

Greenwood Nebraska

Small Town, Nebraska with Big Heart

**Board of Trustees
Special Meeting
September 21, 2020
Meeting Minutes**

A Special Meeting of the Greenwood Board of Trustees will be held at 7:00 p.m. on Monday, September 21, 2020 at the E.L. McDonald Community Center, 619 Main Street, Greenwood, Nebraska. Said meeting is open and the public is encouraged to attend. The Board of Trustees reserves the right to adjourn to Executive Session per State Statute 84-1410. The open meetings act is posted in the meeting room for the public to view.

Call to order

Gerlach, Wilken, Mack, Starr, and Piehl.

New Business

Discussion approve disapprove hiring of water/wastewater operator

Wilken stated that the reason we are here is because PeopleService is not holding up to their end of the contract. There are services stated in the contract that they are not providing. We are moving forward to find a person to be our water/wastewater operator. We have talked to Vandeman and he is interested in the position. Mack and Wilken met with him last Wednesday. He is willing to work for the village for \$30.00 an hour around 4 hours a day. He will be eligible for paid holiday and paid vacation after the probationary period is up. We will pay for his continuing education. He is willing to help McClatchey get his licenses as well. McClatchey will serve as the backup water/wastewater operator.

Vandeman said that he realizes that we will need a back up operator. If he could get some cooperation with the village men than he would be willing to train them. He stated that before when he worked for PeopleService, he didn't feel like it was right to utilize the village men. He said that he would typically use his wife or son to help him with stuff at the plant. He couldn't ever get PeopleService to give him someone to assist him. He said that it didn't surprise him that Grashorn was blaming him for everything. He explained to the board that while working for PeopleService he could never get any help from them. He said that safety wise what he was doing was risky anyways. If he had fallen in the tank, they would not have realized that he was even down there. Some of the tasks down at the sewer plant, require having a second person for safety reasons.

He said that he would like to get McClatchey trained because one day he might want to retire. He said that he was forced to retire early from PeopleService because he was tired of being thrown under too much stuff. He explained that was why he abruptly resigned from his position with PeopleService.

Starr asked Vandeman about his agreement with PeopleService in regard to working with villages that previously used PeopleService. Vandeman stated that he never signed a no compete clause with the company. He said that agreement was with the village, not with him as an employee. Vandeman explained that he had started working for PeopleService so long ago, that it was not a requirement when he first started with the company. When PeopleService hires employees now, they are required to sign them. Vandeman explained that he left PeopleService September 9, 2019. The contract that the village signed stated they had to wait one year to hire PeopleService employees.

Piehl asked if he would be working Monday through Friday, four hours a day. Vandeman explained that the next month or so, might require more than four hours a day. It will depend on how much time it will take to get everything caught up. He said that he would write a letter to the state, asking for them to be patient while he gets everything back into compliance. Starr asked if he will be working on Saturdays. Vandeman stated that at the end of his time with PeopleService he hadn't been coming in on Saturdays, but requested that the village just tell him what they would like him to do. He can definitely come to check on the facilities on the weekend. Wilken stated that he did not think that PeopleService doesn't come on the weekends. Starr said that he thought that Vandeman had always stopped by on the weekends when working for PeopleService. Vandeman explained that he had three or four runs before he came to Greenwood, but Grashorn had him stop doing it. Grashorn told him that the state was not requiring it. Vandeman explained that he is always just a phone call away. Piehl stated that she didn't feel that they need him on the weekends.

Gerlach mentioned that cleaning the sewers was one of the next big-ticket items. Vandeman asked if PeopleService had been cleaning them while he was gone. Wilken stated that they had only done very little.

Starr asked Vandeman how long he had worked with the Village of Greenwood. Vandeman responded that he started in 1997 and then he was gone from 2007 until 2014. Vandeman stated that he used to jet a quarter of the village's sewer lines a year. He said that had more to do with the budget in the maintenance contract. He said that the maintenance contract used to be higher but boards over the years made cuts to it. Vandeman explained that you just

have to tell me how you want things done, and I will do it. Wilken said that the board discussed having a third of the town's sewers jetted every year unless there are trouble spots that might need to be done more frequently.

Gerlach asked Vandeman when his licensing expire. He stated that he renewed his water license last December and his sewer will need to be renewed this year. Wilken stated that he has a continuing education class coming up on October 7th, 2020. The renewal comes up every two years. Vandeman explained that the licensing for the water is around \$115.00 and the wastewater is either \$150.00 or \$175.00. He stated that he needs 20 hours of continuing education hours for the wastewater. He will need 10 hours of continuing education hours for the water. He stated that he is trying to take the class that gives you credit for both.

Starr asked Vandeman if he takes care of Memphis. Vandeman stated that he does take care Memphis and the Cubby's by the interstate too. He said that he has been taking care of Memphis for the last 8 to 10 years, and Cubby's for the last 15 years. He also takes care of the sewer plant out by the race track for the last 20 years. He explained that PeopleService had then before Vandeman and they were not taking care of the plant very good. PeopleService eventually dropped their contract with them. Vandeman was approached by a board member and he has been taking care of it ever since.

He said that he did have a few problems out there a couple of years ago and the state stepped in. He said that he got it back into compliance though. He said that the system out there is very small. There is not enough flow and not enough waste. He said that the other jobs should not affect what he does for the village. He said if an issue does arise, he will let Wilken know and clock out. He said that he will be flexible with the village.

Wilken explained that in the meeting that Mack and Wilken had with Vandeman they did discuss extra time to be given in the first couple of months to get everything back in compliance. Vandeman will work on getting the dry sprocket fixed properly. He said the shaft will be need to be repaired. Mack said that he feels it should be a priority to repair the other tank and getting the paperwork up to date.

Gerlach mentioned that we are out of compliance on reports that were filed on paper that were supposed to be entered into the system. Vandeman said that all the stuff in the computer system will need to be reset up.

Piehl asked what kind of materials he would need to run the plant. Vandeman said that basically he would need to check to see what items need to be maintenance. He said the jar tests should already be down there. He stated that he has a pH meter that he checks the pH with. He said there should already be one down at the plant, but PeopleService might claim that is theirs. He said he is unsure how they will handle it. He said that when he goes to fix the other side of the tank, that will mainly be a lot of labor. He thought it might need a new small drive chain. He will need to get quotes for the village.

Starr asked Vandeman if he foresees any issues with the village being out of compliance having to boil water and such. Vandeman said that he has seeding bacteria that will help it get growing again. When it gets old and septic there is nothing you can do but pump it out. Starr mentioned that in prior years they have had to boil water. Vandeman stated that he hadn't gotten a chance to look on line but he thought they have been passing their tests. Wilken mentioned that there have been high nitrates. Vandeman stated that in years past there have been high nitrates in well one. Wilken mentioned that the other well is only 5.8. Vandeman explained that well one is required to be tested for nitrates quarterly if it is testing that high. That is a state requirement.

Starr mentioned that the village had to boil water years ago when Grell took over. Vandeman stated that just because it tested for e coli back then does not mean that it necessarily had e coli in the water system. That could have tested positive due to the faucet that Grell got the sample from. The faucet needs to be disinfected before the sample is taken. Vandeman stated that this should not be an issue at this time. He also said that he would like to disinfect the wells with some liquid bleach. He would put out a notice before this is done.

Wilken said that Vandeman gave him a list of everything that he would need including the last 5 years of lab testing, maintenance logs, etc. Vandeman said that they used to have books that they kept everything in. Vandeman stated he would be willing to go down there with a board member to look for the reports.

Wilken asked what the board members would like Vandeman start. Starr thought that he should start on October 1, 2020. Wilken stated October 5, 2020 is a Monday. He thought starting on Monday would be best. They discussed Vandeman and Cadwell picking up reports from the sewer plant.

Cadwell mentioned that PeopleService had an appointment to meet with someone. Messer never showed up and McClatchey ended up meeting with them instead. Wilken mentioned in June they asked PeopleService for a quote to fix the tank so we could include it in the budget. We have never seen a quote from them.

Wilken made a motion for Vandeman to be hired as the water/wastewater to start on Monday, October 5, 2020. Starr seconded the motion.

Aye-Wilken, Starr, Piehl, Mack, Gerlach

Nay-None

Motion carried

Wilken stated that a background check and drug test will need to be completed prior to employment.

Board Questions or Comments

Gerlach mentioned that there had been a substance this summer that was killing the bacteria at the sewer plant. Gerlach stated that they have never been able to get testing to figure out what it was. Cadwell said that she thought that was grease that was found in the sewer on West Street. Gerlach said that since it was not tested, we do not know for sure. Cadwell said that she had spoken with Vandeman in regard to this issue. Vandeman said that the grease balls have always been there. They come from people dumping grease down the drain. You just have to skim them out of the scum box.

Wilken mentioned that they have the grinder pump on but they have the bypass open so not everything is being ground up. Vandeman stated that it is all supposed to be going through the grinder. Vandeman stated that it only makes the system work harder by doing this. Cadwell asked Vandeman why he thought this is being done. Vandeman explained that if it gets clogged it makes a mess.

Vandeman said that it will take a few months to get it back to compliance and then he will start working to get everything fixed.

Adjournment

Wilken made a motion to adjourn 7:46pm. Gerlach seconded.

Aye-Piehl, Starr, Mack, Wilken, Gerlach