

Highway 41 Water Utility
Minutes of the Meeting held September 21, 2023
In Office Meeting, Aberdeen, SK

Attendance:

- Rene Labrecque
- Mark Schaffel
- Rochelle Blocka
- Dale Cousin
- Christine Meachem
- Blaine Tomolak
- Rob Tutka
- Graham White

Rene Labrecque called the meeting to order at: 6:59 pm

Addition – deletions: none.

Adopt agenda: Dale Cousin moved adoption of the agenda as presented, seconded by **Graham White**; carried.

Minutes from last meeting: Changes to minutes: none, Dale Cousin moved adoption of the minutes, **Rochelle Blocka** seconded; carried.

Financial Report as presented by Christine Meachem:

*Motion [Motion 32 – 2023] Dale Cousin made the motion to accept the financial report as presented by Christine Meachem, **Graham White** seconded, carried.*

*Motion [Motion 33 – 2023] to pay the bills: Dale Cousin made the motion to pay the accounts payables, **Rochelle Blocka** seconded, carried.*

Operator Report – Presented by Rob Tutka

Rob Tutka presented a yearly water consumption breakdown based on three years; cost vs profit. How to combat loss of water: Auditing the system, including subscriber meters, contacting SaskWater about their meters and their accuracy.

Safety Update – Presented by Rob Tutka

Mark Schaffel, Christine Meachem, and Rob Tutka met on Thursday, September 14th to discuss monthly meetings and future documentation. Mark Schaffel brought examples of safety documents that the utility requires. Christine Meachem has been formatting into usable forms for the utility to utilize and have available to review for the next safety meeting. Christine Meachem spoke with 4 rural utilities regarding their safety programs and their policies regarding working alone. Using texting, calls, or riding with another staff member seemed to be a common safety practise with those utilities.

Rob Tutka spoke with “Site Docs” – to look at as a new safety online platform for possible use with the organization. Set up fee of \$600.00. Yearly cost is \$1545.00/year or \$128.75 per month. Fees include: Digital cloud storage, form creation, work orders, work alone safety, etc. There was discussion regarding aggressive subscribers and employee safety as being a focus for the utility. A letter will be sent to subscriber #672 by Christine Meachem and Rene Labrecque regarding civil treatment to staff as there had been an issue this past month.

The staff and Mark Schaffel will discuss at the next safety meeting when more research has been done with the “Site Docs” platform. Next safety meeting will be October 12th.

Administrator’s Report as presented by Christine Meachem

Board Review – Daily Water Testing Logs and Saskatchewan Research Council (SRC) Testing

Review of Accounts Receivable. There is a 35% difference/decrease in money owed over 90 days when compared to September of 2022.

Christine Meachem received a call from RBC Investments Broker regarding an Investment Savings account offering better interest rates (currently 4.55%). \$50,000 from the project account and \$100,000 from the chequing account were moved into the Investment Savings account in August.

There were three new truckfill customers in August.

Received a quote for Operators to receive company jackets and hats from Jeff's Crestwear in Saskatoon. To purchase and emboss with company logo is approximately \$500.00.

*Motion [Motion 35 – 2023] motion to approve new jackets and hats for Highway 41 Water Utility staff from Jeff's Crestwear, Saskatoon; **Rene Labrecque** made the motion, **Dale Cousin** seconded, carried.*

Munisoft has a new software extension. The software would allow our customers to view their utility bills online. This is a request that has come from several subscribers. The cost of the extension is \$500.00, which includes Munisoft tech support to set up extension on our system. The annual fee to retain information on their server, to keep the software active, and receive support will be \$125.00. Table this till next meeting. Christine Meachem will do more research on the product.

Financing for Subscriber Loans should be addressed. The current rates of 4.41% for a five-year loan and 5.03% for a ten-year loan are now outdated and below Canadian prime rate. Christine Meachem recommends prime+2% when a new loan is considered with the utility from a new subscriber.

*Motion [Motion 36 – 2023] motion to approve the new rates for subscriber loans – at date of loan agreement, the interest will be calculated at prime rate + 2%; **Rene Labrecque** made the motion, **Dale Cousin** seconded, carried.*

Bergheim Truckfill Expansion – presented by Blaine Tomolak and Rene Labrecque

Would like to expand the Truckfill station to attract large volume customers and facilitate current customers with decreased wait times. Includes an extra acre of land that has been purchased and levelled. A clay pad has been built for extra tanks. Cost estimates include: levelling, grading, and extra dirt and gravel, Meridian surveys, storage tanks, plumbing, new pump, "Flow Point" to set up the software and electrical components, an electrician and electrical components, etc. at an estimated cost of \$100,000.00. Christine Meachem spoke with our auditor from Jensen & Stromberg - their suggestion was the project is considered a Capital Asset project and not an expense. Therefore, the project would not affect the current year budget. The board voted to move ahead with the project.

*Motion [Motion 37 – 2023] motion to approve the Bergheim Truckfill Expansion Project; **Rene Labrecque** made the motion, **Graham White** seconded, carried.*

Farm Pilot Project Update – presented by Blaine Tomolak

The Farm Pilot Project is to accommodate Agricultural producer subscribers to access more water on their yard site. The water is to flow through their metering assembly with additional storage. Blaine Tomolak will work with chosen subscribers on each phase who will design a storage and delivery system at the subscribers' cost; approximately \$15,000. Currently each subscriber has a 0.5 imperial gallon allocation. Subscribers on the Farm Pilot Project need an increase of flow rate/allocation. An increase by half gallon of flow rate is required. It is suggested that the money generated from the extra allocation for this project be used towards the Glenmaur and Lanwici Truckfill stations to increase the load out volume of water and decrease the load out time for our customers.

*Motion [Motion 38 – 2023] motion to approve the fee structure - \$3,000.00/half gallon water allocation increase to applicable subscribers; **Dale Cousin** made the motion, **Mark Schaffel** seconded, carried.*

Motion [Motion 39 – 2023] motion to use the money paid for allocation increase from the Farm Pilot Project towards upgrading Glenmaur and Lanwici Truckfill stations; **Rene Labrecque** made the motion, **Rochelle Blocka** seconded, carried.

Maintenance Operator Report: Presented by Blaine Tomolak.

August 1st there was a leak reported from a flex hose at a subscriber's home. The hose was changed to PEX line. Neighbouring subscribers were checked for pressure on the line and converted away from flex hose to either PEX line or direct hdpe connection. All subscribers with delivery pressures greater than 110 psi will have the same conversion to avoid leaks to the system.

Four new infill projects to be completed this fall. There were new water service inquiries from 8 interested potential subscribers for next year; nothing is confirmed.

H41/Town joint committee – No meeting to date.

Set the next board meeting on October 19th, 2023.

Meeting adjourned at 11:00 by Rene Labrecque.

Signed by 

Christine Meachem
Administrator

Approved by 

Rene Labrecque
Chairman