

TOWN OF RICHLAND WATER DEPARTMENT

1 BRIDGE STREET PULASKI, NY 13142

MINUTES OF THE RICHLAND WATER ADVISORY BOARD

Date: February 6, 2023

Kind of Meeting: Regular monthly water board meeting

Place: H. Douglas Barclay Courthouse Jury Room

Water Board Members Present: Doug Schwalm, Acting Chairman

Ken Moonan

Krista Fox

Absent: Rob Goodsell

Others in Attendance:

Supervisor Ron Novak, Water Department Supervisor

Mary Yerdon, Water Department Clerk

CALL TO ORDER: Tonight's meeting was called to order at 6:00pm with Doug Schwalm leading the Pledge of Allegiance.

Krista Fox made a motion to approve the December 7, 2022, water board minutes. It was seconded by Ken Moonan. All were in favor.

- **Emergency at Richland wellsite:** Today, power has been off all day at the Richland wellsite. The generator was started manually and ran for about 15 minutes. After the initial generator startup, it would only run 60 seconds at a time. Supervisor Novak and the two water operators spent all day making sure water would be available until power was restored. A National Grid representative said there was a problem at the substation, and they had been unsuccessful trying to locate and fix it. They did not know when the power would be restored. They told Supervisor Novak to shut down all pumps and equipment since it could cause damage while they were trying to fix the problem. The Board of Health was notified as well as Oswego County Emergency Management. There was a very limited water supply to fight a fire. The water towers were all full to ensure the public would continue to have water for the next 18 hours while we wait for the generator rental to arrive. Another problem, without power, the telecommunications system would not send messages to the County Route 41 office and regulate valves automatically. We then had to rely on Fernwood and manually watch and adjust valves, etc. as needed. Fernwood had power and could pump water, but the Richland wellsite could not pump any water. Fernwood only has one pump working right now (running at 63%) which also limited our water supply. After several hours, a generator was rented through Independent Power Supply. It will take 3 hours to be delivered and another 4 hours to hook it up. This will ensure we have plenty of water to serve our customers. The Emergency

connection with the Village of Pulaski could not be used due to lack of pumping capacity. When installed it could meet our needs, but our system has expanded since that time.

- **Fernwood Pumps**: The Fernwood pumps are running at 63% capacity and the screens are plugged. Both pumps in Fernwood and one in Richland need replaced. It cost the water districts \$2,000 to diagnose the problem and it will cost approximately \$40,000 to replace the ones in Fernwood and \$22,000 to replace the one at the Richland wellsite. Supervisor Novak reminded everyone that our system is a \$70,000,000 system and these items are normal for a system this size. This was tabled by the Town Board at multiple meetings.
- **Cameras**: New cameras have been installed at our office. However, a screen needed to set up the cameras was not ordered or installed. Supervisor Novak would have appreciated being consulted on this when making the decision on what to purchase. Funds for Fernwood camera installation needs Town Board approval.
- **Zenner installs**: We currently have 828 out of 1108 transmitters installed. Currently there is a problem with them all reading correctly. Supervisor Novak has been in contact with the Zenner representative to get this taken care of.
- **NYS reports due**: Two large reports are due by March 1, 2023. The annual water withdrawal report shows how much water is not accounted for (leaks, fires, etc.). The other report is the vulnerability and cybersecurity report.
- **Truck repairs**: Operator Hicks would like to keep the truck he is currently driving. The driver's seat needed repair. The repair parts were purchased from Ford \$280.00, and he did the repair. Operator Sikora needed a new taillight to pass inspection. It was purchased for \$331.00, and he installed it. The newer truck required proper lights since it is considered a "hazard vehicle" under DOT laws. The cost was \$2200.00. The emergency response trailer is black and DOT requires reflective tape to be added to the back and sides-this was also done in house.
- **Maintenance at Fernwood Site**: During the light winter we have experienced, the Fernwood building has had the pipes painted blue. Also, the parts we sell have all been painted blue and are ready to go. All interior and exterior lighting was repaired. Next, the floor is going to be painted.
- **GIS updates**: Now that Water District #5 is completed, the DANC representative will be marking out all the hydrants, valve boxes, etc. on our maps. Water Districts 1,2,3 have already been updated. This will take about 3 days to complete.
- **Tank Inspection**: The 300,000-gallon tank in Richland requires an inspection this year (they inspect inside and outside). The cost is \$2500.00. The report is then forwarded to DOH. The outside bottom 6' will be pressure washed by our operators before the inspection. The other two tanks are due for inspection in 2024.
- **Atkinson Road Leak**: There was a leak on a homeowners tap. An 8" band failed after just 3 years. The total cost was \$2,000-\$2500 to repair this. The property owners yard still needs restoration. The Ford Company representative came today to get the faulty band. They will take it back and analyze why it did not last. Supervisor Novak feels Blair bands appear better at \$105.00 each (which costs about \$1.00 more per band). We lost about 500,000 gallons of water due to this leak.
- **Leak at 41 office**: The Kennedy valve in the office has failed. To replace the parts the pumps have to be shut down and drain the lines. Parts have been ordered at \$424.00.

- **Heater in vaults:** There was a frozen transducer in the Fernwood tower. The heater failed. After two alarms (the temperature went below 0 degrees), a small space heater was placed in the vault. The ceiling heaters are about \$500 each and the small heaters are closer to \$50 each. The exhaust fan that removes chlorine fumes from the chemical room is about \$500-\$800. That is on the verge of failure.
- **Water Salesman:** The water salesman hose is broken-a customer cut his hand on it. We have purchased new hose for \$75.00 and we will be fixing it ourselves.
- **Generator:** ARPA money funds will be replacing the existing generator (runs wells #27 and #13. That generator has been on order for over a year and should be in around April 26, 2023. The Orwell hookup fee (\$75,000) will be used for a second generator for wells #7 and #23. The second generator has not been ordered yet and is waiting Town Board approval.
- **Manwaring Vault:** all vaults have valves which modulate to control pressure. This one started modulating uncontrollably. At one point the pressure was up to 145 in the main line which could blow out main lines. It was discovered there had been no maintenance performed since it was installed in 2008. When taken apart to check/clean, the strainer gasket was broken. The same strainer is in the Lehigh and emergency interconnect vaults. It would take 18 weeks to order and receive the new gasket. Supervisor Novak found a company in Buffalo that could make one. It should arrive in 2 weeks (4 were ordered at \$31.00 each). The Manwaring Road valve is one of the three ways to fill the Bishop Road tank.
- **Cost to make water:** Until the 2022 books are closed, the final cost to make water cannot be evaluated for 2022. This will take place in February 2023 once all the 2022 bills are paid and accrued income has been posted.
- **Chlorine Residual Monitors:** We are now required to have continuous chlorine residual monitors because we reached the threshold when water district 5 went online. These monitors must be purchased and installed before NYS approve the Richland Water District #5 project and Sandy Creek Water District #3 project. They will be paid out of project funds. Rural Water (funding agency) wants Sandy Creek to own the pump for well #27 because they are the "lead agency". Richland does not want anyone to own or have unlimited access at our wellsite. If one of our current monitors fail, NYS Law requires continuous manual residual monitoring every 4 hours 5 days or until the chlorine residual monitor is fixed. B&L is working on the plans now. We are waiting for financial approval from Rural Water-technical approval has already been obtained.
- **Water District #5 Update:** Water district #5 is substantially complete. Water mains are installed, restoration needs to be finished. The big issue is some residents along the Sandy Creek shoreline have sued the Department of Conservation over not allowing them to be part of the water district. The Administrative Hearing was canceled, and they are now filing a new variance application. Sandy Creek has not closed the contract out because of the above. Many property owners have not yet hooked into the water in water district #5. Once more property owners start using municipal water, the EDU charge should come down.
- **Water District #5 extensions:** Letters were mailed out to qualifying property owners to give them the opportunity to enter water district #5. There were 2 positive responses. The cost for the Map Plan and Report is \$2,000 which will be divided between those two individuals. Once that is paid, it will be engineered and the process to make it official will take place. They will then be charged for any permits, legal fees, public hearing fees, etc. Once the total cost is established and paid for, they can hook into our water main.

- **Water District #6:** There are 530 properties that are not currently in any Richland water district. A survey letter will be mailed to the property owners to see if there is any interest in municipal water and the location of those properties. This is waiting for Town Board approval before mailing it out. Once the survey is completed, the Town may then move forward with a plan to try to serve those that are interested in receiving municipal water.
- **Delinquent accounts:** There was some discussion in the Town Board regarding turning water off for residents who do not pay their water bill. There are only a couple of area municipalities with public water that have a shut off policy. Most other towns collect delinquent water accounts through relevy. Richland will continue with the relevy policy for now.
- **EDU waived for Churches:** A pastor from a local church has requested to have the EDU charge on his taxes waived. After research through the Association of Towns and our Town lawyer, it was clearly stated that a church is not exempt from special district charges in a Benefit system, which we are.
- **Chlortec system:** The price of hypo-chloride has risen from \$2.69 last year to \$3.11 in the summer to \$4.49 this year. We use this exclusively in Fernwood. In Richland we make our own with the chlortec system which is currently down. We ordered the new part, but it comes from Europe, and it will be May or June before it comes in. We will have to continue using the hypo-chloride in the meantime. This cost will exceed the budgeted amount for hypo-chloride.
- **Structure Fire:** There was a structure fire in Richland on Sunday. Joe Sikora and Supervisor Novak were both at the scene to make sure hydrants were working properly and there was adequate water supply.
- **Sanitary Survey:** The annual sanitary survey conducted by the Oswego County Board of Health was completed last month. A response letter to the survey was sent back to the DOH this week.

At 7:55 Krista Fox made a motion to close the meeting. Ken Moonan seconded the motion. All were in favor.

The next water board meeting is scheduled for March 7, 2023, at 6pm at the H. Douglas Barclay Courthouse.

Respectfully Submitted,

Mary Yerdon
Town of Richland Water Department Clerk