

Commission of Public Works meeting, August 28, 2023  
Regular monthly business.

Commissioners present: Trey Stephens, Donnie Cooper, Jackie Keenan, Roy Shaw and Gerald McMurray

Employees present: Danny Lowe, Ken Phillips and Christy Lowe

Visitors present: Larry Halicki and Carter Rhine

Place: New Ellenton Commission of Public Works  
100 South Main Street  
New Ellenton, SC 29809

Time: 7:00 PM

Chairman Mr. Trey Stephens presiding.

Mr. Trey Stephens opens with the Pledge of Allegiance and Ken Phillips said the prayer.

Mr. Trey Stephens welcomes everyone and asks that he or she state their name for the record.

Mr. Trey Stephens opened the floor to guest comments and questions.

Larry Halicki asked about the status of the Club Drive project planned with the grant money. Danny Lowe informed him that surveying on all of the projects planned has already started but may not have made it out to Cedar Creek yet. Once the surveying is completed, it would go out for bid which would not be finalized until next year. Larry asked about rate increases for this budget year. Chairman Trey Stephens stated he doesn't foresee any this FY but if we have to fund out of pocket for a new water tower then there may be an increase at that time.

Mr. Trey Stephens states that approving the Financial Report for July 2023 is on the agenda and asks for a motion and a second. Vice Chairman Donnie Cooper made a motion to accept the Financial Report; it was seconded by Commissioner Roy Shaw and carried.

Chairman Trey Stephens states that approving the minutes for July 24, 2023 is on the agenda and asks for a motion and a second. Commissioner Roy Shaw made a motion to accept the Minutes as written; it was seconded by Secretary-Treasurer Jackie Keenan and carried.

Mr. Trey Stephens asks for any questions or comments. (none)

### OLD BUSINESS

Director Danny Lowe reported the Maintenance shop has made progress. The roof is on, concrete floor poured, the plumbing has been installed and inspected by the county and framing is up.

Danny Lowe stated that after speaking with our attorney, he suggested the CPW has a memorandum with the City of New Ellenton for the 99 year lease on the land. Attorney Chris Austin sent over a

memorandum for the Commissioners to sign tonight but after reading over it, Danny stated there is some wording in it that needs to be changed before it is signed.

Danny reported that we did get the permit for the well and are currently working to put together a bid package.

Director Danny Lowe informed the Commissioners that he has a meeting next month with SCRWA, SC811 and the Secretary of Transportation concerning the telecommunication lines that are currently being installed in certain subdivisions with no rhyme or reason as to where they are putting the lines in the ground. There are approximately 10+ different companies installing at the same time with some having 18 crews a day. Mr. Lowe stated that it is becoming a major problem and will be in the future when there is a leak to be fixed. There does not seem to be any regulations or oversight on where these companies can put these lines in the ground so they are all over the place and on top of water lines, gas lines, etc. It is also costing CPW a lot of man hours to mark our lines, paint to mark and then cost for materials and man power when they break our water lines. It is out of control at this point and Danny stated he is seeking answers.

Danny Lowe reported the water loss was 8.6% for the month of July.

Ken Phillips, the Operations and Maintenance Supervisor, gave an update of field activities for July.

Danny Lowe informed the Commissioners he has prepared a letter to send out to customers concerning the new EPA guidelines for lead and copper. A copy of the letter has been included in the meeting package for the Commissioners to review. It will only go out to the customers who we are not sure what type of lines are on their side of the meter.

Danny Lowe updated the Commissioners on the situation with Oak Hill Water Department. He stated they have decided to hire an outside company to monitor their water system and fix any leaks or issues they may have.

Danny Lowe reported to the Commissioners that Zeke has informed him that he will be retiring sometime this year. Zeke is not sure of the exact date but that it will probably be sometime before the end of the year.

Mr. Trey Stephens asks is there any more old business. (none)

## NEW BUSINESS

Chairman Trey Stephens stated he would like to go ahead and look at hiring someone to fill Zeke's position and fill in as Tommy only works about 12 – 15 hours a week. This would be a part time laborer position that could help with just about anything needed; locates, grass cutting, etc. Vice Chairman Donnie Cooper stated that he doesn't think we should hire anyone else until Zeke retires since we did not budget for 3 part time laborer positions. Commissioners decided to table the discussion until a later date.

Office Manager, Christy Lowe, informed the Commissioners that the auditor came last week for the initial visit to gather information. Danny stated that both auditors mentioned how great the books looked and they can tell managed things were.

Christy Lowe reported there will be another increase with Publiq that will go into effect in October. The last increase was for postage and our monthly fee. The new increase of 7% is for actually printing the utility bill for customers.

Danny Lowe informed the Commissioners of an incident at Cedar Creek last week. A customer called about a leak near his meter, so a work order was done to repair the leak. In order for the field technicians to get to where the leak was, they had to cut approximately 3 branches from the customers bush that was over the water line. The customer proceeded to cuss CPW employees out and was very belligerent towards them, so much so that Hugh Ray had to be called to the address to try to calm the customer down. Danny stated that, in his opinion, if customers have bushes, trees, flowers, etc in the utility right of way, we should not have to replace them if they are in the way of a meter and/or water lines. Mr. Lowe also stated that he understands if we mess up the grass/pine straw that we would replace or fix that area but does not feel CPW should be responsible for replacing trees and bushes that should not be there in the first place. Danny feels that we need to put out some kind of communication to all subdivisions concerning keeping the utility right of way clear of any bushes, trees, flowers, fences, etc other than grass/pine straw. Mr. Halicki from Cedar Creek stated that he is in full support of this. The Commissioners all agreed on this and will work on a letter to send out to HOA's and Property Owner's Associations to get the message to customers.

Danny Lowe reported that he and a few others met with Al Jenkins from Senator Tim Scott's office. Mr. Lowe stated that he gave us some good alternate options for funding additional projects within the water system.

Jackie Keenan made a motion to adjourn; Gerald McMurray seconds, all vote, so moved.

Attested by,



Director  
Danny Lowe



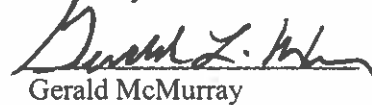
Trey Stephens  
Chairman



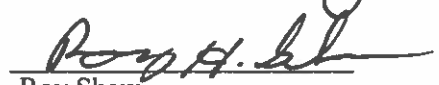
Donnie Cooper  
Vice Chairman



Jackie Keenan  
Secretary-Treasurer



Gerald McMurray  
Commissioner



Roy Shaw  
Commissioner