

SEVEN LAKES WATER ASSOCIATION, INC.

Board Meeting Minutes – October 18, 2022

The meeting called to order AT 6:33 PM by Board of Trustees President, Kim Gudgel

IN ATTENDANCE:

Board Members: Kim Gudgel, Ron Crow, Karri Chase, Marc Lebeau

GUESTS/Members: (15) Theresa Regimbal, Elizabeth Johnson, Ron Erue, Sherri Klotz, John Flaherty, Andrew Springer, Sissel Springer, Fred Dockendorph, Bruce Holen, Bill Bowgle, Maryland Bowgle, Yvonne Crow, Dan Nielsen, Curt Bry, Keith Kruger

Employees: Paul Lucas and new-hire, Deana Sweet (Future Office Manager)

ABSENT: Craig Thompson, Adam Bursell

Kim Gudgel made a brief introduction and asked fellow Board Members to do likewise. He introduced Ms. Deana Sweet, who last week accepted the position of SLWA Office Manager. She offered comments on her work history including 10-year experience working for the Camano Island Water District. She will be added to all of our accounts for access to view and allow her to pay bills.

MINUTES:

The minutes for the September 20, 2022 meeting were reviewed and a motion to approve was submitted by Kim Gudgel, it was seconded by Karri Chase. The **vote** was unanimous for approval and the Motion was carried.

TREASURERS REPORT:

There was no Profit & Loss Statement nor a Balance Sheet available at the meeting. Marc Lebeau reported he hopes to have those for the November meeting. In their absence, he provided a current Bank Statement Summary. Mr. Lucas Closed UNION BANK accounts and has plans to close CD with US Bank on 01 NOVEMBER, (Mature Date) – avoids \$3,000 penalty. Last month the Board authorized moving funds to BECU CD Account. That has not been done yet.

As assigned, Marc visited the major banks with whom we do business, asking for the best deal to support our Association's financial needs. Karri Chase and Kim were able to join him on several of the visits. CHASE Bank seems to offer the most beneficial business services.

With more funds in CHASE, they can offer the Business Platinum Checking, which includes a number of beneficial services for SLWA, including a free check reading machine and software, Credit & Debit cards as needed, Reduced transaction fees (.40/ea.) after 500 per month, Free cashier's checks, Money Orders, Credit card reader in office, etc.

MOTION: Marc Lebeau submitted a motion that we place our funds from Union Bank into a new CHASE Business Platinum Account. Funds from US Bank CD place in BECU CD Account. Limited discussion followed, including a Guest member's assertion that CHASE Bank had questionable corporate business dealings. The Motion was seconded by Karri Chase.

The **vote** was unanimous; Motion carried.

Marc Lebeau offered the following Discussion: With the front office in such a disarray, and a new Office Manager (OM) seems very ambitious to make improvements as they are needed, He suggested that rather than subject the new OM to a \$500 purchase "Mother May I?" we waive that for the first 4 months, until we can assemble a proper BUDGET. Adam Bursell offered a counter proposal (by e-mail) before the meeting and Karri Chase suggested a compromise solution: That the Board "pre-approve" a sum of money (not to exceed \$10,000) from which the New Office Manager can seek access to, with Board Representative approval. The purpose of the TEMPORARY Funds was to purchase (for the Association) – things that she may need to get the office functioning competently. Some of the existing office equipment has been poorly-selected and in some cases – poorly-functioning. (Office Copier, new computer for the front Office, Desk, Chair, etc.)

MOTION: Marc Lebeau submitted a motion that the Board Approve a \$10,000 TEMPORARY Budget Item for the front office manager to use at her discretion to purchase the things needed for the Front Office. Each would be subject to the Secretary-Treasurer's verbal authorization. The Motion was seconded by Ron Crow. The **vote** was unanimous; Motion carried.

SECRETARY'S REPORT

Marc Lebeau reported successful effort using ZipRecruiter, to identify qualified candidates for Office Manager. He thanked Board Members for participation in a rather lengthy hiring process. (2 full days of candidate interviews), following background and reference checks. The following dates were noted:

10/11/22 – Closed posting for Office Manager.

(10/01/22) Invoiced for \$576.05 for ZipRecruiter

10/11/22 – Adjusted (increased) advertised salary of Bookkeeper to just below the pay-scale approved for (new-hire field technician) Mr. John MOEHRLE.

Checked 10/16/22 – no new qualified Bookkeepers applied on ZipRecruiter.

Reminder to the Board: SLWA Pays \$25/day to keep ad active.

Marc Lebeau offered the following for Discussion: There is a need to identify the division of Association Duties between the two managers. He referred to a pre-prepared document circulated to the Board Members, with input incorporated from interested Board Trustees. Limited discussion followed.

MOTION: That the Board approve the notional OFFICE MANAGER and OPERATIONS MANAGER Duties and Responsibilities List (RevB). Have the Board President sign to certify these wishes to be from the Board of Trustees. The Motion was seconded by Karri Chase.

The **vote** was unanimous; Motion carried. Kim Gudgel signed the documents at the meeting.

Marc Lebeau reported on the ANNUAL ELECTION BALLOTS: He admitted being blindsided by the task, until prompted by Mr. Paul Lucas. Marc reported the following timeline:

10/03 – Received DRAFT Ballot from Paul Lucas via e-mail.

10/04 – Provided input, suggest ADVERTISEMNET for Board Membership.

10/05 – Received the REVISED Ballot with Ad on bottom

WEBSITE REPORT:

Adam Bursell was not present to report on progress. Kim asked Paul Lucas about whether the HostGator contractor had been contacted. Paul reported that the personal sign-on by the SLWA's former Bookkeeper prevented further changes. He reported that the only option was to close the current account and re-establish a new one.

ACTION ITEM: (Paul) Contact website contractor, HostGator to close the current account and establish a new one.

MANAGERS REPORT:

Paul Lucas provided the Board with pre-prepared notes with updates on various projects and current and future plans. They are summarized below:

Wireless Meter Installation: Total Project Complete: 33%

Installed this Month: 80 (As of this date)

Total Installed: 731

Meters On-hand: 30 (Industrial)

Meters on Order: 1,000 (250/2-months)

Emergency Generator Installation: Total Project Complete: 25%

Generators Delivered: 02

Generators On-Hand, Ready to be set): 01

Propane Tanks Ordered: 03 (Delivery by 11/01)

Installations Begin: by 11/10

Security Cameras: All materials are on-hand. Commence installation in next 10 days.

Ordered a new SLWA Office Sign (replace defaced one): Delivery by 11/05.

Allocating time for training new Office Manager.

OLD BUSINESS:

Kim Gudgel provided a summary of vacant Board positions. We currently have one vacant seat, and a letter from Mr. Craig Thompson seeking no further Board Membership following the Annual Meeting, next month. Mr. Kim Gudgel had submitted the same notification, at last month's meeting.

Kim Gudgel acknowledged the written input provided by Guest/Member Ron Erue and Ms. Sherri Klotz, provided in the closing minutes of last month's meeting. Several

productive observations that should help the Board as we determine our priorities for moving forward.

NEW BUSINESS:

Karri Chase offered the following for discussion: Field Technician, Mr. Eric Hentila has been doing a remarkable job both in the field, working & interfacing with our customer/members while also pitching in to support office operations and training the new hire. She proposed that the Board consider a 15% Raise (to include COLA adjustments, promised but not delivered. Discussion that supporter her observations were expressed.

MOTION: Karri Chase submitted the motion that the Board approve a 15% pay raise for Mr. Hentila in recognition of the extraordinary contribution to the Association's focus on service delivery demonstrated by his loyal actions. Ron Crow seconded the motion. The **vote** was unanimous; Motion carried.

Kim Gudgel offered the following for discussion: The Organizational Chart that Marc Lebeau had developed should be adopted by the Board as our SLWA official Organizational Chart. No discussion followed. Ron Crow seconded the motion. The **vote** was unanimous; Motion carried.

Kim Gudgel offered as an attachment to the Meeting Minutes, a comprehensive listing of Action Items from the past year. They were accepted without review. They will be attached to these Meeting Minutes as documentation.

Karri Chase reported that she had seen a member's complaint in an on-line social app about receiving a late fee. She investigated the report and found it to be a mistaken report. She offered to contact the member on behalf of the Board with updated information.

Kim Gudgel made a short presentation, providing Guest/Member Ron Erue with a copy of his Water Certificate and User Agreement that he had requested months ago. Paul Lucas said it had been dated for the month that he purchased his home.

OPEN DISCUSSION:

Guest/Member Sissel Springer offered an observation that the members decided to allow the Board Members to make decisions with the members' best interest in mind. Expressed hopes that other members would recognize that and be more supportive.

Guest/Member Andrew Springer asked about how far behind the bookkeeping had gotten. Mark Lebeau offered that it was probably close to 70% being caught up. Karri Chase suggested that number was too high. Mr. Springer acknowledged (toward Mr. Lucas) that the "Water is Good," adding that perhaps with a new Office Manager coming in, perhaps we could get both sides equally successful.

Guest/Member Ron Erue asked about whether the derogatory comments that were on his Bill Master Account in the SLWA database, (made by a previous employee) had been removed. Mr. Paul Lucas that they had. Mr. Erue asked whether they had been

removed from all accounts (not just his), and the answer was that “all the ones that we were made aware of” had been removed. Mr. Erue believed that SLWA should have audited all the accounts for these unprofessional entries. Karri Chase pointed out the enormity of that effort and asked him where the priority of doing such a task might fall relative to paying our bills?

Guest/Member Ron Erue was asked by absent Board Member, Mr. Adam Bursell to read and then submit his letter of resignation from the Board of Trustees. He did so and presented the signed letter to the Board.

Guest/Member Sissel Springer offered the comment that she would like to be helpful to the Board, but said that she didn't have the temperament to take this sort of treatment as a member of the Board.

Guest/Member Dan Nielsen offered the comment that this was the first Board meeting that he had ever attended in the 40 years that he has been a member. He said that he “loves the water quality.” He asked about the qualifications to be a Board member. Several Board members offered responses; generally speaking, the answer was “nothing but interest and some spare time.” The point was made that we need to outline that as SLWA advertises for volunteer Board Members.

A Guest/Member offered the comment that the Board was doing a fine job, given the circumstances and that collectively there was community appreciation. The gentleman offered a round of applause for the Board.

Kim Gudgel addressed the guest/Members about the current Board vacancies. Guest/Member Ron Erue offered that SLWA has not sent out advertisements with the bi-monthly bills (as he had suggested some months ago). Recent Board efforts to place a message about LATE FEES at the bottom of bills had very little effect. He suggested a separate quarter sheet of contrasting colored paper inside the billing envelope was strongly suggested. Kim Gudgel asked Paul if it could be done; he answered affirmatively. Marc Lebeau asked whether anyone would volunteer to write it up and got no responses.

ACTION ITEM: (Marc) Author a short narrative to be sent to the printers for use in the very next billing cycle.

Guest/Member Yvonne Crow offered a comment that the effectiveness of the Board had improved dramatically in the last 4 months.

ADJOURN: 7:50 PM

Submitted by: Marc Lebeau, Secretary-Treasurer

CERTIFIED TO BE A TRUE COPY:

 11/15/22

July 2022

- Vision Statement/Priorities Craig
- Allow Volunteer members to examine books and assist with bookkeeping Karri/Sherri
- Research Power Usage Marc/Paul

August 2022

- Investigate bank accounts to determine best use of funds Marc/Kim/Karri *Pending*
- Provide written procedures for maintenance of books Karri *Pending*
- Establish Division of Labor between Office Manager and Operations Manager Marc/Board
- Hire Bookkeeper Hiring Committee (Kim/Marc/Craig/Ron/Karri/Paul) *Pending*
- Develop Questions for Applicant Reference Calls Marc
- Develop Questions for Office Manager Applicant Interviews Marc
- Develop Questions for Bookkeeper Applicant Interviews Marc
- Hire housekeeping Service for SWLA Office Karri

September 2022

- Complete Analysis of Banking Accounts and consolidate Marc, Kim/ Paul *Pending*
- Generator Installation: Research availability of Natural Gas/Propane Tank Lease/Purchase Eric/ Paul *Pending*
- Advertise via website and ballots for Board Members Paul *Pending*
- Research Pipe Locating Equipment Eric *Pending*