

A MEETING OF THE COMMISSIONERS OF THE BAMBERG BOARD OF PUBLIC WORKS ON MONDAY, FEBRUARY 22, 2010 AT 5:15 P.M. AT CITY HALL. MEMBERS PRESENT: Chairman Carl Kilgus, Dr. Marion Dwight, and Buddy Sandifer. Manager: Bruce Ellis. CLERK: Bruce Watson. VISITORS: Nancy Hiers, Jason Miller, Joyce Searson, Gene Searson, Will Martin, and Gary Downes.

Chairman Kilgus called the meeting to order and Commissioner Sandifer gave the invocation.

Commissioner Sandifer made the motion to approve the minutes of the November 30, 2009 meeting as received. Chairman Kilgus made the second. All approved. The motion carried.

The financial statements for the months of November, December and January were received as information.

Chairman Kilgus asked Manager Ellis if the financial statements looked ok?

Manager Ellis explained that the statements reflected that the BPW purchased gas and power and that they were now collecting for it. He told the Commissioners that the BPW had experienced record setting usages for the month of January.

Chairman Kilgus asked if the good customers were allowed to make arrangements for paying their high bills?

Manager Ellis assured the Commissioners they were working with everyone.

Manager Ellis informed the Commissioners that the BPW was presently pulling the old metal poles and sandblasting and painting them to match the new poles. He explained that some of the metal poles had to be straightened.

Manager Ellis reported that the BPW was busy changing out some of the old fire hydrants and raising some of the others. He explained that some of the old hydrants did not have valves. Manager Ellis told the Commissioners they were also exercising the valves and measuring the flow of the hydrants.

Commissioner Sandifer told the Commissioner that 49% of the ISO rating for the City depended on the availability of water from the hydrants.

Manager Ellis went into detail informing the Commissioners of the various state and federal certifications and training that were required of the BPW employees.

Commissioner Dwight entered the meeting in progress.

Assistant Manager Will Martin informed the Commissioners that since he had learned the BPW employees were not being given retirement credit for certain hours worked which meant the BPW had overpaid the SC Retirement System that the BPW and its employees were due a refund of \$95,000.00. He explained that the employees would be receiving checks totaling \$40,000.00 and that the BPW would be taking credits for the \$55,000.00 owed the BPW.

Manager Ellis presented the Commissioners with rates from the MASC and SC Public Service Commission. He explained that since 1981 the BPW had always been in the top ranking of utility companies with the lowest electric rates. Manager Ellis said the BPW now had the lowest electric rates of anywhere in the state which he said was a plus for the citizens of Bamberg.

Manager Ellis explained to the Commissioners the difference between FERM Gas and Interruptible Gas customers. He explained that Rockland Industries had to be cut off last week due to the cold weather since they were an interruptible customer. He explained that Rockland had an LP tank for backup.

Chairman Kilgus voiced that the US has more natural gas than any other country which should be utilized.

Manager Ellis voiced that the failing infrastructure within the US will be a major problem for the country in the future.

Manager Ellis explained that McCall Thomas would be conducting a study of the BPW electrical system and that the employees would be receiving ARC FLASH certification and training.

Manager Ellis went over the list of pending state and federal legislative bills that would be effecting the BPW if they were approved.

Manager Ellis presented the Commissioners with copies of the Sewer Use Ordinance and Pretreatment Program for the City of Bamberg. He explained that DHEC regulated the BPW wastewater and that the BPW regulated the industries who were pretreating their wastewater.

Commissioner Dwight asked if DHEC would fine the BPW or just send a nasty letter?

Manager Ellis told him that DHEC would send a letter first which would be followed by a fine if the problem was not corrected.

Manager Ellis informed the Commissioners that he would like to schedule a meeting next week to have the 2008-2009 audit report given. Commissioner Dwight said he would be out of town for the next three weeks but urged the other Commissioners to go forward with the meeting without him.

Chairman Kilgus and Commissioner Sandifer agreed to meet next Tuesday on March 2nd.

Chairman Kilgus told the Commissioners that a contractor had complained to him that the tap and impact fees were too high for the BPW. Chairman Kilgus, saying he had voted for the increase in tap and impact fees, told the Commissioners he felt they were too high and that they needed to go back and reconsider what they had done. Chairman Kilgus said Mr. Jimmy Still had contacted him as well as another contractor who was given the previous rates.

Assistant Manager Martin told the Commissioners that the BPW honored the previous rates for the other contractor because he had been quoted the rates before they were changed.

Manager Ellis said Mr. Still was wrong and that the BPW rates were not higher than other utility companies in the area. He explained that they had calculated the needed rate increases based on the time and materials involved.

Chairman Kilgus said a 100% increase was too much and that he felt a 20% increase was more in order.

Commissioner Sandifer, saying a 100% increase was too much, made the motion to increase the rates 50% initially and then to increase them 50% at a time at various stages. Chairman Kilgus made the second. Commissioner Dwight said he would like to amend the motion to allow them to re-evaluate the rates in 12 months.

Commissioner Sandifer withdrew his motion.

Commissioner Dwight made the motion to lower the water and sewer tap and impact fees by 50% and to re-evaluate them in 12 months. Commissioner Sandifer made the second. All approved. The motion carried.

Manager Ellis was asked to refund the water and tap fees that had been paid.

During the remarks from the chairman, Chairman Kilgus informed the Commissioners that he had come by to speak to Manager Ellis only to be told by him that he could not come in. He said things would be better if they could work together.

Chairman Kilgus asked Manager Ellis if he had told the BPW employees to attend the Commissioner meetings?

Manager Ellis said he had not.

Chairman Kilgus told Manager Ellis that Gregg Ayer had come to him saying he wanted to take his girls to Carowinds but that he would not let him take the time off.

Manager Ellis said the incident was about Mr. Ayer asking to cash in his vacation immediately which could not be done.

Chairman Kilgus said the Commissioners had discussed Manager Ellis's salary of \$115,000.00 during a meeting which was recorded in the minutes but which was not published in the paper.

Commissioner Dwight told Chairman Kilgus that it worried him that they were discussing an employee and felt they needed to be in executive session.

The Commissioners agreed to go into executive session.

The Commissioners came out of the executive session.

During the announcements, Commissioner Sandifer told the Commissioners that he was the youngest commissioner and that he had been observing the BPW employees for the last 10 months. He commended Manager Ellis and the BPW employees for the good job they were doing. He voiced that the system was in good shape which was evident when no outages occurred during the recent snow storm. Commissioner Sandifer said the employees of the BPW were the biggest asset the BPW had and that they should look after them. Commissioner Sandifer said he had always heard the moral of the employees was low but that he had heard good comments from the employees concerning the Christmas dinner. Commissioner Sandifer said he was there to keep the employees happy and working safely. He urged the employees to keep up the good work.

Chairman Kilgus said he had taken pictures during the snow storm. He said cutting the limbs had really paid off.

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 6:37 p.m.

ATTEST:

Clerk

Chairman-BPW

Commissioner-BPW

Commissioner-BPW