

STATE OF WEST VIRGINIA, COUNTY OF UPSHUR, CITY OF BUCKHANNON, TO WIT:

A special meeting of the Buckhannon Water Board was held on Thursday, September 29, 2022, at 6:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers of City Hall. The following individuals were in attendance (GTM – GoToMeeting):

Robbie Skinner	Mayor	Present
Randy Sanders	City Recorder	Absent
Dave Thomas	Board Member	Present
Dave McCauley	Board Member	Present
Don Nester	Board Member	Present
Erasmo Rizo	Board Member	Present
Jay Hollen	City Engineer	Present - GTM
Jerry Arnold	Director of Public Works	Present - GTM
Amberle Jenkins	Assistant Recorder/Director of Finance	Present
Beth Broschart	MyBuckhannon	Present
Alice Teets	Utility Clerk/Minute Taker	Present

Guests: Mt Hope Water Association-Deborah Cvechko, Laurie Adams, Nicholas Cutright, Donnie Tenney, Brian Elmore; Elkins Road P.S.D-Carolyn Douglas, Linzy Wilson; Region VII PDC Shane Whitehair; Hodgesville P.S.D-Robert Wright, Tennerton P.S.D.- Bob Heater, Terry Gould (HPSD/TPSD), and Jim Lawrence.

City of Buckhannon Water Board
6:00pm at City Hall in Council Chambers
Special Meeting Agenda for Thursday, September 29, 2022

- A. Call to Order
 - A.1 Moment of Silence
 - A.2 Pledge to the Flag of the United States of America
- B. Recognized Guests
 - B.1 Adrian Public Service District
 - B.2 Elkins Road Public Service District
 - B.3 Mt Hope Water Association
 - B.4 Hodgesville Public Service District
 - B.5 Tennerton Public Service District
- C. Discussion Water System Operations
 - Brief Overview of the City Water Plant & Function
 - Brief Overview of City Water Plant Budget
 - ARPA Funding and Plans in the City
 - ARPA Funding and Plans (in the P.S.D.'s)
 - Any Planned Expansion Plans/Projects?
 -
- D. Adjournment

POSTED 09/26/2022

- A. Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order by Mayor Skinner who asked all to join him in a moment of silence. He then led the attendees in the Pledge to the Flag of the United States of America. The purpose of this meeting is to make sure that everyone is on the same page. We have all heard that communication in an issue. We have all received ARPA money, and this is an opportunity to learn about each other.
- B. Recognized Guests:** Recognized Guests will have opportunity to comment.
 - B.1 Adrian Public Service District**
 - B.2 Elkins Road Public Service District**
 - B.3 Mt Hope Water Association**
 - B.4 Hodgesville Public Service District**
 - B.5 Tennerton Public Service District**

C. C. Discussion Water System Operations:

- **Brief Overview of the City Water Plant & Function:** Kelly Arnold gave a brief overview of the water plant. Our plant can only do so much. It will need rehabilitation. We are counted as a Class 4 Operation because every customer that is served by a PSD that purchases water from us is counted as a consumer/customer of The City of Buckhannon.

- **Brief Overview of City Water Plant Budget:** Amby Jenkins, Finance Director, gave a brief overview of the City of Buckhannon Water Plant Budget. Of note, our last increase was in August of 2021. COB recently utilized a Revenue Review Committee to review the wages of employees in all departments.

PSD meeting – 9-29-22

Amby notes

Balances: Aug 31, 2022

MM/checking \$705,543.95

Working Capital and Depreciation \$618,436

Savings \$255,900

The last rate increase was August 2021

The current budget in effect as of July 1st is \$2,688,000.

In it we have budgeted for:

- Replacement of Stub Shafts in the plant
- Fuel, oil costs have increased, so we may need to do a budget revision before the end of the year to reflect that
- Chemical costs, Telemetry costs and material costs have increased 20%
- Purchase of a Water Turbidity Meter
- Purchase for 1/4th the cost of a lowboy trailer. All of our departments (Water, Sewer, Waste and Street) will share use of this trailer.
- We also budgeted for costs to inspect water tanks.

We have a lease purchasing program for our rolling stock of service and plant trucks through a program in which we trade the vehicle off before it is too deteriorated and use the equity from the trade for a new leased vehicle. This actually worked out well for us this year since the used vehicles were being purchased for a good value.

For other long-term debt, we have the Water Bonds with a balance of \$3, 000,000. But we will soon pay off the plant SCADA equipment.

The Water Superintendent has a wish list of items we will address as we can.

- Water Plant doors & window replacements
- Chemical Pumps
- Water Line Projects along Island Avenue, Lightburn St, Knollwood and Deer Creek.
- Leak Detection Equipment
- Lime/Soda Ash Feeders
- Purchase of a mini excavator
- Plant building repairs for Roof and Electrical upgrades
- Master Meter at WVWC

One of our struggles has been retention of Class 4 Water Plant Operators. Our water plant is considered a class 4 plant.

For Plant Operators we have:

- Two – Class 4 plant operators
- Two – Class 3 plant operators
- Two – plant operators in training

For service personnel we have:

- Two – class 1 service personnel
- Five – class 4 service personnel

We have recently been evaluating salaries for all city departments. Employees skills and certifications were evaluated and the supervisor compared wages to similar jobs in other communities. The current recommendation will increase the collective wages for that, approximately \$78,000.

A few months ago, we upgraded a software we use to include backflow prevention and tracking and inventory.

We use Tyler Technologies for Incode software that handles our core software for payroll, general ledger and billing. We can divide these software costs among General Fund, Water, Sanitary and Waste Departments.

The new computer server was paid off in May 2022. Cyber attacks are always a concern. We contract with a vetted IT vendor to assist with computer security and maintenance issues and as a consultant for hardware and software selection.

We also divide the costs for office staff and supplies among these other departments as well.

We have budgeted extra for the lead and copper compliance. I think we are all a little unsure of how this will ultimately impact our budgets. We have sent out letters out, but we are not getting an over whelming response.

We seek assistance from an outside CPA to help complete our financial reports and our PSC reports. We are audited each year by another outside firm that is certified by the State Auditor’s Office. If we see the need to look at a rate increase, we also contract a different outside CPA to do a rate study. We like to have separate independent accountant’s looking our records. I find it helpful to have other sets of eyes on the records.

We are also getting ready to have the water and sewer plant facilities appraised. Our insurance company has suggested this. If there were a claim it would be difficult to determine a value in this specialty type of facility.

Are staff and engineers are also currently evaluating our entire water plant for needed upgrades.

Gallons Consumption 20-21 fy Tlt 623,222,100
Water customers 263,248,000
PSD’s 359,974,100

Adrian 108,998,800
Elkins Rd 79,964,200
Hodgesville 109,082,800
Mt Hope 61,928,300

- **ARPA Funding and Plans in the City:** City Engineer Jay Hollen shared that the city received \$2.4 million in ARPA funding. The majority of which will be used in water and sewer projects; approximately \$1.3 in sewer and \$1.2 in seven water projects.
- **ARPA Funding and Plans (in the P.S.D.’s):** Shane Whitehair, Region VII PDC, briefly discussed ARPA plans with P.S.D.s. Caroline Douglas, Elkins Road PS.D., said they received \$253,000 for four projects, including replacing hydrants and leak detection on lines. Terry Gould, Hodgesville P.S.D., said they received \$800,000, which will help with an \$8 million project of rehabilitating and replacing service lines and hope to bid soon. There is also an extension to Upper Pecks Run. He also spoke regarding Tennerton PS.D., which will be working on the Orr Street pump station and manhole rehabilitation. Mt. Hope Water Association received \$290,000. They will be working with Region VII to make sure they are in full compliance.
- **Any Planned Expansion Plans/Projects?**
There was a good discussion between all parties. Also mentioned was that some for-profit entities have approached the city and other P.S.D.s regarding purchasing. The city has no plans to sell it to a for-profit company. That could conceivably raise our customer’s cost 300-400%. Mayor Skinner stressed that we want to know if there is anything that we could do better or help with. He also stressed that we need to be open in communication especially with providing our minutes to the P.S.D.s and the P.S.D.s sharing their minutes with us. This is important so that we can plan, not just about water, but also about chemicals, utilities and supplies. It was also mentioned that the PSC suggested smaller increases more frequently.

Mayor Skinner closed with thanking everyone for attending and suggesting that we have meetings like this approximately every six months just to “check in” with each other.

D. Adjournment: The Chair adjourned the meeting at 7:03 p.m.

Mayor Robert Skinner III _____

City Recorder Randall H. Sanders _____