

Monroe County Board of Commissioners

Minutes of the February 25, 2021

Called Meeting

9:00 A.M. Meeting

Present:

Greg Tapley, Chairman

Lamarcus Davis, Vice Chairman

Eddie Rowland, District 2

John Ambrose, District 3

George Emami, District 4

Staff:

Jim Hedges, County Manager

Janet Abbott, County Clerk/HR

Richard Dumas, Public Information Officer

Welcome

Chairman Tapley welcomed everyone in attendance.

Prayer

Commissioner Rowland gave the invocation.

Pledge

Chairman Tapley led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Roll Call

County Clerk Janet Abbott called roll.

Call to Order

Chairman Tapley called the meeting to order at 9:00 A.M.

New Business

Approve Agenda

Chairman Tapley presented the agenda for approval.

Commissioner Rowland motioned to approve the agenda.

Commissioner Ambrose seconded the motion and the motion carried 5-0.

Juliette Water Phase II-Contract 1-Juliette Water Project

The Monroe County Board of Commissioners met in a called meeting on February 25, 2021 to discuss the rising cost of pipe that will be used for Juliette Water Phase II. Also present for the discussion was Water System Engineer, Jo Wood, Jeff Dorough with Utility Partners, Bentley Cox and Matt Stonica, Representative with United Grading.

County Manager Jim Hedges updated the Board on the progress of Juliette Water Project Phase I, stating this phase is complete and so far, 100 of the 374 customers are connected.

Mr. Hedges along with engineer Joe Wood updated the Board on the Juliette Water Project Phase II-Contract I. Mr. Hedges stated since receiving the original bids for this phase the price of pipe has drastically increased due to hurricanes in Louisiana and an ice storm in Texas. Mr. Hedges stated many of the producers have announced force majeure or have products on allocation. Mr. Hedges continued with at this point we are not sure what Phase II will cost.

Joe Woods addressed the Board stating this is a tough predicament. He stated we have discussed and analyzed the numbers and when first presented to the Board we had three pretty tight bids but after the ice storm in Texas it has blew things out of the water. Mr. Woods stated the original bids were \$45 per square foot but the current price is \$62 per square foot and this wipes away any contingency that was set up. Mr. Woods stated he had looked at several different options to try to bring the project back into budget. Some of the options he presented were to eliminate some of the roads that had no homes or there was no potential for development or reducing the size of the water lines in some of the areas from 12" lines to 8" lines.

County Manager Jim Hedges stated given the unknowns of resin price and the availability, Monroe County should step back from the Juliette water project for 6-12 months or at least until the cost of PVC pipe stabilizes. He continued with if you choose to do this, all bids for phase II contract 1 should be rejected and all future bidding for additional contracts should be placed on hold.

Commissioner Ambrose stated he was reluctant to stop Phase 2, Contract 1. He thinks United Grading should continue allowing its crew to begin necessary jack and bore work along Hwy 18 and 87 until Consolidated Pipe had PVC pipe available again.

Commissioner Davis stated he agreed.

Mr. Hedges stated the Board could not obtain any additional loans beyond the \$20.3 million that has already been approved and the Brokerage Firm that handled the bonding of the money had recommended extending the timeline for the project from two to three years. Mr. Hedges stated Monroe County could not afford the project at the rates being presented and either the scope of work needed to be changed or something needed to be left out.

Matt Stonica with United Grading stated he had been conversing with a Consolidated Pipe Representative and they had not announced a force majeure. Mr. Stonica continued with Consolidated Pipe allowed him to honor the original quote the Board had voted on, on February 16, 2021. Mr. Stonica stated Consolidated Pipe had agreed to absorb some of the cost and could have the pipe on the job by mid-April. He stated he was willing to do whatever was necessary to keep the job moving forward. Mr. Stonica suggested moving the upcoming bid for Contract 2 until mid-spring to see what prices on pipe are going to do.

Jeff Dorough with Utility Partners stated he did not recommend taking short cuts at this point because the county would pay for those later. He suggested doing what they could do now and pick up later.

Bentley Cox stated he did not agree with downsizing to an 8-inch water main because it would not deliver the needed pressure. He stated maybe a 10-inch but not an 8-inch.

Following a Board discussion, Commissioner Ambrose motioned to proceed with Juliette Water Project Phase II Contract I.

Commissioner Rowland seconded the motion and the motion passed 5-0.

Karl Cass resident of 121 Pine Trail, addressed the Board stating he appreciates everything the Board is doing to get water to the Juliette Residents. He stated initially he was in support of waiting but he thinks there are additional avenues that can be looked at.

Following additional Board discussion, Commissioner Ambrose motioned to table Juliette Water Project Phase II Contract II for up to four months unless the prices come down.

Commissioner Davis seconded the motion and the motion carried 5-0.

Old Business

There was no old business discussed.

Public Comments

There were no additional public comments.

Executive Session (If necessary)

There was no executive session.

Action from Executive Session (If necessary)

Adjourn

Commissioner Ambrose motioned to adjourn at 10:21 a.m.

Commissioner Rowland seconded the motion and the motion carried 5-0.

Respectively Submitted by:

County Clerk, Janet Abbott