



**Board of Trustees  
Special Meeting  
August 24, 2020  
Meeting Minutes**

A Special Meeting of the Greenwood Board of Trustees was held at 7:00 p.m. on Monday, August 24, 2020 at the E.L. McDonald Community Center, 619 Main Street, Greenwood, Nebraska.

**Call to order**

Gerlach, Wilken, Starr, Mack, and Piehl are present.

**New Business**

**Discussion approve disapprove Marcus Hochstein water/waste water services**

Hochstein explained he has been in utility services for the last 20 years. He currently owns a small excavating company that digs in water, sewer, and septic systems. He has his class 2 waste water facility license because he was going to help out in Eagle. He said that they have since hired someone for that position.

His partner, Cody works construction for GE. He is going to take his waste water test as soon as they open up for testing again. Wilken asked Hochstein if he currently held a water license. He said no that he just missed the deadline. He will take the test as soon as testing starts back up. Wilken asked Hochstein if he had seen our waste water treatment facility. Hochstein said that he had looked around it a bit. Wilken asked his opinion on the condition of our sewer plant. Hochstein expressed that it needs to be kept up on more. The biggest thing that stood out to him is that the sludge has been sitting in the final clarifier for too long. It is not being recirculated and pumped out. You can see the nitrogen bubbles when were there, bursting up and sending chunks to the final clarifier. It is a prime example of it the sludge has been in there too long. Hochstein would like to know what the oxygen level on the active sludge. He has a feeling that is low and not keeping the bugs alive. This was what he came up with from just glancing at it. He wondered if the grinder pump is getting old. He didn't understand why all the water is not going through the grinder pump. By not doing that, more chunks are going through and it is not being processed the way it should. He said they ran out of time so they did not get to look at the UV lights. Wilken said that was good thing because they were probably dirty. He has heard the same thing about other towns that use PeopleService. McClatchey said they did not even have the UV lights on and that they were covered in algae. Hochstein said there would not be any kind of disinfection going through there then. That is pure laziness. Hochstein said his partner and him are willing to take the time out to do things right.

Wilken asked how they would staff working at the sewer plant. Hochstien would probably be the backup and Cody would be the primary. They would both become familiar with it. He would like to get a couple towns. Piehl asked if they planned on staying at their full-time jobs. Cody explained that he would leave GE to become the full-time waste water operator. Hochstein explained that he is self employed and he can leave when he needs to. Wilken asked what they were thinking in regard to dollar figures to do this. Hochstein said that he still needs to run a few numbers but he is thinking \$60,000 - \$65,000 a year to do this. He doesn't know what the other companies are charging. Wilken explained that it runs around \$69,000 a year but they include a maintenance budget of \$4400 with that. This is for the repair of the minor stuff. McClatchey explained that any major expenses or emergency repairs do not come out of that fund. Wilken asked how much experience Hochstein has with running a water and sewer plant. Hochstein said that he has no experience other than taking classes and reading about it. Cody said that he has worked on the maintenance side but never ran a plant. Gerlach asked Hochstein how long he has had his level 2 waster water license. He received his license last year. Gerlach asked about continuing education. Hochstein stated that the state requires 20 hours of continuing education every 2 years.

Hochstein asked who would pay for the testing. Wilken stated that they would take the samples in and the village would be responsible for paying. Hochstein asked how often the testing needs to be taken in. McClatchey thought that some of the tests are done monthly, others are done quarterly. Wilken asked if they have their own truck with equipment. Wilken asked what kind of insurance Hochstein would carry. Hochstein explained that he would get 1 million plus an umbrella for another million. Piehl asked Hochstein if he was going to work with Eagle. Hochstein stated that they just hired someone to handle that. Wilken thanked the men for their time. He explained that they are currently in the middle of interviewing for this position. Hochstein asked if the board would tell him what other companies are interviewing for this position. McClatchey explained that both of the other people are just independent people. Hochstein asked if they would be hired on as a company or as an employee. Wilken stated that he did not know at this time.

### **Board Questions or Comments**

Mack commented that there was not much experience there. McClatchey stated that the only thing is those two are going to work hard. Vandeman will still be cheaper. Cadwell expressed concern with Vandeman's involvement with allocating invoices for PeopleService. She is the one that has looked through the invoices for the maintenance contract and invoices made no sense. She is not blaming Vandeman, it could have happened when he left PeopleService. Maybe they did not know where to allocate the items purchased. Piehl stated that he will be hired hourly through the village so he will be required to turn in purchase request forms just like the maintenance men do. McClatchey is technically the maintenance supervisor. McClatchey stated that technically he is not the maintenance supervisor. McClatchey explained that it was discussed, but not the title was never officially given to him. Wilken stated that if Vandeman is hired, then things will be restructured. McClatchey stated that hiring Vandeman at an hourly wage would be beneficial to the town. Wilken explained that McClatchey lines the guys up for the electrical work too. Piehl stated that she apologizes because she thought the title of maintenance supervisor had already been given to him. McClatchey stated that it is really just a title. He will be doing the exact same job as he had been doing before today. McClatchey explained that the problem with PeopleService is that they refuse to talk or communicate with me. They changed out the fire hydrant down at Baker's candy and never said a word to me in regard to the project. Wilken stated they hired someone to repair that fire hydrant. They will talk to Stewart. Stewart told them that they would need to call Wilken in regard to the repair. They shut the water off and where not going to tell them. Cadwell should probably be the first one notified if water is being shut off. She is the one who fields the phone calls. She was not notified. Gerlach said that he thought there is supposed to be a 24 hour advanced notice given on repairs like that. McClatchey didn't think that was in their contract. McClatchey stated that our equipment was not used so we will probably be billed for that. They brought in Anderson Plumbing in from Waterloo, Nebraska. He suspects that we will be billed for this, even though it was not approved by us. Piehl stated that according to our contract they are not allowed to hire people without our prior approval. As far as she is concerned, the village will not pay that bill. McClatchey agreed stating that is what he read in the contract as well. In his opinion, the company doing the work should have had insurance on file with the village and been bonded as well. What if they hit the electrical or gas line that is located in that area? They could push that off stating that they are doing the work for PeopleService and that is on them. The one call was under Messer's name and not the plumbing company's name. That is illegal. He stated that he already filed a report in regard to this issue. If we got to play by the rules, so does PeopleService. He feels they should be held to the contract. Make them do what it says. He told them they would need to fix the fire hydrant down at Bakers and requested an estimate to repair the north tank of the sewer plant. He has not heard anything in regard to the estimate. Wilken stated that we have talked to the President of PeopleService and Grashorn. They were down at the sewer plant looking at the UV lamps and they told us they would give us an estimate. Mack stated that he thinks Grashorn has someone fooled. McClatchey explained that Grashorn has been in the field a long time. He is going to tell you what he thinks you want to hear. He has an answer and an excuse for everything. Piehl agreed with McClatchey. McClatchey explained that he questioned him about when the last time the north tank had ran. He was not sure. I knew Messer didn't know because he has not been with the company that long. Grashorn has been with PeopleService for along time. He was Vandeman's boss the entire time he worked for the village. How do you not know how long it is has been out of service? He feels as if it is unfathomable that you can be someone's boss, know that it is broke, but not know when it ran last. Wilken stated there should be logs to document these things. McClatchey stated that in their contract, there are supposed to be logs. They are supposed to logs for when they jet, exercise the valves, maintenance repairs, etc. Piehl stated that Grashorn said that he could start logging things. He was supposed to be doing these things per his contract. You should know what your contract reads. McClatchey explained that it is not our fault that they don't know what their contract reads. Wilken stated as far as he is concerned, they are currently not under contract. McClatchey explained that they are not required to give them 90 days. We have to give them 30 days. Right now, they are already in breach of that contract. The plant got tagged again with some violations. Piehl questioned when this happened. Wilken stated about a week ago. McClatchey explained that we are right back to them not taking care of the problems that DEQ told them to take care of months

ago. We are not required to give them 90 days. Mack asked where the violation went to. Wilken said that it came to me. It was also given to PeopleService. McClatchey stated that Wilken gets a copy because he is chairman of the board, PeopleService receives a copy because they are our representatives. The biggest concept that PeopleService has lost is the fact that the village pays them. They work for us. The reason that he brings this up is because Grashorn made a comment that it was his license and he should get the say in who does what. McClatchey stated that he does not get a say in anything. The village is still paying PeopleService. He works for us, not the other way around. I don't know a company where the boss is there and the employee tells them how they will run things. It doesn't work that way. They are so used to doing things that they have wanted to do that they have become comfortable with it. They did get away with it during the time that Vandeman was the operator. Vandeman was an extremely smart guy that knew how to keep everyone happy. McClatchey thinks paying Vandeman hourly for 4 hours a day will cut costs for the Village. Vandeman also has 25 plus years of experience. He knows our plant and knows our system. He already has all the licenses. He is still our better option.

Mack expressed concerns regarding the invoices that were sent by PeopleService. Even if Vandeman did submit those invoices, his boss approved them. McClatchey agreed. Cadwell stated that she can't even believe that their accounting office sent us those invoices. They basically just opened a whole new set of issues. Mack asked if all the stuff purchased was at the sewer plant. McClatchey stated that there is no where near what they billed us for sitting at the sewer plant. Mack explained that there were like four brooms, three dustpans, eight buckets. These purchases were made but they were not all for our village. McClatchey stated that the person that handles the invoices is only in the office one day a week. They basically just threw a bunch of invoices at us, hoping that no one would take the time to look through it. He expressed concern regarding the invoices being processed in a thirty-day timeframe. There are invoices that are five months old, that suddenly get billed to us. Some of the invoices have Vandeman's address listed. Cadwell discussed an invoice for \$800.00 that their where 5 pairs of safety glasses purchased. That stuff should not be billed to us. There were 4 boxes of gloves, 4 boxes of cleaning wipes, 3 blower filters, etc. I contacted a previous waste water operator that had worked for the village to see if the filters were a legitimate purchase. His opinion was they could have been used at our plant, but they could have been used at another plant. We really do not know. Cadwell expressed concern in regard to the fuel charges for the sludge pump. It makes no sense to purchase gas in Omaha and Gretna and then drive it to Greenwood. She explained that this is quite trivial put the purchases that have been billed to the village all add up. She talked about the ceramic heater that was purchased and is not down at the sewer plant. The dishonesty of it all is what bothers her the most. The accounting clerk that is handling the invoices should not have sent us those. Wilken mentioned the two bottles of diet coke that were on an invoice that we were charged for. Mack stated that someone should be looking over the invoices at PeopleService for approval. He feels that this should be discussed at the next meeting when the President of PeopleService is here.

Cadwell discussed about how the invoices were delivered to her. Grashorn brought the all of last year including a bunch of invoices that were billed to Eagle, Memphis, Bosch, and other places that they service. It took me days to pick through these invoices and remove what wasn't needed. They charged us for personal mileage for Vandeman when his company truck was not working. They charged us for repairs to their company vehicles. They divided expenses for postage on the expense report and then billed us for the entire amount. Cadwell explained that this is all petty things that add up and the village should not be charged for these items.

### **Adjournment**

Wilken made a motion to adjourn at 7:42pm. Gerlach seconded the motion.

Aye-Gerlach, Wilken, Mack, Starr, Piehl

Nay-None

Motion carried