

**CEDAR KEY WATER & SEWER DISTRICT  
P.O. BOX 309 / 510 THIRD STREET  
CEDAR KEY, FL 32625**

**Minutes of Regular Meeting  
Board of Commissioners  
August 9, 2021**

Board Members Present: Dottie Haldeman, Joe Hand, Stephen Rosenthal, Leslie Sturmer, Tabitha Lauer.

Others Present: Chad Wisdom, John McPherson, James McCain, Mandy Offerle, Frank Offerle, Clay Childers, Jan Childers, Heath Davis, Sue Colson, Doris Hellerman, Lynn Martindale, Jim Martindale.

1. Meeting called to order at 5:00 p.m. by Stephen Rosenthal, Chair.
2. Pledge and Prayer.
3. Adoption of Agenda. **Motion** by Leslie Sturmer to adopt the agenda as presented. **Second** by Joe Hand. Passed by a vote of 5-0.
4. Statement by Chair: Chair Rosenthal stated that he owed an apology to everyone for his unprofessional behavior at the prior meeting relating to the water line from Chiefland issue.
5. Approval of Minutes. **Motion** by Leslie Sturmer to accept the minutes of the regular meeting of July 12, 2021, with the following changes: (1) Delete the following line from the Water Plant section of the general manager's report: "Leslie Sturmer stated that she thought there might be significant water management district issues with such a plan." (2) Add the following language as the second sentence of the third paragraph of the Water Plant section of the general manager's report: "He said that it had taken such a long time to get to where we could build a new water plant, and it was frustrating to have new and very expensive ideas pop up at the last minute." **Second** by Dottie Haldeman. Passed by a vote of 5-0.

As part of the discussion of the minutes, Tabitha Lauer asked if it was proper for City Commissioners and others to go to the General Manager first with new ideas. The Board expressed the consensus that it was proper so long as important issues were brought to the Board in due course.

6. Financial Reports. Budget, Balance Sheet, Checkbook Activity, and Employee Leave reports were presented for review. **Motion** by Tabitha Lauer to accept the financial reports as presented. **Second** by Leslie Sturmer. Passed by a vote of 5-0.

7. Public Input.

- Mayor Heath Davis stated that he appreciated the Chair's statement and that he looked forward to working with the General Manager and Board on future issues, and appreciates the ability to discuss issues with District staff.
- Clay Childers stated that he thought it was good that two City Commissioners were attending the meeting.

8. Resolution 2021-03:

A RESOLUTION OF THE CEDAR KEY WATER AND SEWER DISTRICT CHANGING THE FEES CHARGED FOR INITIAL WATER AND WASTEWATER HOOKUPS; PROVIDING INSTRUCTIONS TO THE CODIFIER; AND ESTABLISHING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

The District's attorney, John McPherson, reviewed the resolution and stated that it was before the Board on first reading, with second reading to take place at the next meeting after newspaper notice. **Motion** by Dottie Haldeman to approve Resolution 2021-03 on first reading. **Second** by Tabitha Lauer with the following changes: Change the amount for "Service charge for initial new water connection" from \$2,583 to \$3,000, and the amount for "Service charge for initial wastewater connection" from \$2,385 to \$2,500. These changes were accepted by the maker of the Motion. Passed by a vote of 5-0.

9. Bill Adjustment: Mandy Offerle requested an adjustment to sewer charges. **Motion** by Dottie Haldeman to approve the bill adjustment request as meeting the requirements for an adjustment. **Second** by Leslie Sturmer. Passed by a vote of 5-0.

10. General Manager Report.

a. *Water Plant.*

The GM reported that the District has finished the Actina pilot study and is moving forward with planning with Mittauer on the new water plant. He noted that due to the age of the plant, the District is seeing higher costs on maintaining the current water treatment plant, and that an additional pilot study proposed by Mittauer has been started to prove a new replacement of part of our system that can be done while we continue to run.

The GM reported that Mittauer and Associates is looking for grant money to fund the construction of the new plant. The primary source is likely to be USDA Rural Development, but that the initial commitment by RD will need to be declined so that the District can apply for new funding for the new plant design and location.

Joe Hand asked about the idea for bringing water from Chiefland. The GM stated that he had reached out to Chiefland about meeting with the mayor and touring the water plant and well field. Dottie Haldeman asked what had changed to make the pipeline from Chiefland something to consider now. The GM stated that the cost of the water plant had gone up substantially, but still the cost of the pipeline was also estimated to be very high at \$14 million to \$24 million.

Heath Davis stated that there is and has been discussion about a regional water supply with a well field near Chiefland being part of the possible regional system. He presented information about the history of the regional system idea. Sue Colson added that the regional idea was designed to help small towns like Otter Creek, and that there are now added issues such as sea level rise and salt water intrusion. She stated that the regional idea should be looked at even if the costs are higher due to the added benefits of such a system. Leslie Sturmer stated that the GM should look into this regional plan and report back to the Board.

Heath Davis stated that good water is there under the Chiefland well field, and that the demographics of Otter Creek would help with getting grants. Dottie Haldeman raised the concern that there may be push back regarding drawing too much water from the Chiefland area and piping it elsewhere. Heath Davis agreed that this was a potential problem and would need to be addressed.

Joe Hand stated that his research showed that the water under Chiefland was very good, and that it would be much less expensive to treat. He suggested that if funds could be found to help with the construction of the pipeline, this might be a good solution for the District. Tabitha Lauer agreed that the pipeline might be a reasonable solution that should be looked into. Dottie Haldeman expressed the concern that costs might go way up as we got into the project. The Board directed the GM to continue looking into the possibility of a pipeline from Chiefland.

Heath Davis stated that he was under the impression based on what was said at the City/District joint meeting that the District did not have a plant design that would work. If the District does have such a design, he said, the District should pursue that approach as well. Mandy Offerle stated that the plant design appeared to be very expensive and complicated to operate, and that maybe the Chiefland pipeline approach might be better for the District in the long run. The GM suggested the possibility of having our own wells at the Chiefland well field, and that he would continue working with Mittauer on the new plant design.

Clay Childers asked if there was still grant money available for the regional approach; Heath Davis stated that he thought there was, and Sue Colson agreed. Leslie Sturmer reminded the General Manager to remember the possibility of funding under the new federal infrastructure legislation.

*b. Wastewater System.*

The GM reported that the District is still waiting on billing from CROM to get the final numbers, and that the lift station refurbishment has been looked at by two separate contractors and that one bid was received at \$59,000 per lift station, and that they are waiting on the second to know where the District stands on that project. The GM stated that the possibility of raising the lift station on Whiddon Avenue near the Jiffy store to avoid future flooding. The GM reported that he is looking into sources of funding to make needed wastewater repairs.

- c. *Cell Service.* The GM reported that Verizon has started construction on the ground facilities on the water tower site, and that a late August completion date is expected.
- d. *Covid-19.* The GM reported that the District continues to follow mask-wearing and separation protocols at the District office, with no symptoms or testing this month. He stated that vaccines are available for essential workers and that all employees are being urged to get them. He stated that customers are again being asked to use the drop box rather than enter the building.
- e. *2021-2022 Budget and TRIM.*

The GM provided the Board with a draft budget with the following important components:

- Keeps the millage rate at the current 1.2 mills.
- Increases rates by 3%, except for the large user base rate which stays the same.
- Provides a 5% COL salary increase to all employees.
- Includes purchase of one new light duty truck to replace one of the aging vehicles.
- Includes the next phases of repair for the wastewater plant.

After discussion, the GM was directed to change the COL increase for employee salaries to 3%. It was decided that no budget workshops would be needed prior to the preliminary budget hearing.

f. *Personnel Issues*

The GM raised the following personnel issues for discussion:

- Whether employees should get 100% of the value of sick leave and annual leave upon retirement or otherwise leaving employment with the District.
- Whether all hours within a week, including sick leave and annual leave, should be counted towards determining whether overtime is due for working more than 40 hours.
- Whether Juneteenth and Christmas Eve be added to the paid holidays that employees get.

There was discussion of each of these issues, but no action was taken by the Board and no direction given to staff.

11. Commissioner Comments.

- Dottie Haldeman stated that she tried to call in for the July meeting, but that she could not get cell phone reception to do so.


- Leslie Sturmer asked whether the GAC was still working and was informed that it is working well with it being anticipated that it will last 5 months before needing to be changed.

12. Public Input.

- Mandy Offerle asked about the wastewater testing for Covid, and was informed that it was ongoing with reports provided on a monthly basis.
- James McCain asked whether the District was going back to the old service application requiring City land use approval. The General Manager answered that the old form was now being used.

13. Adjournment: There being no further business to conduct, the meeting was adjourned at 7:28 p.m.

  
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Stephen B. Rosenthal, Chairperson

  
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Leslie Sturmer, Commissioner &  
Secretary of the Board

Date: 9/27/2021

