

**MINUTES
TAYLORS FIRE & SEWER DISTRICT
REGULAR BI-MONTHLY MEETING
NOVEMBER 15, 2022**

The regular bi-monthly meeting of the Board of Commissioners was held at the District Office in the Board Room, 3335 Wade Hampton Blvd., Taylors, South Carolina at 4:30 pm.

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT

Jeff Hannah, Commission Chairman
Paul Bowen, Commission Vice Chairman/Treasurer
Ken Carter, Commission Secretary

STAFF PRESENT

Bobby Baker, Fire Chief
Alicia Jenkins, Administrative Data Coordinator
Stephanie Hackler, Senior Accounting & HR Specialist
Shane Bagwell, Deputy Chief
Todd Jennings, Fire Marshal

OTHERS PRESENT:

Chris Bowen (Hogan Construction), Jaime Daniel, Diane Jones (Constituent), Mark A. J. Rea, Jr., Jared Sang (DP3 Architects)

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Hannah at 4:31 pm.

Chairman Hannah stated that the media outlets who requested notification of this bi-monthly meeting were notified via door posting, email, website, Facebook, and Twitter.

Chairman Hannah amended the agenda for this meeting by moving the Public Comment up on the agenda to follow the Pledge of Allegiance.

Chairman Hannah led everyone in saying the Pledge of Allegiance.

Chairman Hannah recognized constituent, Ms. Diane Jones. Ms. Jones briefly addressed the Board regarding the District's former Septic Tank Reimbursement Policy.

Ms. Jones: I built a house about five years ago and we discovered, I guess the subdivision, discovered that we were getting charged for sewer and we all had septic tanks. So, we contacted whoever we were supposed to contact on the taxes, and they told us that it's too hard to take it off. We'll just give you money every six years to have your septic tank drained. Just do it and give us the bill and here we are coming up on five years, and my neighbor, she went and got hers done, I think in February. And so, I said, I am going to wait five years because it's just me by myself in the house and then I found out, when I called to set it up, that you guys were not doing it anymore. And so, I looked at my taxes and I've spent \$1,058 and some cents to the County for that, which I didn't receive anything back. And so, I was just kind of disappointed and trying to figure out if I

could at least get my septic tank cleaned out one time and that's what I was here for. And I think it's \$475. I called to see.

Chairman Hannah: There was a meeting that you were at with us where we discussed that MetroConnects were probably going to be taking us over.

Ms. Jones: No, I was at the meeting where you said you guys were going to let us do that and pay for it. But I don't believe I was at a meeting where someone was taking it over.

Chairman Hannah: We been fighting with Metro and ReWa for the past four or five years over sewer and Greenville County forced us to turn the sewer over to Metro. So, as of July 1st, we are not in the sewer business anymore. I understand the pain, but we are just not in the sewer business anymore. I would probably call Metro and ask Metro.

Ms. Jones: They said that you guys would take care of it.

Chairman Hannah: They said we would take care of it?

Ms. Jones: Yes, to call you guys.

Vice Chairman/Treasurer Bowen: Do you remember who you talked to?

Ms. Jones: I don't remember. And I think I talked to one of the ladies here and she said well if you want to come and talk to them about it. But I have been retired for many years and being hit with different bills, it has just been very difficult.

Chairman Hannah: Is there something wrong with your septic tank and that is the reason you are having it pumped?

Ms. Jones: No, but they are saying you are supposed to have it done every five to six years.

Chairman Hannah: Who's telling you that?

Ms. Jones: Well, that's what I've checked. And I've got a neighbors behind me that actually had their sewer went bad and they had to move out of their house and have everything torn up and redone. So, I don't know. I've not had a sewer before, so it's news to me.

Chairman Hannah: I've always been told that as long as it's working, leave it alone.

Vice Chairman/Treasurer Bowen: Usually septic tanks will go for ten to twenty years without any trouble.

Ms. Jones: I don't know. I just know my neighbors, which it wasn't in our new subdivision, they had trouble with theirs.

Secretary Carter: Is it possible that the five years is because of what the vote was for the reimbursement originally, every six years to get it done and then a precedent was set?

Vice Chairman/Treasurer Bowen: Originally, we set it up that we would pay for it once every five years.

Ms. Jones: We were told six.

Senior Accounting & HR Specialist Hackler: It's always been every three and we have the minutes to that meeting. And it had been \$250 prior, and in that meeting as a result, because we could not take your ad valorem off, actually the State Legislature, our Board decided to raise it to the \$400. Most companies cost about \$360, so we raised it to \$400 as a reimbursement every three years. So, it had been \$250 every three years for years previous. I don't exactly remember when, but it had been ten or so years for that policy and then it changed to \$400 every three years in 2019. So, it's every three years.

Ms. Jones: I remember every six, so I waited. But I have a grandson that is living with me now for over a year, so I figured I better get it done. And I checked to see how much I spent and gave the tax for that and I paid for nothing. I gave out over \$1,000. And being retired is difficult. I got carjacked and lost about \$3,000 worth of stuff and then I had to buy a brand-new car because when I got my car back after three months, the engine died. So now I have a car payment. So, that's why I was like, alright, I'm just going to come and see if I could get one cleaning. That would be awesome! But I wonder where the \$1,000 went to.

Senior Accounting & HR Specialist Hackler: So, it would go within the sewer. It's similar to on your tax bill where you're paying to Greenville County Schools. And I understand hearing you say you don't have anybody in school. I don't know how often you frequent the library. It's very similar to that. And how this was set up years ago when we had an ad valorem, years before I was here. State Legislature set it up and as long as we are taxing one, you tax all in the District, so that is why the septic tanks were also taxed. There was no way to alleviate that unless we went to consumption, which is what Metro does. I believe your subdivision was actually in favor of going to Metro, so that you would lose your ad valorem and you wouldn't have to pay that anymore. I know it's painful, like you said, as far as what is going on, but it's very similar to what you pay for Greenville County Schools. It was the sewer system, which supports the whole entire community with restaurants and the shopping centers. So, that's pretty much where those had gone from. And in the future, you will not have that ad valorem on your tax bill.

Ms. Jones: Yeah, what will that actually say then?

Senior Accounting & HR Specialist Hackler: It will say Taylors Sewer. That one will go away. The Taylors Fire will still be there. So, you will still be paying the Taylors Fire. Tax bills went out. We received ours yesterday. You should not have Taylors Sewer on yours. If you do, please let Alicia or I know. We'll be happy to take a look at that. Then septic tanks were not charged the user fee that those of us who are on sewer were charged. So, we definitely did it as fair as we possibly could and all of us wanted to fight Metro on that. We did not want to go to Metro.

Ms. Jones: I didn't know it was something that we could have voted on. I would have voted on it.

Senior Accounting & HR Specialist Hackler: We didn't get to vote.

Ms. Jones: Oh. Okay.

Senior Accounting & HR Specialist Hackler: It wasn't on the referendum. I know this Board was thinking about having to turn it over. It's not something they wanted to do.

Secretary Carter: But that ad valorem is in perpetuity from now on that you will not be paying. Is that correct?

Senior Accounting & HR Specialist Hackler: That is correct.

Secretary Carter: That should offset more than what septic should take to get pumped every four or five years or whatever you want to do on that.

Ms. Jones: I guess I don't understand that, because I shouldn't have been charged \$1,000 to begin with.

Secretary Carter: Moving forward, since we don't have sewer anymore, that charge is being eliminated.

Senior Accounting & HR Specialist Hackler: I do have the minutes to the meetings that explain that where our attorneys were here and explained why we had to charge you the ad valorem. I'd be happy to give these copies to you. Maybe refresh your memory. It goes over the \$250 every three years versus the \$400 every three years. I believe you had attended one. I don't know if you attended both of the meetings.

Ms. Jones: I was at one.

Senior Accounting & HR Specialist Hackler: I'm not sure. I can't remember if you were there when our attorney was here, but he explained, and it should be recorded in the minutes why we have to charge everyone in our District. Moving into any District that has an ad valorem, you are going to get charged that whether you use that piece of whatever the ad valorem is or not. It's something that when you're moving into that County or District you're charged.

Ms. Jones: I understand that, but when you're promised that this is what will happen, and it doesn't happen...

Senior Accounting & HR Specialist Hackler: If we had kept the sewer, we would be happy to write you a \$400 check and then the Board would have to vote, but we are no longer in the sewer business.

Ms. Jones: Well, if Metro was buying the company, then why did they not buy the debt?

Senior Accounting & HR Specialist Hackler: They did not buy us. It was a merger by Greenville County. Greenville County Council ordered all the sewers, we weren't the only ones. There were several of us that were taken over and they did take cash flow as well as debt from us, but they did not have to take our policies.

Chairman Hannah: And to be fair, we did fight Metro for y'all about septic tanks. We tried to get them to do something for people who did have septic tanks and we were backed into a corner, because Greenville County was going to hold our funding and we wouldn't get any tax money. So, the Fire Department would have been sitting with no fuel, no pay, no nothing and we had to do something. It was just a strong-armed tactic to get it and they did. I never thought I'd see Greenville County stoop that low, but they did.

Ms. Jones: So, there is nothing to vote on or anything? It's just a no, right?

Chairman Hannah: The sewer department was given to Metro July 1st and if you would have gotten it pumped before July 1st, we would have paid for it.

Ms. Jones: Well, I had a lot going on. I totally forgot about it and when it came up, I found out it was too late when I called.

Chairman Hannah: So, it's just you and your grandson living in the house?

Ms. Jones: Yes.

Chairman Hannah: I don't know that I would touch that septic tank until it gave me trouble.

Vice Chairman/Treasurer Bowen: Most people don't have a septic tank pumped until they start having trouble.

Ms. Jones: Well, what would the trouble be?

Chairman Hannah: Your drain fields would fill up.

Vice Chairman/Treasurer Bowen: The drain fields would fill up. You would start having a wet spot in your yard.

Ms. Jones: It's kind of hard to find a wet spot because my builder didn't do a very good job in draining the thing and I had to pay for drainage in the backyard.

Vice Chairman/Treasurer Bowen: If your septic tank starts coming on top of the ground, you going to have a big green spot.

Ms. Jones: A green spot?

Vice Chairman/Treasurer Bowen: Yes, that's where the grass is going to grow the best.

Ms. Jones: Okay.

Secretary Carter: It's the best fertilizer.

Chairman Hannah: I don't know that I would touch it, until it gave me trouble.

Deputy Chief Bagwell: I have seven people in my family, and I haven't pumped mine in ten years.

Secretary Carter: I'm going on six and I have four.

Chairman Hannah: You've got to understand the people who are telling you to pump it are in the business to pump septic tanks.

Ms. Jones: Well, I was going by what they said, too. Well, what I remember, six years.

Senior Accounting & HR Specialist Hackler: Yes, it's always been three years. Well, it's been three years since I been here, and I have been here fourteen years.

Chairman Hannah: And there are some people who do live in places where the ground doesn't perc well. And by perc, I mean it doesn't take water out of the drain field. So, that is one of the reasons why we probably went to three years. To let everybody...

Vice Chairman/Treasurer Bowen: For the ones that were having trouble.

Ms. Jones: Okay. Well, I hope the meeting goes well.

Chairman Hannah: Thank you for coming.

Ms. Jones: Stay warm.

Chairman Hannah: Drive careful going home.

Ms. Jones: Thank you.

Chairman Hannah presented the minutes from the regularly scheduled bi-monthly meeting held on September 13, 2022 at 4:30 pm and the special called meeting held on November 3, 2022 at 8:45 am. Vice Chairman/Treasurer Bowen made a motion to accept the minutes as written. Secretary Carter seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Vice Chairman/Treasurer Bowen made a motion to go into executive session as per SC Code of Law Sections *30-4-70(a)(1)* and *30-4-70(a)(2)* for discussion of current By-Laws and Procurement Policy for Taylors Fire and Sewer District and potential changes to same; for discussion of negotiations incident to proposed contractual arrangements related to proposed construction contracts for the new Fire Station/Headquarters; for discussion of compensation of employees and Commissioners and other employment related issues; and to receive legal advice where the legal

advice relates to matters covered by the attorney-client privilege related to the issues mentioned above and other related matters. Secretary Carter seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously. The Board entered executive session at 4:48 pm.

Secretary Carter made a motion to exit executive session. Chairman Hannah seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously. The Board exited executive session at 6:49 pm. No action was taken during executive session.

Vice Chairman/Treasurer Bowen made a motion to increase employee Christmas bonuses to \$150 per year of service and offer volunteers a bonus of \$575 pending legal approval. Secretary Carter seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Secretary Carter made a motion to move forward in choosing a one-story design build for the New Fire Station/Headquarters. Vice Chairman/Treasurer Bowen seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

There was no old business to discuss.

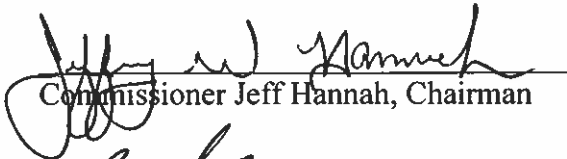
Under new business, Senior Accounting & HR Specialist Hackler and the Board briefly discussed the proposed 2023 regularly scheduled bi-monthly commission meeting schedule. Vice Chairman/Treasurer Bowen made a motion to accept the 2023 regularly scheduled bi-monthly commission meeting schedule as proposed and to publish the schedule in the necessary media. Secretary Carter seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Chairman Hannah recognized Fire Chief Baker for the Fire Department Report. Fire Chief Baker reviewed the meetings attended during the previous months, as well as upcoming meetings/training. He recognized the years of service, resignations, and deployment for various personnel. Fire Chief Baker announced that David Orshal completed the South Carolina Fire Academy and was assigned to A-Shift. In addition, Amber Reid also completed the South Carolina Fire Academy and was assigned to C-Shift. Fire Chief Baker also announced that Hadyn Coley was hired on September 28, 2022 and assigned to C-Shift. Fire Chief Baker informed the Board that the 27-year-old Reserve Engine #82A (1995 Pierce Saber Fire Engine) that was declared as surplus to sell, was purchased by Clinton Fire Department for \$22,500. Fire Marshal Todd Jennings submitted all four quarterly fire inspection reports for 2022 to the South Carolina Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation Fire Life Safety Division. Fire Chief Baker also submitted the Department's annual equipment certification document for 2022 to the South Carolina Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation Fire Life Safety Division. The Fire Department received \$286 from the collection and recycling of the aluminum cans program, with proceeds going towards the Southeastern Firefighters Burn Foundation. Fire Chief Baker then summarized the Incident Response Reports for the months of September and October 2022, as well as the 2022 South Carolina Fire Fatalities Report as of November 7, 2022. Not included in Fire Chief Baker's report, Firefighters Alan Wood and Tyler Lowe passed their driving test. In addition, the New Fire Engine #81 was put in service as of November 14, 2022. Its first call was run on November 15, 2022 to assist with a child who fell down an old well off of Clement Road. Old Fire Engine #81 is now Fire Engine #81A on the backline with a cracked tank that is currently

getting repaired. With there being no questions or comments with the Fire Department Report, Vice Chairman/Treasurer Bowen made a motion to accept the Fire Department Report as presented. Secretary Carter seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Chairman Hannah recognized Mrs. Jaime Daniel for the Financial Report. Mrs. Daniel reviewed the Financial Report in draft of the first quarter of fiscal year 2023. She detailed the statement of net position, the statement of activities, general funds, and the cash flow statement. Mrs. Daniel informed the Board that the District's auditor had been onsite and that everything was going well with the audit. Mrs. Daniel asked if there were any questions. There were none. Vice Chairman/Treasurer Bowen made a motion to accept the Financial Report as presented. Secretary Carter seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

There being no further business, Secretary Carter made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Vice Chairman/Treasurer Bowen seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously, and the meeting was adjourned at 7:11 pm.


Commissioner Jeff Hannah, Chairman

1/10/23
Date Minutes Approved


Commissioner Paul Bowen, Vice Chairman/Treasurer


Commissioner Ken Carter, Secretary