemnitzer raised the question of engaging the public on this topic. **Action Item: S.Kemnitzer will research public engagement and report back. Action Item: J.Bresland and M.Godfrey will do further research on PFAS and report back.**

6.d. Previous Action Items:

- Staff are still working on the purchase of a new vehicle for operations. **(pending)**
- Research concluded that the charges(costs) to the water treatment plant for backwash paid to the wastewater treatment plant are correct. **(done)**
- A review of past sewer services payments received were correctly coded **(done)**
- D.Decker response was prepared and sent re subject of State rules for maintaining and funding distinct reserve accounts for public utilities. **(done)**
- A distinct Water Balance Sheet was prepared and well accepted **(done)**

7 MAYOR'S REPORT.

Mayor Auxer directed that a special Sanitary Board meeting be held December 8 at 1:00 pm

8. NEXT MEETING DATE.

January 26, 2023, at 12:30PM. (at Town Hall)

9 ADJOURNMENT. J. Auxer adjourned the meeting at 2:05 PM.

Respectfully Submitted: M.Godfrey