

COMMISSIONERS OF PUBLIC WORKS
Minutes of June 26, 2008

The regular meeting of the Board of Commissioners of Public Works was held on Thursday, June 26, 2008 at 10:00 a.m., in the Boardroom at 121 West Court Avenue.

In attendance:

Gene P. Hancock	Steve D. Reeves, Jr.	Vickie Gorham	Bill Patrick
Michael G. Monaghan	Ken Barnett	Richard Gentry	Chris Trainor
Henry O. Watts	Jeff Auman	Jeff Chapman	Mark Warner
	Carlos Cometto	Curtis Burnett	Steve Brown
	Denise Ogletree	Melinda Bishop	Brad Jeffares
	Jay Thompson	David Tuck	Derek Pendley
	Vicki Knott	Stacia May	Prudence Taylor

- I. Chairman Monaghan called the meeting to order and Ken Barnett gave the invocation.
- II. Chairman Monaghan gave the statement of compliance with the notification provision of the Freedom of Information Act.
- III. A motion was made by Commissioner Hancock and seconded by Commissioner Watts to approve the minutes of the May 8, 2008 regular meeting, and the May 22, 2008 regular meeting; the motion was unanimously approved.
- IV. Financial Statement:

Chairman Monaghan referred to page six showing total capital construction expense and inquired if that was exclusively from the operating maintenance budget or if bond funds were included. Ms. Ogletree responded that it was exclusively from the operating budget. Chairman Monaghan referred to restricted cash on page 13 and asked if that was residual bond funds to be spent. Ms. Ogletree responded that it was that as well as debt service reserve funds. He then asked where it was invested; Ms. Ogletree responded that debt service reserve funds that are sent every month to make the bond payments are with Bank of New York who invests those funds. She added that they reduce the payment made annually by those interest payments. The proceeds from the 2007 bond issue are at County Trust invested in federated funds with a return of around 4%. Chairman Monaghan inquired about proportion of debt service to bond proceeds. Ms. Ogletree responded that bond proceeds are a little under \$9 million and the remainder is debt service reserve. Chairman Monaghan noted a large number shown as outstanding debt and inquired about the status of

collection efforts. Ms. Ogletree responded that Ms. Gorham and staff were going through and cleaning up accounts, and that procedures are ready for review by the Manager and the Commissioners. She noted that she had talked with several collections agencies; one was brought in to talk with, and staff had requested that another come in. She stated that programming is being done to extract those accounts and they hope to be ready to go out for RFP's in July or August. Chairman Monaghan asked whether the outstanding debt amount would be considered the \$939,000 or the \$678,000 amount. Ms. Ogletree responded that it is everything 90 days or older; Chairman Monaghan noted that would be the \$678,000 amount. Ms. Ogletree added that written-off accounts would also be included. Chairman Monaghan pointed out that with the economy, we want to be "nice" in our collections efforts, but some kind of effort must be made. Ms. Ogletree stated that a collection company would have to be firm with customers without harassing them, and would have the ability to look at a customer's assets in order to evaluate their ability to pay. Chairman Monaghan noted a couple of creditors shown on the list of those over \$5,000 that were back in business now and that would be shared with Ms. Ogletree later.

V. New Business:

A. Manager Reeves noted a request from the electric department for six lights and poles for an ongoing project at Lander University. He stated that since timing was critical, bids would need to be opened and reviewed, and staff would return with a recommendation later in the meeting.

B. Manager Reeves presented a recommendation for the following low bids to replace broken concrete and asphalt paving of the rear entrance road at the COC: Lawrence Construction Services for the concrete replacement project at a cost of \$18,600; and Herbert Anderson Construction for the asphalt project at a cost of \$14,615.45.

A motion was made by Commissioner Hancock to approve both bids as recommended; the motion was seconded by Commissioner Watts, and unanimously approved.

C. Manager Reeves noted a recommendation from Mr. Auman to proceed with replacement of network switches, and explained how the different options would allow for CPW to proceed alone or allow Metro to join with us. He noted that the vendor had made the option available to Metro to hold the same price for an additional thirty days. Mr. Auman explained that the price would not change regardless of whether Metro bought directly or we bought for them. The vendor gave better pricing because of the volume of the

business, but agreed to honor their best prices either way in this situation. He noted three options were bid and referred to Option B. that included firewalls, adding that the current firewall would be at the end of its life around the end of 2009. Mr. Auman noted that the vendor stated they would give a super discount by purchasing the firewall, but in his opinion, there was not enough of a discount and this option would put us over budget. He stated that the firewall could wait until 2009 at which time it would have been included in the budget for that year. Mr. Auman then recommended Option A., the CPW network switch only, at a total cost of \$85,721.81 from SDI Network.

A motion to accept the bid from SDI Network as recommended was made by Commissioner Watts, seconded by Commissioner Hancock, and unanimously approved.

Commissioner Watts inquired if anyone had talked with Metro. Mr. Auman noted that they had responded by letter and stated his intent to go back to them and show them the exact quote.

- D. Manager Reeves presented a recommendation to accept the low bid for caustic soda for a six-month period from Colonial Chemical Solutions at a cost of \$860 per dry ton. He reminded the Commissioners of the need to rebid this item due to notification from the vendor that they could no longer honor the annual bid price.

A motion to approve the bid as recommended was made by Commissioner Hancock, seconded by Commissioner Watts, and unanimously approved.

- E. Manager Reeves presented a recommendation to accept the low bid from Henry Pratt Company at a cost of \$19,850 for a 12-in. ball valve at the water treatment plant, with an additional \$2,300 expense for a filler piece to go between two flanges where the valve would be placed. Chairman Monaghan inquired about rebidding with the correct specification. Manager Reeves noted that the vendors were asked to come in and see the piece so that they would know the exact size, and that only one vendor bothered to come and even they ignored the length and bid the standard. Mr. David Tuck noted a design change in the ball valve over the past forty years that had increased the length so that it requires a shorter spool piece to make the valve fit; therefore, even if we were to rebid, we may still run into the same issue. He added that the spool piece can be purchased from another vendor since it is not a part of the Henry Pratt bid. Chairman Monaghan asked if they were sent a written specification; Mr. Tuck responded that the spool piece was not

in the specification. Manager Reeves added that the \$2,300 spool piece had not been bid yet but it would be bid. Commissioner Hancock clarified that a valve was ordered for a space that was bigger than the valve; therefore, you would then get a spacer to fill in. Mr. Tuck explained that the intent of the bid documents and specifications was for the vendors to come and look at the actual installation currently there to make sure that the new valve would fit in the existing space; only one vendor came and still missed the new labeling of the ball valve. The intent of the specs was to make sure the new valve would fit and if it required an additional fitting, they would at least recommend that so that we would know; however, none of the three vendors caught that so to make the new valve fit, would require we buy the spool piece. Commissioner Hancock noted that this was not unusual. Chairman Monaghan inquired as to whether a mandatory pre-bid conference took place. Mr. Tuck responded that there was not a pre-bid discussion, but vendors were asked to come to the site; only the second low bidder actually came.

A motion was made by Commissioner Hancock and seconded by Commissioner Watts to approve the bid from Henry Pratt Company as recommended; the motion was passed by a vote of two to one with Chairman Monaghan voting "no".

- F. Manager Reeves reminded the Board of approval to purchase tablet PC's over the last couple of years to use in a pilot study. He stated that before the process to purchase additional tablet PC's begins, they felt the Board would benefit from a demonstration of how they are used in the field. Mr. Brad Jeffares with GST Consulting who has worked closely with staff to develop the program presented an overview of what had been done thus far including an explanation of the goals set initially in order to get updated GIS and mapping information out to the guys in the field. He stated that when the guys are on-call or out there doing work, they need to know where underground utilities and above ground things that get covered up are located. He explained that in the past, mapping information was provided on a printed map and that would be updated every three months or sometimes up to a year; the goal was to get that information out to them quicker. Another goal was to give them the ability to streamline regularly scheduled maintenance tasks and document them. Where that was once done on paper and then information was transferred down the line onto the computer, they now have the ability to enter that information directly and on the spot. Mr. Jeffares noted that it also allows field staff to provide revisions and updates to the GIS. For example, when they go out and make an underground configuration change, or find a mistake in the GIS, it can be marked up and

handed off to the GIS department in order to get the maps updated more quickly. He continued that they want to make computers available to more field staff but wanted to avoid a "per computer" cost, hence the decision was made to do a pilot study. He explained the requirements of tablet PC's. Mr. Jeffares explained that the devices chosen are the best on the market with the best outdoor visible screens; they can be mounted in the vehicle or taken out; have built-in GPS; and can be used with or without a keyboard. He noted that the same GIS software as is used by the GIS department was expanded upon to allow the information to go out in the disconnected environment. The interface was customized with GIS data to make it user friendly. Mr. Jeffares noted that 800 edits had been submitted to GIS by the gas department alone in just over ten months. Mr. Derek Pendley, a maintenance person in the gas department, demonstrated several examples and applications of actual usage while out in the field. He explained that they have a search engine to help locate lines and valves and help find underground gas leaks quicker and easier. He noted that they can determine which houses have service quicker which is especially useful when you are on-call. He explained that any changes that are made are taken back at the end of the day and synced back so that they go to every computer on the server. He explained the benefits of the new system versus the old with the monthly valve program required by federal regulations whereby they go out and turn and maintain every valve in the system annually. Chairman Monaghan asked Mr. Pendley to explain a valve for those who may not be familiar. Mr. Pendley provided an example of an instance where the main trunk gas line might run north to south and there may be a valve in the middle. If there is a rupture in the line on the north end, they can valve it off, work on it, and cut the valve back on to let the supply come back through. Commissioner Hancock noted and there are also valves where the line goes to a house and another at the house and every one in the system has to be checked each year. Mr. Auman noted that whoever needs a report can now run them at the click of a couple of buttons where before they would have to take sheets and go through and compile the information needed to submit each month. From a management standpoint, the supervisor or director now has the ability to go in to see how they are progressing. At the request of Chairman Monaghan, Mr. Auman further explained checkpoints in place to address keying errors. When changes are made, there are red lines showing an edit which goes back to the GIS people for verification. It still keeps a version out there so that they can roll back to the previous backup and get it back. Mr. Pendley pointed out how this has helped with the relationship between the guys in the field and GIS. Where it used to be that guys in the field marked up maps and handed them over to GIS to edit and maps may get lost and edits were never made, now those are submitted electronically and submitted back to the guys in the field and they

can see that the edits are done. Mr. Auman stated that things in the gas department are solid enough that they have now moved into the water department. Between the water and gas departments, they are all clamoring for one in their trucks. Mr. Auman noted ten additional tablet PC's budgeted for 2008 for field work and to implement a mobile work order system to do work orders in the field. He added that additional tablets would be needed to get started, and noted \$52,000 budgeted to equip ten additional vehicles for a total of seventeen vehicles equipped and one for testing. He stated that the startup had been with crews that would get the most benefit. He noted an additional specific application for stake-out in the electric department was being tested. Commissioner Watts inquired as to which departments would receive the new tablets. Mr. Chapman responded that the water department was finding them very useful and with only two in their department could use four more immediately. He added that currently, they are operating off of paper maps that are somewhat dated and difficult to use in a wet environment. Mr. Auman concluded that they were looking to put several units in the water department, a few in the gas department, and at least two so that one can be placed with Ms. Gorham's service guys to begin a pilot program on the work order system, and at least one in the electric department. Commissioner Hancock noted that these are great tools to help keep up with state inspections.

G. Ms. Prudence Taylor with the Greenwood County Library thanked the Commissioners for the generous donation to the new library project made by CPW and presented plaques. She noted in-kind contributions in excess of \$113,000 had made a tremendous investment in both the community and the library. Commissioner Hancock noted that all contributions were utility related.

H. Chairman Monaghan stated that consideration would be given to pay rate increases during *Executive Session*.

VI. Other Business:

1. Manager Reeves had no annexation updates to report. Mr. Steve Brown reported that first reading had taken place on the Howard Corley property. He stated that under the original agreement, the property would not be annexed until there was a certificate of occupancy; that had occurred and the property would be officially annexed after July. Mr. Richard Gentry reported that Mr. Jeff Chapman and he would go to Columbia on Thursday to settle a \$28,000 grant to get water to some apartments. Commissioner Watts inquired about other grants; Mr. Gentry responded that he had not heard anything yet

- from Columbia on the block grants. He added that he had heard that the Governor wanted to eliminate them.
2. Chairman Monaghan inquired about the length of life for a gas furnace. Commissioner Hancock responded that with older furnaces it was somewhere between fifteen to twenty years; some last up to thirty years, but the useful life of the heat exchanger would be around fifteen to twenty. The newer ones that are 98% efficient will last longer. Chairman Monaghan noted that Mr. Gentry had done a good job of promoting the gas incentive program. He noted 574 furnaces and 303 water heaters since the inception of the program, adding that a gas furnace lasting twenty years is a good investment. He commented on the desire to see more ads on the incentive program. He suggested that Ms. Gorham also include something in the bills.
 3. Manager Reeves noted that the bids for six (6) light fixtures and poles for the Lander project had been reviewed and that staff was ready with a recommendation. Mr. Burnett stated that the low bid came from Wesco at a cost of \$95,075.90 without sales tax.

A motion was made by Commissioner Hancock to accept the low bid from Wesco; the motion was seconded by Commissioner Watts, and unanimously approved.

4. Manager Reeves reported that a vertical turbine pump from high service pump station #2 at the water treatment plant had been down. The pump had gone in for repairs and the initial quote was \$19,159. Manager Reeves stated that Mr. Tuck was asked to obtain two additional bids both of which were over that amount at \$24,875 and \$27,872. Mr. Reeves stated that because this pump is needed back in service, the recommendation is to approve the low bid for repairs in the amount of \$19,159.

Commissioner Hancock made a motion to approve the bid for repairs as recommended; the motion was seconded by Commissioner Watts, and unanimously approved.

5. Manager Reeves presented a second place award for the South Carolina Municipal Insurance Trust Occupational Safety Contest for 2007 in Division IV. He noted a bad experience in 2006 but that 2007 was a good year and so far 2008 had been as well.

VII. Executive Session:

A motion was made by Commissioner Hancock and seconded by Commissioner Watts to go into *Executive Session* to discuss contractual and personnel matters; the motion was unanimously approved.

The meeting returned to open session. Manager Reeves stated that during *Executive Session* the Board had reviewed and discussed the possibility of pay raises for employees, and as a result of that discussion, it would be appropriate for the Board to adopt a motion granting an across-the-board 3% pay increase to employees, and a 3% increase to on-call pay.

A motion was made by Commissioner Watts to increase all employee salaries by 3%, and to increase on-call pay by 3%, with an effective date of June 30, 2008; the motion was seconded by Commissioner Hancock, and unanimously approved.

A motion was made by Commissioner Hancock to increase the salary of the General Manager by 4% with an effective date of June 30, 2008; the motion was seconded by Commissioner Watts, and unanimously approved.

VIII. With no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Approved: _____, 2008

Secretary