

Friendsville Utility Board
Regular Meeting
July 3, 2025
Friendsville City Hall
Minutes

Present:

Mayor Steven Cardwell	Zach Sproul
Vice Mayor Sandra Bell	Kresha Fields
Commissioner Jonathan Newberry	Earl Fields
Commissioner Margaret Maze	Janice Lambach
Commissioner Shane Rogers	Tim Lambach
City Recorder Janet Ledbetter	Pattie Kuhn
City Administrator Kim Rogers	Debbie Bentz
City Engineer Bob Colvin	Janet Walton
City Attorney Rob Goddard	Shanon Adame
Building Official Barry Ottinger	Shelley Rios
Hailey Russell	Sergio Rios
Steve Palmer	Woody Bell
Jessica Sproul	

1. Meeting was called to order at 6:33 p.m.

2. Motion to approve minutes from previous meeting by Commissioner Newberry, second by Commissioner Rogers. Motion passed.

3. Discussion:

Update- low water pressure affecting Riverview Drive: Kim Rogers spoke about the issue of Dr. Kirksey's water pressure from the previous meeting, where they had decided to purchase a booster pump, move his meter to the bottom of the hill, and run a 2-inch line to his house. She said that they found out that several other residents on Riverview Drive had low water pressure during peak times, and that two new homes were planned in the area. She agreed with Bob Colvin, who determined it was best to upsize the main 2-inch water line to a 6-inch line and put a blowoff at the end. If that doesn't give Dr.

Kirksey sufficient pressure, they will move his meter to the bottom of the hill, change it to a 1-inch meter, and replace the service line to his house.

4. Public comments:

Patricia Kuhn, who owns a house at 205 N. Morgan St., asked who would own the sewer grinder pump after it was installed, and who would maintain it. Kim Rogers told her it would be the homeowner on both questions. Ms. Kuhn asked if it would go with the house if they sold it, and Kim told her it would. She also asked if they had to go with the plumber the city suggested to hook it up to the house. Kim said that Wilson Brothers Plumbing was the contractor that was supposed to hook up the grinder pumps for the grant through Blount County. That grant required for the homeowner's septic tanks to be filled with gravel and crushed once the sewer was hooked up. The HUD grant doesn't require that, so he was supposed to send out updated quotes to reflect the changes. Ms. Kuhn said that the plumber and electrician she spoke to wanted to use the same trench, which would save money. Kim told her that she didn't have to use the same plumber that the city had recommended. According to Bob Colvin, the contractor working on the sewer line will put in the grinder pumps. Kim said that there had been a deadline of July 1 for customers to decide if they wanted to get the grinder pumps paid for by the grant.

5. Staff Reports:

Grants Update: Phase 1 of the sewer project is 75-80% complete, and there is enough money left to pay for the grinder pumps for the homeowners who requested one, which would happen in Phase 2. Also in this phase, the line can be extended down Miser Station to the second entrance of Cedar Crest, possibly to the marina, depending on how many people who sign up on that section of the line. The board would have to approve a change order allowing for Phase 2 of the project. Motion to approve change order #1 by Commissioner Rogers, second by Commissioner Maze (passed below). Earl Fields, who lives on S. Farnum, asked why they had to pay for their own grinder pump. Kim explained that the grant that was supposed to cover theirs was from Blount County, and it was a turnkey grant which would have paid for the entire cost. However, Blount County withdrew the funds, so they weren't available to help the homeowners. The new grant is a HUD grant, which only covers the cost and installation of the pump, but not wiring or hooking it to the house, and it only covers grinder pumps for homeowners along the line that

was installed with this grant. Mayor Cardwell explained that the first grant was from ARPA, and that Blount County took the money away because they said it didn't meet the ARPA requirements. Mr. Fields asked why his line from the road would have to be over 200 feet, when his home is about 100 feet from the road. He shares a driveway with another resident. It was determined that to go straight, the line would have to go through the neighbor's property. He would have to get an easement from that property owner. Kresha Fields asked if they were required to hook up to the sewer since they had signed up for the grinder pump through the grant. Kim told them that since it was the ARPA grant, and there is no money left, that they would not have to hook up. Kim said that the county had estimated a total of \$16,000 to put in the pumps and hook them up, as well as filling in the septic tank and crushing it. The HUD grant only covers the purchase and installation of the pump, but not the hookup to the house, so it still would be a cost burden to some homeowners. Mayor Cardwell mentioned that even though the HUD grant didn't require filling in the tank and crushing it, he wanted to confirm with county environmental services to make sure it wasn't required by them. Bob Colvin told him that if they were going by county regulations in the grant, that they would have to, but since they are not associated with the county, they didn't have to do that. The city would inspect and make sure the tank was disconnected from the house. Patricia Kuhn asked what the penalty was if they didn't get connected to the pump within 3 months of installation, and Kim told her that the homeowner would have to pay for the pump. Ms. Kuhn mentioned that she had tried to sell a house where there was sewer available and it wasn't hooked up, so the bank wouldn't loan the money. Commissioner Newberry said it was likely an FHA or VA regulation. Kim said the city would apply for another HUD grant to try to get more help. Vice Mayor Bell said it was sad that the city lost the ARPA funds because they would have been able to take care of the citizens.

Mayor Cardwell stated that they still needed a vote on the change order, which had been made and seconded. Motion passed.

Upcoming Projects: There is \$150,000 in the budget for water rehab, which will be used to change out old lines. In the next 10 years, the asbestos, lead and copper lines will have to be replaced. The first project will be on Pine and Front Streets. Employees should be able to self-perform. Kim said she hoped to replace lines on Lane Drive near the catfish farm in the future, since there had been so many leaks in that area. Bob Colvin mentioned that in


February there would be another appropriation available through HUD. TDEC has approved the sewer extension to the Front Street properties. However, the owner of a property on East Main wanted the developer to pay to put in his grinder pump before he would agree to let it go through his property. They have decided to go in another direction, down East College by the Fire Hall, which is an area where sewer is badly needed.

Financial Reports: The board looked over the financial report.

6. Motion to adjourn by Commissioner Rogers, second by Commissioner Newberry. Motion passed. Meeting was adjourned at 6:52 p.m.



Mayor Steven Cardwell



City Recorder Janet Ledbetter