

Town of Lake Lure – Utilities Board

- Minutes of Regular Monthly Meeting – September 3, 2019

The Utility Advisory Board held their regular meeting at the Town of Lake Lure Municipal Center on Tuesday, September 3, 2019.

Members Present:

Wayne Hyatt, Chairman
David Diorio
Don Cason
John Chapman
Richard Glassen

Others Present:

David Arrowood
Linda Ward – Board Clerk
Shannon Baldwin – Town
Kurt Wright – In House Engineer

Stephen Webber – Liaison
(filling in for Board Liaison Bob Cameron)

Members Absent: none

General Meeting Actions

Call to Order – Chairman Wayne Hyatt called the meeting to order at 2:00 pm.

Consider Approval of the August 6, 2019 Regular Meeting Minutes - Richard Glassen made a motion to approve the minutes, David Diorio seconded and the motion carried 5 - 0.

Old Business

a. Broadband / Wi-Fi Update with Russ Pitts – Russ Pitts introduced Ned Kiser, who works directly with Pangea, Rutherford and Polk counties on assessment projects, currently looking at catalyzing on assets that are owned by the counties or municipalities to be able to use those as vertical, to then use fiber in combination with wireless. Pangea has talked Open Broadband about the challenge to bring Wi-Fi in the town center area, and the commercial corridor. They talked about leveraging the fiber connections points and setting up wireless broadband beam. This would allow commercial entities to connect at a much lower cost. He said that the Town will need a hybrid approach using fiber and broadband. Russ mentioned that Pangea is a non-profit organization which belongs to the community and we need to utilize what it can help with.

Shannon said that the process is going to be to compare each proposal and then bring those back to this committee to discuss and make a recommendation to Council. He said if the board wants to discuss others at that time that they can. He said that the goal is to get the Town center connected

and then maybe spring board off of that. Shannon mentioned that William Morgan will be at the next meeting to go over the contract with Pangea. He also asked the board to bring any points they may have concerning this matter to the next meeting UAB meeting in October.

Russ told the board that there is a combination of Pangea owned fiber and County owned fiber. To make the Town's intranet work, Pangea invested over \$300,000 dollars themselves. Fiber can either be for transport only or distribution type network. Once it is cut into, it is hard to get it lined up perfectly which can make it not work properly or fully.

Shannon said that we don't want to create a situation with Wi-Fi that phases out new technology but want it to be a stepping stone. He also said that we want to make sure that we have redundancy. We want to be sure that Town Hall, the Beach, Arcade area, new campground and Flowering Bridge have service for tourists and workers.

Russ discussed the fact that Point Broadband tried to bring in broadband but could not even get 30 customers to sign up as was their requirement. And that the community needs to take some responsibility for not stepping up at that time. It was reasonably priced and guaranteed but still could not get interest. Which sends a message to companies that the community is really not interested. Shannon said he hopes this will not be a stumbling block in a broader sense of the community as a whole. Right now we just want to get the Downtown area served, and then hopefully we will have a good relationship and be able to move further out.

This and the proposals for the project will be discussed at length at the next meeting so that the board can make a recommendation to Council.

b. Low Pressure Sewer System Update – Wayne Hyatt began the meeting discussing the presentation at the August UAB meeting given by Heritage Water Systems/Barnes Pumps, and some of the areas that they are suppliers for. He mentioned that the recommendation to use them was given by Cape Fear who is working with Brown Engineering.

The board then discussed the need to go over the information that they have been given through all of presentations they have had, and the need to come up with a recommendation to Council on the type of pumps they think the Town should use.

Richard Glassen discussed the need to have the pump that the town decides to use in the bidding process. He also mentioned that the town should have the company that is used for pumps be involved in the design stage because they know more about the pumps than the engineers will, because they work with and run these pumps every day.

Town Manager Shannon Baldwin told the board that they pulled the geo tech work into the ER, where it is normally in the design phase, so that they could ground truth some of the numbers that were given to the state in the ER. The Town contracted with BLE, which was in concurrence with Brown Engineering to get the trench rock numbers. BLE is wrapping up their final report which will go to Brown and then into the numbers on the ER. He also mentioned that the spreadsheet

from Brown shows \$100 per cubic yard for the trench work, which will be higher, around \$250 per cubic yard, according to BLE.

Shannon then mentioned that the wastewater treatment plant is also not on the report and needs to be. That Stepp construction has told them that the water line is in the shoulder of the road, therefore the sewer line cannot be in the shoulder of the road, as Brown has it in the report. DOT has said if the line is put in highway, that we will have to replace the whole road by paving, and the report numbers for asphalt are too low if we do have to put the line in 64/74.

Shannon mentioned again that each property installation would be around \$25,000 per site where Brown has \$8,000 on their papers. SRF needs to show how much money is needed before ER will be completed. Shannon told the board that is why we are trying to ground truth the numbers because the \$28,000,000 project could jump into \$30,000,000 project easily, and he does not feel like this is something that will be affordable for the people of Lake Lure. He said the next step will be to finalize ER and get last addendum. And then meet with them about the cost.

Shannon also told the board that we were told that sewer plant has to come out of the floodplain but have found out that is incorrect information. And the ER is based on the fact that it had to be moved and it doesn't have to be. Richard Glassen brought up the fact that we were also told that the sewer system had to come out of the lake which it does not. So there is still some work to be done on the numbers and what has to be done.

Shannon to the board that we need to see what other options are available. He mentioned that after all of the work that the board has done that we may not even go with a low pressure system.

Shannon said that the funding has a milestone that has to be met in September for the low pressure system. He talked about writing a follow-up letter to the state asking to hold onto the loan to use for a completely different thing if it looks like we need to go in a more affordable direction. He believes that the state will be understanding knowing that the LPS may not be affordable. He said that we have 1.3 less than the 13 million dollar loan left to spend on something that will work better for the Town. Shannon mentioned that we would have direct communications with the state along with Brown now instead of Brown doing all of the communications.

One of the things to be done when the lake is down this winter is to do an inventory of the lines around the lake per Shannon Baldwin. To really take a look at what is actually out there. Richard Glassen mentioned that he thinks we should be sure that the connections in the lake that are a problem are repaired to code. There was a short discussion about the Town's authority in this.

The board had a discussion about the manholes needing to be repaired and how when the lake goes down this will be helpful to do this. They discussed the different options to repair or change out the manholes, and also the pros and cons on the manhole from lowering the lake. At this point, Russ Pitts who was in the audience and is a past Town Council member, mentioned that when they wrapped the lines years ago, there was supposed to be a phase two that would lift the manholes out of the water so that the connections would not be under water. He mentioned that the main trunk line was in pretty good shape really and that it was not the problem. That the laterals and

manholes are what needed to be worked on. Shannon Baldwin said that we may be able to slip line at least the laterals. He said that he would like to look at the information that Russ told the board about.

After all these discussions, Shannon Baldwin said that we will need to wrap up the ER, have conversation with state as a partner, and then talk about this concept.

After a question about the Treatment Plant, Shannon said that the sludge has to be pulled out of the plant. If we take all the water out would we want to change our process to an aerobic microbial process rather than a chemical process? Richard Glassen said that he thinks we have to figure out the collection problem before moving forward with the treatment plant.

John Chapman asked what would happen if we went with gravity, and build new plant, what would happen to the sewage while building new plant. Kurt Wright responded by saying that you have the line ready to switch over from the old one once the new one was complete and tested.

New Business

a. ***Community Involvement in LPS Project*** - Per John Chapman talked about the meeting that they had with the community about the community involvement with lake going down. Said that most of it was reaction and not based on fact. He thought then that the community needs be involved with the meetings and what is happening around town including Wi-Fi and Sewer. He said that we need to get the word out so that people will become part of it and understand what the town is and has to do. Shannon told the board that Laura Krejci will be a next meeting to discuss how to do this, and asked the board to bring any ideas they may have to accomplish this at that time.

Open Comments/ Discussion –

Wayne Hyatt welcomed the new Mayor in which Mayor Carol Pritchett told the board that she would be attending the UAB meetings and that asset management is her primary interest. She then told the board that she thinks we need to be sure that the people of the community understand the cost and all of the problems involved in these big projects that the Town is facing, that we need to explain these matters in a way that they are easily understood. She would also like to see people understand what the boards actually do, what they are there for. That folks can come to these meetings to discuss matters rather than bring them to Council where they do not always discuss matters that are brought up.

Steven Webber mentioned the decision to begin lowering the lake, to a maximum of 6 ft., December 1st. They will then begin to bring it back up on February 10th. He would like to encourage anyone that has work to be done to get started as early as possible to be sure they have all of the necessary permits.. He said that they are still discussing the schedule for take down after this year, whether it be 3, 5, 10 years or only when Town so decides.

He then asked the board to mark their calendars for September 25th at noon. He told them that the Town was having a picnic for all board members and staff in recognition of all of their service, time and hard work. The picnic will be held at the Town Hall and that they would really like for all board members to show up for this.

Public Comments – none

Adjournment

There being no further business Don Cason made a motion to adjourn, John Chapman seconded the motion and the meeting adjourned at 3:40 p.m.

ATTEST

Wayne Hyatt, Chairman

Linda Ward, Clerk