

FLATHEAD COUNTY WATER DISTRICT #101

POB 1141, Columbia Falls, MT 59912

*** Meeting Minutes March 4, 2025 ***

General Meeting:

I. Call to Order 7:00pm

General Meeting for FCWD #101 held this March 4, 2025.

Directors present include Nikki Bond, President, Russ Barnett, Vice President, Linda Parker, Brian Rohletter and Steve Fucci.

Also present: Jeff Soyland, CWO, Tina Bondy, Board Secretary and Water District Customers: Norm Nunnally, Clarence Tabor, Ellen McGrory

II. Minutes - Discussion and approval of the December 3, 2024 Minutes of Regular Meeting

Following Secretary reading of the Minutes, Russ made a Motion to accept the Minutes. Brief discussion about a typo correction after the Draft Minutes were circulated electronically prior to the meeting, Nikki made a Motion to approve the Minutes as Amended; Russ seconded and all voted in favor.

III. Time for Public Comment and Discussions - 5 min allotment / property owner.

Clarence Taber, customer, provided a list of items he wanted to address, including a hydrant issue, election issue, recall of board members, concerns about some of the Bylaws not being followed, such as posted notices for 3 days and annual audit.

Linda Parker, referenced a printed copy of the current bylaws, which had been revised and restated previously. In these Bylaws, there is a reference to the office positions and terms, but if no one wants it, the board does not have to change position / seats.

Norm Nunnally, customer, addressed the board with his concerns about district boundaries concerning his property; also insisting that notifications for all meetings are to be done by mail. He included a complaint about the past water district project.

Ellen McGrory, customer, would like an additional meter on her property. Inquiring as to the procedure. She is also concerned with the manganese in the water. Her doctor suggested she get a prerequisite from insurance to have a toxicology report done on levels in her body.

Board discussion that A2Z is looking into grants - no levels set yet (state and/or EPA will set) but in the meantime, looking at what options may be available. Further discussion about

“aluminum city” – the testing is good and clear, and housing can now be put over there, but all plants are also waiting on the levels to be set. In the meantime, water up here at the Heights is better. Jeff provided info on the testing he performs, but if customer would like to do self-testing, recommends ME Labs.

IV. Old Business

a. General Manager Role / CWO Role / Secretary Role

i. Job Descriptions and Budget for same

Russ addressed the board about the difficulty in finding managers for the water district. Rural water recommended trying to find someone within the district, though this is such a small district, it's been a challenge. In the past – our president handled most all of the GM duties – almost full time work (as a volunteer); president role is overwhelming. Right now – up to the board members to handle these additional tasks. Russ spoke with Ben Shaeffer about the possibility of adding another district. He is not interested, but may have someone that would be, and that could work under Ben to learn the ropes.

Customer Nunnally became frustrated with the Board discussion and threatened to have the Board president arrested saying “that's the way it is baby”! The Board president retorted to state that Mr. Nunnally was the one most recently arrested. Mr. Nunnally approached the Board Secretary to insist that this exchange be included in the minutes.

Further discussion to add Treasurer to the list of roles to be filled.

b. Water tank drain, fix liner, clean and refill to be scheduled

John Toftum / T5 had provided a quote to complete this work. Jeff discussed getting in touch with John to get this scheduled. Additionally mentioned the assessment of the booster pump and the replacement of the pressure tank, both of which need to be done. Jeff was to check with John on these, but the discussion centered around wanting the tank fix and sanitization done in this month.

c. Proposed new website for FCWD 101 – hosting by Rural Water Impact

- i. Initial Set up Fee: \$449
- ii. Annual Cost: \$560
- iii. Does not include existing content transfer or custom domain
- iv. Anticipated timeline for getting up and running: 3 days

Nikki had been working on this – but would be in the districts interest to host this; Rural Water Hosting does a great job. Costs listed above. We already own a custom domain – fcwd101.com – anytime there is a meeting, minutes, can send out notices online – blog online. Existing website is unworkable with Wordpress. This would mean transparency for all district members.

Nikki made a Motion that the FCWD goes with Rural Water hosting – for development and hosting. Initial set up fees and annual cost of \$560. Russ seconded; All in favor. Motion unanimously passed.

V. New Business

- a. Flathead County records questioning previously annexed properties, district boundary lines and capacity certification
 - i. A2Z Engineering involved
 - ii. Randy Snyder is involved

History – in 2018 in preparation for the system overhaul, there were several annexations petitioned and filed. Randy Snyder, the district's attorney (now retired) provided copies of the certificates of inclusion. Flathead County had lost these initially. However, they are not able to locate the certificate of inclusion for a number of the properties. Waiting to hear back from Randy on the Certificate of Inclusion from the Sec of State. If the county did not record the certificate of inclusion from the MT SOS – will have to re-do and resubmit.

Note that most of the petitions would still be intact, exception being Clarence Taber and Renata Lewis – will need readjustment / name changes.

We have been treating all of these members as being in the District, as they should have been. This was a Flathead County error. Working to resolve this issue.

b. Flathead County Elections / Board Seats

Discussion about the Flathead County elections office notifying the board that there were some members of the district that expressed interest in being on the board and submitted for an election for upcoming board seats. Several of the interested parties though are technically not living in the district, due to the lack of a Certificate of Inclusion. Randy advised that Steve should remain on the board, as we are under the assumption that all here *are* in the District.

Discussion that if there are open seats the Board can appoint. Awaiting letter from County Attorney for more information.

If elections are required, will be in June, and while the time to file interest letters has already passed and closed, the County not certified the eligibility.

UDig boundaries are correct though – just as an aside.

c. Unauthorized hookups

- i. Letters to two property owners drafted
- ii. Inspection and certification of hookups required
- iii. Meters must be installed

Discussion that it was brought to the Board's attention that two owners may have hooked into the system without meters and adding a number of additional hookups. Further discussion about Bylaws state that a temporary hookup for more than 21 days, is \$100 a month without a meter.

d. Annual Budget (Fiscal Year ends June 30, 2025)

Secretary provided a draft budget based on the prior year's spend. Discussion about these costs and recommendations to include such as:
Incorporate ME Labs – annual testing costs
Quickbooks access fees.
Maintenance line item

Nikki made a Motion to accept the proposed budget with the amendments discussed – estimate \$45k ending June 2025. Linda seconded the motion.

Discussion to add in an approximate for the general manager position.
Steve suggests \$3k a month for a placeholder.

Russ – we were advised to put money away (asset replacement). Does this budget take that into account? Discussion about the asset replacement account and questions about same. How much have we added to the account?

Nikki again made a Motion to accept amendment to add GM funds into the draft budget as presented. Brian Seconded. All in favor. Motion unanimously passed.

VI. Operator's report – Quarterly Report presented by Jeff Soyland, CWO4

a. CCR Report

ME labs working on this for 2024. Once they return to us, we will submit to DEQ. Sanitation survey every 3 years for DEQ.

b. Maintenance Issues to address – things that MUST get done:

- i. Rebuild RPZ Backflow Prevention Device – on well house 1 storage tank - it won't pump out. This is a maintenance issue, per Jeff.
- ii. Pumphouse – Water Meter Malfunctioning - wellhouse meter is not working.
- iii. Removal and Replacement of Pressure Tank

c. Operator report:

All monthly routine samples came back fine.

Testing schedule with ME labs – this next year. Fluoride, arsenic, have until the end of the year to do them – would like to do them in the next month. Sooner it is done, the better.

d. DEQ – Notice 2/4/2025 – Failure to Submit Lead Consumer Notice

- i. Jeff confirmed this was timely submitted in December 2023.

e. Further notes from Jeff:

- i. Low pressure alarm – not sure what fixed it after it had been going off.
- ii. booster pump number 1 doesn't appear to be firing. Have been brought back up to pressure; pump 2 and 3 are running. Hoping to visit with John to check this out.
- iii. Hydrant being used for pumping, was leaking.
- iv. Serena Pierce's place, appears to be a leaky meter. This meter is currently turned off.
- v. There should be another manganese flush in April.
 - 1. This should be announced on FB / posted at gas station, emailed.

VII. Financial report – Secretary provided financial reports as of March 3, 2025

VIII. Correspondence and Additional Discussion

Brian Roheletter provided a letter of resignation, effective tonight. The Board thanked him for all of the time he has given.

Mr. Taber addressed the Board again, with concerns about not being heard at the last meeting and not following the bylaws. He came prepared to present at this meeting. Further discussion about the placement of a hydrant that he feels was incorrectly placed and on his property. Discussion with the Board that there have been surveys conducted, but Clarence insists that it is 3 feet over the boundary onto his property. According to the plans there was not to be a meter in his field. Concerned that the meter cover is in the county turnaround.

Further comments from Mr. Taber about the need for a treasurer and he wants an audit.

Further comments from Mr. Nunnally demanding to see the “pre-plans” as well as the “as built”. Convinced that where there is a hydrant in front of Ken Kahn’s house, A2Z “gave us the shaft”.

IX. Adjournment 9:21pm

-- President to announce the next General Meeting of the Board is scheduled on June 3, 2025, 7pm, at the Badrock Fire Department.