

## **Tongue River Valley Joint Powers Board Meeting**

### **Meeting Minutes**

*January 26, 2017*

*Present:* Peter Clark, Karen Walters, Eric Lofgren, Joey Sheeley, Jack Fritz (WWC), Chad Reed (WWC), Kristin Magnusson (Sheridan Press),

*Next meeting:* February 23, 2017

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#### **I. Announcements**

#### **II. Approval of Minutes from December 15, 2016 Meeting**

#### **III. Approval of Agenda**

Additions: Appointment of Officers

Deletions: None

#### **IV. Discussion**

Old business: None

New business:

- a) *Financial report:* Approved reimbursement payment of \$664.90 to Peter Clark for lodging (SLIB group) in Cheyenne and \$100 to the Town of Dayton for Eric's bond. The account balance is \$34,900.
  
- b) *SLIB award discussion.* Peter: The JPB was not awarded the funding we applied for due to lack of funds and the size of the request. This was expected, but the discussion was positive. He believes the project should be funded by the Business Council, but is unsure how to make the jump. The good news is that the JPB has a good report that can be leveraged going forward.

The USDA rural development office contacted Peter and is interested in funding the project. The interest rate is lower with a longer timeline than the SLIB could offer and the JPB can still apply for SLIB grants; anything awarded would be deobligated from the USDA loan. WWC is preparing a proposal for the USDA at an estimated cost of \$12K (motion to proceed approved); deadline for submittal is March 31. Jack Fritz said that the application form is fairly straightforward and most of the info the USDA would need is in the report, with the exception of the environmental report (ER); because the USDA is a fed department, the ER is needed to comply with the National Environmental Policy Act. Jack was told that most of this could be handled via "desktop analysis." Jack also noted that the deadline to resubmit to SLIB is February 17 for the June award; every effort will be made to get that done to keep it in front of the SLIB. Chad Reed said that using the USDA loan funding as a bridge could definitely help get the project moving. Jack will meet with the SLIB director ahead of time to let them know what we're doing/changing

The financial analysis would also have to be updated in the prelim engineering report to reflect the loan amount and payback timeline. The JPB and/or WWC would need to put

together proposed service contracts/gas supplier contracts and a rate policy with short-lived assets.

Peter was advised to contact the Economic Development Administration as the pipeline is an economic issue; retention of residents and jobs in rural areas is something the USDA is interested in.

- c) *Appointment of officers.* Peter Clark will remain as Chairman, Karen Walters will remain as Treasurer, and Craig Reichert will serve as Secretary.

## **V. Public Communique**

The next meeting was set for January 26, 2017.

The meeting was adjourned.