



3847 Country Manor West - P.O. Box 18 - North Vernon, Indiana 47265

Office: (812) 346-5500 - Fax: (812) 346-0838 - www.JNRU.org

Jennings Northwest Regional Utilities

Meeting Minutes

Jennings Northwest Regional Utilities

March 8, 2023

President Brian Hatfield called the meeting to order at 5:15 PM.

Roll call was performed. The following members were present: Brian Hatfield, Marshall Jenkins (5:30), Mike Gerth, Dale Boyd. Also in attendance: Jeff Maddux (Utilities Superintendent), Andrew Klescht (Utilities Manager), Debbie Brown (Auditor), Cindy Summerfield (Office Manager) Kayla Zimmerman (Attorney), and (0) members of the public.

Approval Of Minutes:

The February 2023 board minutes were presented. Mike Gerth made a motion to approve the minutes as written. Dale Boyd seconded the motion. (3-0).

Utilities Superintendent:

Jeff Maddux presented a verbal report. Jeff informed the board that we recently had a large rain event, which in the past would have caused JNRU to violate for the entire month for ammonia violations. Since the actuator was replaced and properly implemented with the Scada system, we did not violate at all during this event.

Jeff then spoke about the Hycor and the idea of moving all pretreatment permanently outside. Currently we treat all incoming raw inside the headworks building, the hydrogen sulfide gases released in the building cause heavy corrosion to all components of the building from wiring to motors and anything not stainless steel. The costs associated with currently trying to keep the headworks building in a workable condition are quickly increasing. Our current Hycor is used in emergencies only but is not well suited for permanent implementation due to many factors. It's current age is 26 years, the heat traces that ensure it could operate in the cold conditions of winter are unrepairable and the screening it performs are ¼ inch and the current screening is 1 mm. The new Hycor would be a 3 mm screening process and have the ability to properly work in winter months and it would have the ability to be worked on in a more modular fashion. Cost was discussed at approximately \$81,500. This issue was tabled until further financing can be discussed.



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Sludge Issues:

Brian Hatfield next brought up sludge removal and the agreed order from IDEM. There have been multiple discussions regarding this issue recently. The first avenue which we plan to investigate is the feasibility of applying for/renewing our land application permit from the early 2000's and doing land application to help us meet the agreed order to remove the sludge from the lagoons. The county commissioners and county council has made a preliminary decision to allocate up to \$500,000 to purchase a parcel of farmland from JNRU. Brian has met with a commissioner, Matt Sporleder, and discussed land applying, there is a company who does it and could do ours for \$.02 per gallon. The amount they could process each year would be limited by the amount of land to apply to, we currently own 45 tillable acres. All board members discussed the need to investigate grants and other funding avenues to help us achieve our goals.

Land:

Brian stated the land appraisal for the 48-acre parcel has been returned. The initial appraisal came back at \$448,000.00, while the county has a potential interest in buying the parcel, they will have to do independent appraisals of the land. If JNRU were to move forward with a land sale, one of the high priorities would be a new Hycor and making a substantial water bond payment. If the county would buy the land they have shown an interest in allowing us to also use the parcel to do a land application of sludge as well. For this upcoming season it was stated it may be our best option to proceed with doing a one-year lease agreement with the previous lessee of the land T&S Farms. Mike Gerth made the motion to enter into a one year lease with Tom Low of T&S Farms if T&S Farms is willing to enter a one year lease. Dale Boyd seconded the motion and the motion passed (4-0). Brian Hatfield will reach out to the county council concerning the purchase of the land and/or other forms of assistance.

Utilities Manager:

Andrew Klescht presented a verbal report. The first item of business was the creation and implementation of a public Facebook page for the Utility. This page will post notices such as boil water advisories, office closures, and important billing information. This page would be controlled by at least one board member, the Utility manager, and another member of staff. Marshall Jenkins made a motion to approve the Facebook page, Mike Gerth seconded the motion and the motion passed (4-0). The annual pool fill adjustment form was next, this allows for a one time sewer adjustment for individuals wanting to fill a pool each summer. The 2023 form was submitted. Mike Gerth made a motion to approve the pool fill adjustment, Marshall Jenkins seconded the



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motion and the motion passed (4-0). A quote from Ni-Tech to upgrade our networking and network security was presented. Mike Gerth made the motion to approve the quote and was seconded by Marshall Jenkins, passed (4-0). Andrew then discussed the need to proceed with creating a website domain hosting account with Go-Daddy. This will be required for us or a third party to assume since Wolf Services will no longer be doing this portion in the coming months. Andrew suggested we create the account ourselves. Marshall Jenkins made the motion to create the account and pay for it using the credit card since it cannot be invoiced. Dale Boyd seconded the motion and the motion passed (4-0). There was an OVO payments issue, OVO made an error and requested JNRU to return 2 \$25 payments. According to our agreement with OVO since the issue was not discovered within the required 60 day time frame we were not obligated to return the funds but we could if we so chose too. Andrew recommended to not return the funds as it would cause undue stress to the customers to have more money back to their bills. Mike Gerth made the motion to Not return the funds to OVO, Marshall Jenkins seconded motion and the motion passed (4-0). Andrew then gave a brief update on the status of the Verizon tower, preliminary studies show it may go next to the maintenance building between the two hills, will share more updates as they become available. In the search for new work trucks, currently Ford is unable to price Ford Mavericks. Currently F-150's are prohibitively priced. Andrew then informed the board we will most likely be making the switch to comcast for our stations analog land lines and no longer using Frontier which would result in a savings of near \$200 a month. The AMR meter reading report was presented, this is a potential plan for the future to reduce labor costs associated with meter reading and data pulling.

Treasurer:

Mike Gerth presented a verbal report. Claims were presented. Marshall Jenkins made a motion to approve the claims as presented. Dale Boyd seconded the payment of claims. (4-0).

Old Business:

The sink holes on 300 N phase 1 were discussed. After further investigation it appears that all sink holes are at or near the new city sewer laterals. Russell Vaught came over and investigated with Jeff and agreed it appeared to be a settling issue. Brian will reach out to the city utilities board.

The amended by-laws were presented and read in. This amendment allows for the changing of location and time of board meetings. Marshall Jenkins made a motion to adopt the amended by-laws and Dale Boyd seconded the motion. (4-0).



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New Business:

There was discussion regarding setting an **executive session** to discuss the water bond. Marshall Jenkins made the motion to set a special meeting for Wednesday March 22, 2023 at 4 PM at the JNRU office. Dale Boyd seconded the motion and the motion passed **(4-0)**.

The vacant board member position was discussed. Three members of the public submitted an application and are to be submitted to the Jennings County Commissioners for consideration. The board will present a preference of Judy Stevens. Dale Boyd made the motion to submit the list for consideration and Marshall Jenkins seconded the motion and the motion passed **(4-0)**.

Marshall Jenkins discussed the need to investigate rate studies for water and wastewater with the potential to see rates raised by our vendors. Andrew will investigate further on price and timetables.

Adjournment:

Marshall Jenkins made the motion to adjourn, and Dale Boyd seconded the motion **(4-0)**. The meeting was adjourned at 6:48 PM.

Members

Signatures

Brian Hatfield

Marshall Jenkins

Mike Gerth

Dale Boyd

Vacant

ATTEST: April 12, 2023

Marshall Jenkins, Secretary