**EAST RANGE WATER BOARD**

**Monthly Meeting Minutes**

**Wednesday, February 15, 2023**

**City/Town Government Center**

**4:30 P.M.**

***Appointed Board Members for City of Aurora Present:*** *Doug Gregor, Chairman of the Board; Dennis Schubbe;*

***Appointed Board Members for the Town of White Present:*** *Jon Skelton, Vice Chairman of the Board; Clark Niemi;*

***Other Team Members Present:*** *Jim Gentilini (COA); Jodi Knaus (TOW); Miles Jensen (SEH); Mia Thibodeau (Fryberger Law); Luke Heikkila (COA); Richard Hess (COA); Kimberly Berens (COA); Mike Larson (SEH):*

*Others Present: Robert Rutka*

1. **A board meeting was called to order by Chairman Gregor at 4:30 p.m.** Gregor introduced Luke Heikkila, new City Administrator.
2. **Consent Agenda:**
   1. Approval of January 3, 2023 Regular Meeting Minutes & January 3, 2023 Reorganization Meeting Minutes
   2. Treasurer’s Report – Fund Balances: Interim Financing: $318,593.00; Biwabik Fund: $109,606.87; Total: $428,199.87
   3. Approval of Disbursements
      1. Fryberger Law Firm - $1,241.50
      2. SEH - $3,825.00
      3. East Range Times - $776.25
   4. Correspondence
3. LMCIT Coverage Binder for Property/Casualty Insurance Renewal
4. Liability Waiver Form “Not Waiving” the Monetary Limits on Municipal Tort
5. East Range Times Published Thank You for Senator Smith & Project Information Sheet

**MOVED BY CLARK NIEMI, SUPPORTED BY JON SKELTON APPROVING CONSENT AGENDA AS PRESENTED. MOTION CARRIED**

1. **Legal Matters** – Mia Thibodeau Updates
   1. Scenic Acres Land & Facility Title Clearance – Board reviewed Paul Kilgore correspondence in packet; Kilgore is working on title actions.
   2. Rosa Easement Status – Fryberger sent out Easement paperwork to Rosa’s (property owners); Rosa is ready to sign; Closing will be held remotely; Township Board will need to also approve & sign easement agreement including gate access.
   3. Project Labor Agreement Review Status – Updated Project Labor Agreement was reviewed as prepared by Donald Erickson at Fryberger Law Firm

**MOVED BY DENNIS SCHUBBE, SUPPORTED BY JON SKELTON APPROVING THE PROJECT LABOR AGREEMENT AS PRESENTED AND TO SHARE WITH THE LABOR UNIONS. MOTION CARRIED**

* 1. Creation of New Legal Entity Timeline & Guidance – Tabled from last month, keep on agenda, no action taken. Mia will check into if the Water Board needs its own EIN with the Secretary of State. We will need a new Public Water ID established and Miles Jensen will check into what is needed for this.

1. **Guests** – None
2. **Engineering Updates** – SEH
   1. Funding Initiatives & Cumulative Accounting – Mike Larson updated the secured funding to date; IRRRB has one million left to commit to the second phase of the project. Included in the bonding bill will be five to eight million in funding from the PFA water infrastructure fund, leaving a four to five million gap in funding which the City/Town will borrow from the PFA drinking water revolving fund. SEH needs to update the cost estimates for the Project and then Sweeney needs to update his calculations for rates.
   2. Engineering Work – Miles Jensen
      1. January Status Report was verbal this month.
         1. Environmental Review - Draft Archaeological Environmental Review was approved by SPHO; now we wait for MDH approval; Heikkila inquired about federal environmental review and Jensen reported it will take about three months; Kohlstad advised this be done prior to bidding Project; this will be an additional $7,500.00 cost for SEH in engineering fees.
         2. Bat Nesting Sites – Tree removal tabled to Spring; no new updates; June 1st Deadline; Niemi requested guidance on flagging (what do colors of ribbons signify).
         3. Technical Committee Meeting was not held; Jensen will be sending out color boards of the plant & raw water pump station facilities in March
         4. Emergency Water Service Interconnects Agreement Status – 2nd draft was sent to Biwabik PUC; Discussion took place about the interconnect that would be a 50% benefit to Biwabik and how it should be paid for; a second phase of the Project could be for the booster stations and interconnect.
         5. Water Appropriations Permit – was sent to DNR
3. **Community Outreach Plan** – Three informational articles were published in the East Range Times. Next step is to send out a bulk mailing and schedule a public meeting with SEH and key stakeholders presenting the Project.

**MOVED BY JON SKELTON, SUPPORTED BY CLARK NIEMI TO SEND BULK MAILING OUT. MOTION CARRIED**

1. **St. James Pit & Current Water Plant updates** – Water is pumping.
2. **Next Meeting date: March 15, 2023**
3. **Adjournment**

**MOTION BY JON SKELTON, SUPPORTED BY CLARK NEIMI TO ADJOURN MEETING AT 5:27 P.M. MOTION CARRIED**