

**MOUNTAIN LAKES DISTRICT  
BUDGET COMMITTEE MEETING via Zoom Video Conferencing  
November 24, 2020  
\*UNAPPROVED\***

Chair Laraine King read a statement that the Board was authorized to meet electronically due to the state of emergency (COVID-19), that the meeting had been properly noticed and information given to the public on how to join the meeting via Zoom Video Conferencing, and that all votes would be by roll call, in accordance with the provisions of the Governor's emergency order.

**Call to Order:** Laraine King called the meeting to order at 8:00 am.

**Present:** Laraine King (alone), Robert Roudebush (alone), Brian Loutrel (alone), Chris Roberts (alone), Don Drew (Water/Maintenance Manager-alone) and Kristi Garofalo (District Administrator – alone). Commissioners Bob Long and Mark Johanson, and Water Committee chair Patricia Brady, were also present via Zoom.

**Approval of Minutes: Nov. 10, 2020:** Robert Roudebush moved to approve the minutes; Brian Loutrel seconded. Roll Call Vote: Laraine King-Aye, Robert Roudebush-Aye, Chris Roberts-Aye, Brian Loutrel-Aye, Don Drew-Aye, Kristi Garofalo-Aye. Motion passed.

**Budget Updates:** The Committee reviewed Worksheet #1 for General Operating and Worksheet #2 for the Water Department containing current YTD figures as of Oct. 31, 2020. The worksheets used the line amounts appropriated for 2020 as a starting figure for 2021. Noted below are the updates, actions and/or changes the Committee agreed on for lines from both budgets:

**General Operating Budget:**

- **5026-1 (FICA Expense-GenOp) and 5026-2 (FICA Expense-Rec):** The Committee agreed to set 5026-1 at \$4,900 and keep 5026-2 at \$1900 per Kristi Garofalo's calculations.
- **5062-1 (Fees/Registrations):** The Committee agreed to set this line at \$3,300 to include NHDES dam registration fees (\$1,150 annually) and VLAP testing fees (about \$250 annually).

**Water Dept. Budget:**

- **2-5039 (WD FICA Expense):** The Committee agreed to keep this line at \$3,000 per Kristi Garofalo's calculations.
- **2-5062 (WD Fees/Registration):** Don Drew previously sent an email with an estimate from Eastern Analytical of \$3,527 for state required water testing for 2021 and suggesting a buffer to bring the line to \$4,000 for water testing, plus the additional membership fees, dues, license fees, etc. .The Committee had previously agreed to set the line at \$5,000 after moving the dam registration fees (\$1,150 annually) and the VLAP testing fees (\$250 annually) to the General Operating budget as noted above. After discussion of the licensing and testing fees required, plus other costs such as dues and re-testing if needed, the Committee agreed this line should be set at \$6,000.
- **Revenues:** The Committee discussed Water Department requests for funding of 2021 water projects, including \$30,000 for water source exploration of gravel wells; \$6,000 for repair of the chambers riser; \$3,200 for state-required cleaning and inspection of the chambers tanks, and \$10,000 for further work on Bear Road water line replacement. Kristi Garofalo shared spreadsheets showing funding calculations depending on the amount of customer rate increase. She noted that the Water Emergency and Water Department Capital Improvement Capital Reserve Funds would also need to be replenished

for 2021 and that the Water Dept. unassigned fund balance was low and not a recommended option to be used for funding.

The Committee debated options, agreeing water source exploration was a definite long-term need to reduce dependence on buying water from Woodsville Water & Light. The Committee agreed the chambers riser repair could be done in 2020 using existing CRF funds and the tank cleaning/inspection could be funded from line 2-5064 (Facility Operations) in 2021, but \$30,000 for source exploration would require a substantial rate increase. They discussed whether the project could be done in stages. Don Drew said that since they would work on more than one site at the same time, the estimate included savings on equipment transportation that would not be available if the project were done in stages. Rather than raise customer rates by a large amount, Bob Long suggested a short-term loan for the project with payments estimated at around \$550 per month. The Committee discussed ways to educate residents about the need for water source exploration. **Bob Long said he would provide numbers on the cost if Woodsville Water & Light was the only source for District water.**

After discussion, the Committee agreed to recommend the annual base water fee be set at \$600 and further recommend taking out a short-term loan for the \$30,000 source exploration project.

#### **Important Dates:**

- **Next Meeting Date: Tuesday, Dec. 15 at 8:00am via Zoom. Focus: Was, CRFs, Cleanup/Finish Up**
- Future Budget Meetings: Jan. 5 (if needed).
- Jan. 11, 2021 at 6:00 pm – Finalized budget submitted to the commissioners
- Feb. 8, 2021 at 6:00 pm – Commissioner meeting and public budget hearing
- Mar. ??, 2021 at 10:30 am – District Annual Meeting at the Lodge (date to be determined)

Chris Roberts moved to adjourn; Brian Loutrel seconded. Roll Call Vote: Laraine King-Aye, Robert Roudebush-Aye, Chris Roberts-Aye, Brian Loutrel-Aye, Don Drew-Aye, Kristi Garofalo-Aye. Motion passed and the meeting adjourned at 8:56 am.

Respectfully submitted by  
Kristi Garofalo