

**SEELEY LAKE – MISSOULA COUNTY WATER DISTRICT**  
**MONTHLY BOARD MEETING**  
**March 30, 2023**

**Attendance:**

Charlie Hahn	President	<b>PRESENT</b>
Todd Johnson	Vice President	<b>PRESENT</b>
Kris Martin	Director	<b>ABSENT</b>
Chris Lorentz	Director	<b>PRESENT</b>
Freda Rathbun	Director	<b>PRESENT*</b>
Vincent Chappell	General Manager	<b>PRESENT</b>
Felicity Derry	Office Manager	<b>PRESENT</b>
Tammy Lewis	Operator	<b>PRESENT</b>
John Richards	Customer	<b>PRESENT**</b>

**\* Arrived at 5:32pm**

**\*\* Left at 5:42 pm**

**OPENING:**

Lorentz moved to open the meeting at 5:30pm. Johnson seconded the motion. The meeting was the Water District Plant.

Johnson moved to amend the agenda to move John Richards to the top of the agenda under Public Comment. Lorentz seconded the motion, which was then passed.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS:**

Chappell explained that John Richards wanted to discuss the \$5 late fees that had been assessed to his five accounts, which had now been paid. The late fee had been waived on these five accounts in June, 2022, so this would be the second time that the late fees would be waived. There was discussion as to when the payment last June had been dropped off at Rovero's, how frequently the District picks up those payments and when the late fees were assessed. John Richards proposed that he would pay his bills a month or two in advance and that the District would then waive the late fees totaling \$25.00. There was discussion regarding John Richards paying his bills ahead.

Johnson moved to waive the late fee and for John Richards to pay his bill two months in advance. Chappell reviewed the current rule for waiving late fees. The Board discussed the rule and waiving these late fees. There was no second for this motion, so the motion failed.

03/30/2023

Regular Monthly Meeting

Seeley Lake – Missoula County Water District

## **MINUTES:**

### December 29, 2022

Johnson moved to approve the December 29, 2022 minutes of the Regular Board Meeting as presented. Rathbun seconded the motion, which was then passed.

## **FINANCIAL REPORTS:**

### December 2022

Johnson noted that he had met with Chappell to review the financial reports. The Water Sales income had exceeded budget by \$7,000. Overall Operating Income was slightly below budget. Expenses were relatively low for the year. At year-end Operations was approximately \$34,000 in the hole, noting that the bond income would end once the bonds had been paid off.

The bond payments had been made, which had lowered the balance in the DNRC Loan Payable account. Accounts Payable still had a credit due to the Prepaid propane. At year-end nothing was way out of budget. Chappell added that they had tried to keep the expenses as low as possible and overall, it had been a good year.

Johnson noted that he had reviewed the bank and credit card statements.

### January 2023

Johnson noted that the Water Sales income was very good for the month. Chappell added that the Water Sales income for January was approximately \$4,000 more than December, due to the rate increase and a couple of leaks. Johnson noted that the expenses were under budget for the month. The Licenses and Fees expense was high; however, that was an annual payment. For January, Operations had a small loss of \$2,000. All being well, in the higher water usage months that could keep operations above water, without factoring in the bond income.

Johnson noted that all of the accounts looked good. On the credit card statement, there were two minor receipts that Chappell had misplaced.

### February 2023

Johnson noted that the Water Sales income for February was over budget. Even considering the high utility expense, the expenses for the month were below budget. Chappell added that it was one of the few Februaries that we made more money than we had spent.

Johnson noted that the accounts and financials all looked good.

Johnson moved to accept the December 2022; January & February 2023 Financial Reports as presented. Lorentz seconded the motion, which was then passed.

03/30/2023

Regular Monthly Meeting

Seeley Lake – Missoula County Water District

## **DELINQUENCY REPORT:**

### March 2023

Chappell reviewed the Delinquency Report for the Board.

Johnson moved to accept the March 2023 Delinquency Report. Lorentz seconded the motion, which was then passed.

## **OPERATIONS REPORT:**

### January, February & March 2023

Chappell informed the Board that during January there had been a lot of snow plowing and the snow had been removed from around the fire hydrants. January 5<sup>th</sup> we were notified of the first frozen service line, on the customer's side. The owner paid to have the District thaw the line. There were issues with the chlorine stations, which were being resolved. A customer on Double Arrow Phase 1A had frozen pipes. The owner repaired everything and the water is now back on. Chappell had been working on the UVT unit. Lewis went out to read meters after the water loss had jumped up. There was a huge leak behind the fire hall on a customer's service line, caused by a contractor not putting the fittings back together properly.

In February there was a frozen line at Summit Insurance. It was frozen on their side. They did not have sufficient heat tape. Unfortunately, a home burned down. There was more than adequate water supply and pressure. Lewis and Derry worked on the inventory. A broken pump was replaced at chlorine station. More snow was plowed. The parts arrived for the UVT, so that was back up and running.

The fire hydrants were plowed again. Lorentz noted that he had received a complaint about the fire hydrant being buried at the end of Overland Trail. Chappell had received a verbal complaint from a customer, who had been keeping that fire hydrant clear all winter, which he greatly appreciated. Chappell had spoken to the contractor that plowed the roads and they were supposed rectify the issue, which unfortunately never happened. The chlorine stations had issues again, so they had been working on that and the stations are working better now.

On February 6<sup>th</sup> a customer's service froze on Morrell Creek Drive, which was the first time there had been an issue in that area. It was frozen on the District's side. We dug it up and then thawed the line out. February 13<sup>th</sup> we were notified of frozen mainlines at Pine Drive and Peacemaker Place. Then on March 22<sup>nd</sup> Wild Turkey Court froze. A company brought in thawing equipment that utilized ground heat, and expected to thaw the line in four days. They set them up at Pine Drive and Peacemaker Place. After two days the boiler on Pine Drive unit blew up, so they took that one away and did not charge the District for that. After two days the one on Peacemaker had issues, which they fixed and got back working again. After six days of thawing, we gave up and started digging up the mains. The mains were thawed and then put back together through Saturday. Then on Monday the last main was thawed.

03/30/2023

Regular Monthly Meeting

Seeley Lake – Missoula County Water District

Chappell added that Peacemaker Place had not frozen before. It was a dead end with only one full-time customer on it. Wild Turkey Court was also a dead end line, with low flow and nobody was trickling water. The Board discussed approaching customers in these areas, before next winter, about trickling their water for three months. The Board discussed writing off the extra water usage, for people that had been trickling their water. Discussion followed on how to avoid the lines freezing in the future. Chappell added that he had offered to put the affected customers into a hotel, they could pick up free drinking water at the store and Lewis had taken some five-gallon buckets of water to customers so they could flush their toilets.

Chappell noted that the water loss had spiked badly for the last couple of months. There were a couple of water leak adjustments this month and a contractor issue. The contractor was working on a sewer line and in the process cut through two water lines. At which point Chappell turned off the water to those accounts. The contractor repaired those lines properly. They then cut through two more water lines. The contractor assumed these lines were abandoned (actually the water had been turned off previously), therefore the contractor did not repair them properly, using black irrigation fittings. By the end of January both Chappell and Lewis had been out trying to find the water loss of 1.4 million gallons. Chappell review the water flow chart for that time. Chappell calculated the water loss from that leak and sent the contractor an invoice.

After the leaks were fixed the flow had dropped, but then climbed again. Then in February Chappell had revisited the leak site and found that the second line had ruptured. Potentially this loss could be double that of the initial one. Chappell had spoken with the contractor throughout these issues. The contractor was currently out of town and planned on attending the April board meeting to contest the invoice. The Board discussed the leaks and invoicing the contractor for the second leak.

Chappell noted that Missoula County had \$175,000 of ARPA grant funds available to water & irrigation districts, so we put together some numbers for the tower reading system. Derry wrote the grant application, using the leaks as the nexus. Missoula County awarded the District \$78,000 with no match required. Now we are now playing catch up putting together the paperwork and quotes for the tower rental. There was a \$1,800 application fee to put equipment on the tower. There are sufficient funds in the Capital Projects account if the Board approves.

Johnson moved to proceed on the application, and if it looks like the expenses will be more than \$20,000, then to bring it back to the Board for a vote. Lorentz seconded the motion, which then passed.

Rathbun moved to accept the January 2022, February & March 2023 Operations and Loss Report. Lorentz seconded the motion, which was then passed.

## **OLD BUSINESS:**

### USFS Service Line - Update

Chappell noted that Quinn had not got back to him. This item was tabled.

03/30/2023

Regular Monthly Meeting

Seeley Lake – Missoula County Water District

## **NEW BUSINESS:**

### John Richards Water Bills – Write Off

Previously covered.

### Davy Good Construction Invoice – Write Off

Covered previously.

### Main Replacement/Extension – Pine Drive

Chappell noted that this project was in the initial stages. This would loop the main between Pine Drive and Cedar Lane. This was going to be looped in the 2009 project, but the District couldn't get the easement. The easement was now in place, allowing this section to now be looped, which would alleviate the freezing issues. Derry had spoken to the funding agencies and there was a good chance that the District would only have to pay for 25% of the project out of pocket.

### Frozen & Broken Mains

Covered previously.

### Thawing Equipment

The mains had been thawed by cutting the pipe and using a jetter, which the District rented. Chappell had been researching products to thaw the main and would get back to the Board with more information and a recommendation.

## **CORRESPONDENCE:**

### Acc#168 - Normark

Chappell noted that this customer was the last customer on Peacemaker Place that did have water when that main froze. He had a leak and had requested that his entire bill be written off. They have in-floor heating and the pipe broke, which flooded the garage. The District found the issue and the owner got the leak repaired in a timely manner and this would be his first leak adjustment.

Johnson moved to approve the leak request in the amount of \$336.96/132,140 gallons. Lorentz seconded the motion, which was then passed.

### Acc#402 John Corey

Chappell noted that this leak was found after the meters were read. It had started the day after the meters had been read the previous month. The owner had requested a leak adjustment. This would be his first leak adjustment.

03/30/2023

Regular Monthly Meeting

Seeley Lake – Missoula County Water District

Rathbun moved to approve the leak request in the amount of \$620.85/243,470 gallons. Lorentz seconded the motion, which was then passed.

**NEXT SCHEDULED MEETING:**

The next Board meeting was scheduled for April 27, 2023.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

Rathbun moved to adjourn the meeting at 6:35pm. Lorentz seconded the motion, which was then passed.

Attest

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Charlie Hahn, Director

-And-

| SEAL |

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Vince Chappell, General Manager