

I. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 5:02 p.m. by Board President Charln Stewart. Board directors in attendance were Carl Jeanise, Charln Stewart, Gloria Thompson, Jerry Burnaman and Robert (Bub) Sepulvado. It was noted that a quorum was present. Treasurer Tina Barrett and advisors to the Board, Mike Meyer and Mike Stewart were also present.

2. The November 12 and December 2 meeting minutes were approved as written following a motion by Director Thompson and seconded by Director Burnaman.

3. Directors Report

- President
 - A Special Board Directors' Meeting was held on December 2 to review several special items:
 - the recently received rate study as well as discuss to review Draft Rate Study
 - The draft report calls for a 51% increase in order to meet the requirements of the financial model. That calls for an annual ratio of expenditures to income ratio of 1:1.15. Revenues must be increased for the numbers to work.
 - A discussion on employee bonuses was held and a decision was made to forgo bonuses this year for financial reasons.
 - A discussion on the possibility of hiring a business manager was held and this item was tabled.
 - A discussion on employee performance reviews was held and a subcommittee of the board is drafting a proposal with a target to implement at the beginning of 2025.
- Treasurer
 - November financials look normal with year-to-date revenues slightly up
 - Year to date maintenance expenses are up significantly
 - There were numerous comments from attendees/members about the financials and several requested copies of the financial statements. The board agreed to make these available to members.
 - A motion was made by Director Sepulvado and seconded by director Thompson to accept the November treasurers report.
- Advisors
 - There were no advisor updates this meeting.

4. Operators Report

- Tony Farrel reported that the job postings for the vacant operator position as requested by the board have not been ordered yet.
- Tony spoke to the engineering firm working on the plant upgrades and they are on hold until discussions with the town of Many are complete.
- Two new meters were installed in November. There are 881 active meters.
- There were several complaints filed in November, and they were all related to high water bills.

- SRA water purchases for the month were 6.8 million gallons.
- No plant run time was available.
- No total gallons metered report available.
- There were numerous comments and questions from members during the operator report:
 - Q: Who is monitoring fire hydrant flushing? Do you have a schedule for flushing the system? A: Pendleton Water Association has no fire hydrants on the system. You may be referring to flush valves at the end of dead legs. These are flushed periodically as operators are working on the system. There is currently no schedule for flushing.

5. Water Rate Discussion

- Board President Stewart provided a background on the water plant and the board decision to seek a State Water Sector Program Grant for funds to upgrade the plant to meet current water quality standards. This grant required a system rate study which the board received in draft on November 19. This rate study resulted in a requirement to increase current rates to meet the necessary financial stability
- There were numerous comments and questions from members during the water rate discussion:
 - Q: Why weren't we told about the purchase of land that was made to upgrade the plant? A: The need to purchase additional land was identified, evaluated and ultimately approved over several regular monthly board meetings which are open to all members.
 - Q: How much land was purchased? A: Three acres were purchased.
 - Q: How are people on fixed incomes supposed to handle the rate increase? Can we come up with a plan to help people who lack the means to handle the rate increase? A: The board agreed and will evaluate options to address these questions.
 - Q: Were signatures required on submitted ballots in the recent board member elections? A: Signatures were not required on submitted ballots. A member name or account number was required.

6. Adjournment:

A motion was made by Charln Stewart and seconded by Gloria Thompson to adjourn the meeting. The meeting was adjourned at 7:00 PM.

The next regular meeting of the PWA Board will be at the PWA Water Plant on Tuesday, January 21, 2024, starting at 5:00 PM.