

Tongue River Valley Joint Powers Board Meeting

Meeting Minutes

January 28, 2015

Present:

Peter Clark, Norm Anderson, Randy Sundquist, Joey Sheeley, Karen Walters, Jack Fritz, Bob Wood, Dennis Wagner, Jeff Feck, Randy Bomar, Jeff Barron, Greg Reid, Chad Reed, Hannah Sheely, Pat Blair, and Eric Lofgren

Next meeting:

TBD

I. Announcements

None.

II. Approval of Minutes from December 18, 2014 Meeting

III. Approval of Agenda

Additions: Peter: interview with American Gas magazine.

Deletions: None

IV. Discussion

Old business:

- SLIB award update (Peter): SLIB did not award the grant or loan we were seeking, but did award us a \$100K feasibility study grant. There is a \$20K limit on the engineering portion; concern to all as engineering would be major component of a study. Peter said that at the award meeting, Governor Mead, Mark Gordon, and Bridget Hill all remained very supportive of the project. As this is a new concept, the state is not exactly sure where to put us, so is looking at creating a separate fund for natural gas pipeline projects so they are not in direct competition with emergency funds typically requested.
- Eric Lofgren asked if the study is required to get the loan/grant funds we need. Peter answered that this is political; the SLIB wants something more concrete to look at.
- Bob Wood said that the SLIB funds are given out quarterly; Peter said we can't get the study done by the Feb. 19 deadline for the June award. Possibly can get it done for the October award.

New business:

- Approved payment of the following bills: \$6300 for Pipeline Solutions, Inc., \$299.33 to reimburse Peter for the trip to Cheyenne.
- Peter informed the audience that Pipeline Solutions found another possible hookup (interceptor at Sheridan HS) that is large enough and has enough pressure to supply gas to the TR Valley for approximately 20 years. Would be a hybrid system; TRV JPB owns the line, MDU supplies the gas. Win-win for both parties. It would mean becoming an industrial customer. PSC would be involved if we decided to hook up any customers outside the town limits. Would cost about \$100K in permitting fees, so we would anchor the line with the towns and schools and build out from there. Bob Wood added that this option would cut the cost essentially in half. Peter said we're working on setting up a

meeting with MDU folks in Bismarck as we are certain the MDU employees in the Sheridan and Billings area can't make that decision.

- Peter thanked WWC and Vista West for being with us since the beginning. The board had planned to choose a firm to handle the feasibility study at this meeting, but have since decided that we need more information. We can use our current funds to use one of the companies to develop an RFP and then will send out a notice asking for Statements of Interest for the project. WWC and Vista West both said they would read through the contract and rules and we will discuss at the next meeting on February 12.
- Peter said he had been contacted by a freelance journalist out of Pennsylvania who was working on an article for American Gas magazine. He gave the writer and interview.

V. Public Communique

- Dennis Wagner asked for clarification on the engineering costs and how they would be covered if the grant allows for only 20% to be used for that purpose. Peter admitted that he was a little confused about that as well, but he has a call in to SLIB to discuss. In the meantime, we can use our own funds for anything we choose.
- Pat Blair asked if she understood correctly that the state 'is not really sure what to do with' the TRV JPB project. Peter gave her a history of the progress we've made and where we're headed. Bob added that we do fit under SLIB, but the amount we're asking for is large. Peter added that it's hard to compete with emergency projects, so the state is, again, working on setting up a separate fund. May be under SLIB, may not.

The meeting was adjourned.