

SEELEY LAKE WATER DISTRICT
MONTHLY BOARD MEETING
March 25, 2021

Attendance:

Charlie Hahn	President	PRESENT
Todd Johnson	Vice President	PRESENT
Kris Martin	Director	PRESENT
Chris Lorentz	Director	ABSENT
Freda Rathbun	Director	PRESENT
Vincent Chappell	General Manager	PRESENT
Felicity Derry	Office Manager	PRESENT
Tammy Lewis	Operator	PRESENT

OPENING:

The meeting was brought to order at 5:34pm. The meeting was held via a conference call, due to COVID-19.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

None.

MINUTES:

February 25, 2021

The minutes for the board meeting held on February 25, 2021 were presented to the Board for review.

Martin moved to accept the February 25, 2021 minutes as presented. Rathbun seconded the motion, which was then passed.

FINANCIAL REPORTS:

February 2021

Johnson noted that he had reviewed the financials with Chappell earlier. The Water Sales income was pretty good for this time of the year. Income and expenses just about broke even for the month. With Debt Retirement included there was a profit of approximately \$8,000 for February. Chappell added that the construction services stemmed from repairing a fire hydrant that somebody had backed over.

Johnson had reviewed the accounts, which all looked good. Funds for the new chart recorder had been transferred out of the Capital Projects account.

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Johnson moved to accept the February 2021 Financial Reports as presented. Rathbun seconded the motion, which was then passed.

DELINQUENCY REPORT:

March 2021

Chappell reviewed the delinquency report for the Board.

Rathbun moved to accept the March 2021 Delinquency Report. Martin seconded the motion, which was then passed.

OPERATIONS REPORT:

March 2021

Chappell informed the Board that a good portion of time had been spent on the meter request for proposals. Routine maintenance was performed on the chlorine stations and the new chart recorder was installed. The flush station issue was figured out and resolved. The skid steer will have routine maintenance performed shortly.

The water loss report had actually dropped, even though the percentage had increased to 19%, which was due to less water being sold at this time of year.

Johnson moved to accept the March 2021 Operations Report. Rathbun seconded the motion, which was then passed.

OLD BUSINESS:

Water Meter Replacement Update

Chappell reviewed the bids, which were listed 1-8. The last two were for mechanical meters, which were not what the District had requested and were also the two highest bids. The District was interested in an ultrasonic type meter that would read at low flow rates and had no moving parts. Also, for a system that had reasonably priced reading equipment, reasonable annual costs and a good warranty.

Kamstrup #1 bid cost \$198,862.51 and could be converted to a tower system. This bid had ultrasonic meters for all meter sizes. The yearly maintenance cost was \$1,100. The Kamstrup warranty was the best at 20-years across the board.

The Neptune bid was for ultrasonic brass meters throughout and could be read with a mobile unit, a laptop or with an android phone. These meters did not read as low flows as Kamstrup. The Neptune bid was \$198,328.96 and could be converted to a tower system. The annual maintenance cost was \$2,500 and had a 10-year warranty, with a 10-year prorated discount program.

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The Master Meter bid was for ultrasonic meters that could be read with a laptop and android devices. These meters did not read as low flows as Kamstrup. The annual maintenance cost was the lowest at \$960.00. The Master Meter bid was \$188,883.00 and could be converted to a tower system. Their warranty also had a 10-year prorated discount program.

The Kamstrup #2 bid did not have the ability to convert to a tower system, but otherwise was the same as their first bid. The cost of this bid was \$142,217.86.

The Sensus bid utilized magmeters for the smaller sizes, which were similar to ultrasonic. However, the larger meters were mechanical. These larger meters accounted for most of the water loss. The annual maintenance was approximately \$2,500. The Sensus bid was \$160,254.59 and could be used as a tower system. Their warranty for the battery was 15-years, with a 5 year prorate discount program.

The Badger Meter bid was plastic ultrasonic meters for the smaller sizes, with mechanical meters for the larger sizes. The loss rate was higher than Kamstrup. The annual maintenance was approximately \$1,600. The Badger Meter bid was \$148,687.32. Their warranty was 10 years, with a 10 year prorate discount program. Badger Meter's track record with the District was still a concern.

Chappell recommended the Kamstrup bid #1, with the tower option. Potentially the District could secure some the COVID infrastructure money and use that to add a tower later. This would send the readings to the office, which would eliminate the need to go out and read meters. It would also send alarms and would enable the District to respond quicker. The bid was for ultrasonic meters for all sizes, the reading equipment was versatile with a reasonable cost, the meters read at extremely low flow rates, read temperature, had a long data log, the annual maintenance fees were low and they had the best warranty.

Chappell had reviewed the bids with all of the Board members prior to the meeting. As Chris Lorentz was unable to attend the meeting, he had emailed his opinions on the bids and accepted Chappell's recommendation of the Kamstrup bid #1, with the tower option.

Discussion followed regarding the two main differences between the two Kamstrup bids was that the first could convert to a tower system and collecting the data log could be done wirelessly, while with the second you could neither. Also, that because replacing the failing meters was considered maintenance the District would pay for the new meters and there would be no additional cost to the customer.

Johnson questioned if the Board felt that \$50,000 extra was worth being able to upgrade to a tower later, so as to not drive around reading meters and enable a quicker response. Discussion followed on the benefits of the Kamstrup bid #1, which would mean that employees would not have to crawl under homes or dig up meter pits, the data was accessible even when a customer was not home and the reading equipment was easy to use. With a tower system the District could potentially respond to leaks within a day, which could have huge savings. There had been instances where leaks started just after the meters were read and ran for almost a month, until the meters were read again and showed up on the report. By which point the home had been flooded. Installing a tower may have to wait for a little bit, but the first Kamstrup bid gave the District that option in the future.

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Lewis added that customers were under the misconception that we know when a break happens, when we don't unless it were to coincide with reading meters. This would be a step in the direction of a quicker response, resulting in much smaller leak adjustments, therefore saving the District money and ultimately better for the customer.

Johnson suggested that if the District spent the extra money for the tower capability, that a tower should be installed as soon as it made financial sense. Martin added that even without the tower it would save on labor as you would not have to find the meter and dig it up. Discussion followed regarding alleviating the need to crawl under homes, accessing vacant summer homes and being able to answer customer questions much quicker. There were no further questions from the Board.

Rathbun moved to accept the Kamstrup #1 bid. Martin seconded the motion, which then passed unanimously. (Chris Lorentz did vote for this bid via email.)

John McDonald

Chappell noted that the Board had discussed the request to bring this property on Wild Turkey Court back into the District and tentatively approved it at a previous meeting. Chappell had reviewed this with the Missoula County surveyor and attorney and confirmed that this property was out of the District. An annexation request needed to be submitted for the Board to approve. Then the Board would approve a resolution accepting that property into the District.

Discussion followed on when these properties were annexed out of the District, the bond debt that had not been paid by these properties and what fees would apply if these few remaining properties were annexed back in. It was noted that his property also owed a prorate.

NEW BUSINESS:

None

CORRESPONDENCE:

James Hensley

Chappell noted that Lewis had found this leak after reading the meters and notified the owners. The owners had fixed the leak immediately and were requesting a leak adjustment. This was their first leak adjustment request.

Johnson moved to approve the leak adjustment in the amount of \$706.15/290,597 gallons on this one occasion. Martin seconded the motion, which was then passed unanimously.

Mary Stuart

Chappell noted that Lewis had found this leak after reading the meters and notified the owner. It was quite a chore for Lewis to get the water shut off. The leak was fixed immediately and this account had

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not received a leak adjustment in the past.

Rathbun moved to approve the leak adjustment in the amount of \$354.45/145,866 gallons on this one occasion. Martin seconded the motion, which was then passed.

NEXT SCHEDULED MEETING:

The next Board meeting is scheduled for April 29, 2021.

ADJOURNMENT:

Rathbun moved to adjourn the meeting at 6:23pm.

Attest

Charlie Hahn, President

-And-

| SEAL |

Vince Chappell, General Manager