**Town of Bath**

**Berkeley Springs Water Works (BSWW)**

**Water Committee**

**Minutes**

**In-Person Meeting**

**Monday, October 4, 2021**

The meeting was called to order at 4:30 PM.

Present were BSWW Director Ron Jainniney, Chairman of the Water Committee Chris Chapman, and Councilman Rose Jackson

Susan Trump and Janine Glasscock from the Foxglove Garden Club discussed with the Committee a water leak in the irrigation system at the Memorial Green on the east side of Fairfax Street. The Garden Club has received a repair estimate from a plumbing company of $4,500 to repair the leak. The Garden Club inquired as to whether BSWW would be willing to perform the leak repairs to help reduce the cost on the Garden Club. Jainniney explained that under West Virginia (WV) Public Service Commission (PSC) rules BSWW cannot do repairs on the customer’s side of the meter. He also explained that it would create an unworkable precedent since other customers would expect similar treatment. BSWW is responsible for repairs before and up to the meter. Though the Garden Club is responsible for maintenance of the water line, the Town of Bath pays for the water from this line. It was suggested that the Garden Club obtain additional quotes from at least two more plumbing companies and that they approach the Town Council about potential assistance from hotel/motel tax funds to cover the cost of the repairs.

Steve Buchanan from Thrasher Engineering provided an update on phase IV of the water line replacement project. Buchanan provided the following updated schedule for moving forward:

* Advertise in the Morgan Messenger on Wednesday, September 29 and October 6.
* Pre-Bid Conference (in person and virtual) at 10:00 AM on Tuesday, October 19 starting at Town Hall.
* Close questions at noon on Tuesday, October 28.
* Open bids at Town Hall on Thursday, November 10, at 2:00 PM.

Buchanan reported that the prices for materials are on the rise. We will need 15,000 feet of PVC for the project. There currently is a supply shortage for PVC pipe that likely will delay the beginning of work on the project until the Spring. He is concerned that this will impact the number of bids we received for the project since contractors would have to gamble as to what the price is now versus what it will be when the work is ready to move forward in the Spring. Buchanan proposed that the BSWW advertise and bid for the PVC pipe and buy it directly including an escalation clause to cover any potential overages, which will be capped at 20%. The Committee agreed for Buchanan to discuss this proposal with the WV Development Office to see if they would approve this approach. Buchanan will let the Committee know as soon as he receives a response from the Development Office.

Chapman discussed with the Committee the Fairview water tower lease agreement between BSWW and Morgan Wireless. Jainniney reported that he has signed the document amending the agreement and we are waiting for Ron Martin from Morgan Wireless to come into the office to sign his part.

The Committee discussed the next steps for moving forward with an RFP for preliminary engineering designs for the proposed project.to expand water lines south along Route 522 to Tabor Road. Chapman will communicate with County Commissioner Sean Forney and Warm Springs Public Service District Board President Mike Jenkins about a proposed advertisement seeking bids for the preliminary engineering design work and will report back to the Committee what he finds out.

Discussed moving the BSWW office system from ASI to another vendor. The determination has been made to go with Munibilling. Warm Springs Public Service District has agreed to go with this company. All office staff member, including Jainniney will be trained on use of the new system. The Committee approved Jainniney moving forward with finalizing negotiations with Munibilling and entering into a contract with them. Chapman will notify the Town Council of this decision and ask for the Council’s approval to change billing systems and to move forward with entering into a contract with Munibilling to handle water and garbage billing.

Discussed whether BSWW needs to continue to maintain Life and Accident and Dismemberment insurance policies for employees through the Dearborn Group given that BSWW provides employees $10,000 in life insurance through PEIA for $2.00 per employee per month. Town Clerk Sharron Corrick will be checking with PEIA to see what the cost for the BSWW would be to provide accident and dismemberment insurance for each employee and what the value of those insurance policies would be per employee.

Chapman discussed the draft position descriptions for the BSWW officer manager and water clerk positions shared with the Committee for review. The Committee requested that a signature block be added to the end of the descriptions for employees to acknowledged that they have received and read the descriptions and fully understand and agree to abide by them. Chapman will make this change and will touch bases with the Town Clerk to see if she has any additional revisions that she would like made to the descriptions.

Discussed whether BSWW has sufficient signage for customers coming into the office to let them know that we have a copy of the law, PSC rules, and the schedule of rates available for customer inspection. Jainniney noted that all this information is provided to customers in the tariff given to all new customers, which lays out the PSC rules, State laws, and BSWW policies. The tariff also is available for inspection anytime on the BSWW webpage on the Town website.

Discussed BSWW personnel issues. Jainniney reported that the one particularly promising candidate he had for the open water operator position has bowed out. Jainniney currently has one other candidate he is waiting to hear back from on the candidate’s interest. Otherwise, we have no new applicants at this time. The position is still being advertised by the WV Rural Water Association.

The meeting was adjourned.