

Coolin Sewer District
Regular Meeting Minutes
November 1, 2023

The Coolin Sewer District Board of Directors met on November 1, 2023, at the Coolin Civic Center. Those present were Jake Copeland, Paul LaCasse, Jim Morse, and Josh Christensen. Also present were Chris Morris, Jordan Brooks, and Thad O'Sullivan. Jake called the meeting to order at 4:03pm.

See attached sign in sheet for community members present.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Jake opened the budget hearing for the 2024 preliminary budget at 4:04pm.

Scott Engle stated he would like the Board to direct Jordan to put more information in the minutes. He stated that Thad's presence and comments are never recorded in the minutes. He would like to have all of Thad's comments in the minutes as they persuade the Board and their decisions. Jake responded that the Board could take that into consideration.

John Mandere stated he was curious about the status of the moratorium and when that would be touched on. Jake said it would be discussed at the next facility plan meeting at the end of the month.

Terry Saunders asked how long a moratorium could legally go on. Jake stated that he did not know a specific length of time for a moratorium. Jake also said that regardless of having a moratorium or not, it comes down to having capacity, and if the District doesn't have capacity, no new connections would be granted.

Jake stated the time was to discuss the budget and if no one had any comments on the budget then they would close the hearing.

A motion was made by Paul to close the budget hearing at 4:10pm. The motion was seconded by Jim and carried.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

A motion was made by Jim to approve the October 4th meeting minutes as read. The motion was seconded by Paul and carried.

A motion was made by Paul to approve the October 18th meeting minutes as read. The motion was seconded by Josh and carried.

A motion was made by Jim to approve the bill payments and treasurer's report. The motion was seconded by Paul and carried.

The Steamboat Bay Force Main project was briefly discussed and the fact that the District could not previously approve it without a right-of-way easement specifying the District. Everyone agreed all other documents and details looked good and there weren't any further questions or concerns at that time. The Board, Jay, Lisa, and Thad discussed next steps for the project. Thad stated there would be a working agreement for the project drafted by himself and the District Engineers. Jay asked when that would be done, and Thad said immediately. A motion was made by Jim to approve the Steamboat Bay Force Main Replacement with the condition of having a right-of-way easement, specifying Coolin Sewer District, in place prior to the transfer of ownership. The motion was seconded by Josh and carried. Paul also commented that he would like to have the District Engineers monitor the project as it is completed.

Jake read a letter from Bryan Riegel addressed to the Coolin Sewer District Board of Directors dated October 30, 2023. After reading the letter Jake gave an example of another property that was like Mr. Riegel's and explained that said property had added a 2nd building with living quarters on their parcel, which resulted in a 2nd connection fee, tank, and ERU to be billed. He stated the example was from October 2021 prior to the moratorium. Jake also went through the application that Mr. Riegel had signed and pointed out the fee of \$5,000 was listed as item #1. Bryan responded that by writing his letter, he was trying to make a point out of the situation, and he doesn't want to be the only person charged in that manner. Bryan also stated that he would like a condensed rate schedule to be given out to customers when they apply for a connection, so the customer is aware of what they are paying for. Discussion between all the attendees and the Board occurred and everyone was debating on how the connection and rates should be listed on the application. Jake stated that a connection is per house/structure (however defined in Resolution 6-01), which can sometimes go to 1 tank, such as Cavanaugh's that has multiple units and a restaurant that pays appropriate ERs for their use and there are only 2 tanks in use at that location. Thad stated that the connection fee is not per "physical connection". Scott Engle stated he believes the connection fee to be excessive. Jake responded that we would find out once our rate study (approved at the 9.6.23 meeting) is completed by our Engineers. Jake also gave examples of what other districts charge monthly for service. His example was Southside Water & Sewer which is similar size to Coolin Sewer. He said their fees are \$71.85 per month and a sewer connection fee for their district is \$17,000 for a customer not apart of their LID. He stated Coolin Sewer District fees are not far off and the rate study that was completed last year (by a previous Engineer) showed our rates to be under what they should be. Bryan then suggested the language in the application be "tightened up" and have an extended explanation of the fees. More discussion between the attendees and the Board occurred. It was suggested that there be a sliding scale for houses with different bedroom sizes as there are some houses along the lake with many bedrooms and

they are paying the same as a small cabin with 1 or 2 bedrooms. Jake directed Jordan to make a note for Kyle so it could be discussed further for at the next facility plan meeting.

Thad requested and received approval from Jake to comment on the letters written by Bryan Riegel. Thad stated he had been practicing law for 20 years and had never had his integrity questioned like it was in both letters Mr. Riegel had written to the Board. Thad also stated he gets paid for the work that he does and in no way receives a kickback for decisions the Board makes. He said year to date he had received \$22,000 for his work done for the District, which is nowhere near the budgeted \$65,000 for 2023. He also explained that at every meeting he has attended for the District since 2021, there has been a threat or mention of possible litigation toward the District, and for the Board to have been prepared when they created the budget for the year was understandable. He stated he was glad that the cost has not been as high as it could have been, and his goal is to have the amount he receives go down. Thad also stated the Board works very hard for the good of the community and it's on a volunteer basis. He even noted that there is a position open for anyone who wants to come aboard and help. Thad said to accuse the Board of working like a "shady car dealership" is completely unfair. Bryan responded to that with an apology for his letters getting heated and the theatrics that were written. He reiterated that he did not want to be charged inappropriately and did not want to be looked back upon as a moment when the Board decided to view the rules in a different way.

Jake asked Bryan if they agreed on how a connection fee is defined, and he agreed.

NEW BUSINESS

Jordan discussed the Districts current website and that it was made custom. She stated the fees are \$120 per month for hosting and maintenance. She told the board about another platform called Rural Water Impact, which is a company specializing in websites for water and sewer districts. She did not know about this company when looking into websites in early 2022. She stated the cost to create the page would be \$350 and the annual fee for the page would be \$457 and even with the page creation cost, the District would be saving a lot of money. She said currently the District pays \$1,440 for the year and with Rural Water Impact the cost would be down to about \$500 for the year, after the site is created. The Board agreed this would be a good switch. A motion was made by Jim to switch from the current provider (BosonHub) to Rural Water Impact. The motion was seconded by Paul and carried.

BOARD COMMENT

Josh stated to the meeting attendees that the Board is doing their due diligence and working their hardest to do a good job for the District. He also noted that some directors are still working full time jobs while also serving on the board.

ENGINEER'S REPORT

Jake stated the next Engineer's report will be at the end of November at the next facility planning meeting. Jordan stated that those meetings are open to the public.

OPERATORS REPORT

Chris stated he replaced a pump at the Cromer residence and at Cyrus Azar's. He also pumped out the tank at Kyle Johnson's property.

Chris discussed a letter he had received from Chris Westerman at DEQ regarding private lift stations and the fact that DEQ now wants each new system to be approved by an Engineer. Jake and Jordan decided to add that to the next facility plan meeting to be discussed with Kyle and Zack, the District Engineers.

Jordan asked Chris about the pump at the Thomas residence and if it was still at the bottom of the hill. Chris said yes it was and he still needs to find help to get it out.

Chris said he was able to repair the pump from the Schwarmann residence and that pump was used to replace the one at the Azar residence.

No further business was discussed. Jim made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 5:31pm. The motion was seconded by Josh and carried.

Submitted by,

Jordan Brooks
Clerk | Treasurer
Coolin Sewer District

Coolin Sewer District

Meeting Sign in Sheet

Nov. 1, 2023

Please print your first and last name below. Thank you!

Budget Hearing
Regular Meeting

1. Scott Engle
2. Kay Bennett-Douglars
3. Payton Douglas
4. Bryan Riegel
5. Jay Bonnett
6. John Skelk
7. Dan Larson
8. Dan & Elson
9. John Mandere
- 10.
- 11.
- 12.
- 13.
- 14.
- 15.
- 16.
- 17.
- 18.
- 19.
- 20.

Terry Saunders (next to John Mandere)

Coolin Sewer District
Special Meeting Minutes – Planning Meeting #3
November 29, 2023

The Coolin Sewer District Board of Directors met on November 29, 2023, at the Coolin Civic Center. Those present were Paul LaCasse, Jim Morse, Josh Christensen, and Jake Copeland. Also, present were Chris Morris, Jordan Brooks & Kyle Meschko. Not present, Thad O’Sullivan. Jake called the meeting to order at 3:14pm.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

The first topic of discussion was about a letter received from Chris Westerman at DEQ in October of this year. The letter was regarding new implementations of engineering approval for new individual pump stations. The new requirement being that an Idaho Licensed Professional Engineer would need to prepare a preliminary engineering report (PER), addressing all applicable items in the Idaho wastewater rules IDAPA 58.01.16. Kyle gave the Board a couple of options for how the District could handle the requirements moving forward. Option 1: Put it completely on the homeowner to find/procure an Idaho PE to develop a PER and submit to DEQ and Coolin/District Engineer for review. Option 2: Keller could work with the District to develop a couple of PERs for individual pump stations, as well as associated typical plans and specs. Kyle stated that option 1 would be the preferred option, as it would put the effort on the homeowner or developer and not the District, besides a cursory review. After discussing those options, the Board requested that Jordan reach out to Chris Westerman for a bit more clarification on the requirements stated in the letter before they made any decisions.

Emergency reuse was discussed. Kyle asked for confirmation that all reports were sent over to DEQ. Jordan stated that she sent the required information to Emma shortly after extended irrigation was completed in October. She also stated that there had been no follow-up questions or concerns from DEQ, since the reports were submitted. Kyle said that was to be expected and to keep him up to date on the matter.

Kyle stated that Letters of Interest (LOIs) for grant and loan funding opportunities via IDEQ were to be submitted by January 12, 2024. A motion was made by Paul to submit a Letter of Interest with the assistance of Keller Associates. The motion was seconded by Josh and carried.

The next item discussed was the possibility of implementing a sliding scale for user fees. Kyle stated that typically sewer rates either have a flat residential base fee or their fee is tied to water consumption. He said that since the District doesn’t provide water, it is difficult to tie sewer production to a house. He stated that other Districts have investigated appurtenances in houses or by rooms, but

that method could create issues as the large residential houses could argue they are only there a small portion of the time, making their overall usage below average for the year. The Board went back and forth on ideas and concerns regarding that approach. Jordan stated that she spoke with Julie at Southside Water & Sewer about their experience with this method of assessment and she was told it was a long and detailed process to implement. Jake stated that he would like to discuss the matter further after the current rate study is completed by Keller. He would also like to move the annual budget hearing forward (into the summer months) next year, so more people can attend. He would like to have a presentation done by Keller to explain the most recent rate study at that time. Kyle said they anticipate having the rate study completed in early 2024 so there would be plenty of time for District review and response prior to the budget meeting/hearing in the summer of 2024.

Kyle provided an outline of the *proposed* projects which were based on planning criteria and system evaluation. His intention for the meeting was to review and discuss the Capital Improvement Plan and get feedback from the District on project prioritization. The Board and Kyle, along with meeting attendees, discussed the proposed projects and the costs associated with each one. They also discussed flow data and how those numbers factor into District updates and any expansion in the future. No decisions were made on projects at that time. The Board felt that funding options would greatly determine the direction things would go. Jake asked Kyle to attend the meeting set for the following week so that they could have some time to look the projects over.

There was discussion about the possibility of transferring “ERs/LIDs” or some sort of buyback for those property owners who would not be using hookups that they had previously paid for. Jake asked if Jordan could check with other Districts around the lake to see if they have a buyback or transfer policy. As well as ask Thad for the legal way to transfer or sell an ER/LID.

Jake directed Jordan to ask Thad if he does Bond work or if he had a recommendation for a Bond Attorney. He also asked her to check with Shelley at IRWA to see if she had any funding options she could share with the District.

No further business was discussed, and a motion was made by Jim to adjourn the meeting at 4:58pm. The motion was seconded by Josh and carried.

A copy of the Engineer’s meeting notes is available by request.

Submitted by,

Jordan Brooks
Clerk | Treasurer
Coolin Sewer District

Coolin Sewer District

Meeting Sign in Sheet

NOV. 29, 2023

Print your first and last name below. Thank you!

1. Janet Lowley

2. Jacob Marble

3. Josh Pich

4. John Menden

5. Dan Larson

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