

## Mary's River Estates Road District Meeting

**Date: March 9, 2023** Zoom meeting hosted by Joe

Approved 04/13/2023

**Attendees:** Joe Chambers (president) Debbie Jackson (treasurer) Sandy Chapman: (secretary), TR Gregg, Rick Veronen, Robyn Lillehei, Kevin Cornelius, Barb Hart (joined 6 minutes into meeting)

**Call to order:** 7:03 PM by Joe, President

Meeting will be recorded for the purpose of note taking by secretary. Recording will be kept for one year on personal computer and approved written minutes will be kept on website indefinitely.

**Additions/Deletions to agenda:** Debbie: under Budget Committee; we need to pick available dates for the Budget Committee.

### **Review RD minutes:**

Joe: Are any changes to January minutes? Sandy: There was a spelling correction. [Debbie moves for the January 12, 2023 minutes to be approved with the correction. Sandy seconds. Joe: All in favor? Commissioners: All agree.](#) Joe: February minutes have corrections also? Sandy: yes, a few additions of missed words and spelling corrections brought forth by Robyn. Kevin clarifies Janet was at the meeting. [Debbie makes motion that we approve the minutes with Robyn's corrections. Sandy seconds. Joe: All in favor? Commissioners: All agree.](#) Minutes will be posted to the website and to Google Groups email by Sandy.

**Mail and Financials:** Report by Debbie, Treasurer

Mail received: Debbie received an email from the Local Law Group with information on raising of their rates. We have not used the legal group in the past 1 ½ years. She is not sure of the prior rates. Debbie will file the information for future reference.

### **Financial:**

Debbie screenshared:

1) MRERD Income/Expenses by Category YTD: 07/01/2022 through 03/06/2023

#### **Account balances as of:** 03/06/2023

Interest Inc	\$	1,998.02
Other Income	\$	18.10
Taxes	\$	<u>119,980.45</u>
Total Income	\$	121,996.57
Citizens Bank Balance	\$	1,488.43

LGIP Balance                \$ 168,866.91

Total bank accounts      \$ 170,355.34

MRERD Transaction report 02/07/2023 through 03/06/2023

BILLS

MRE WIX domain fee 3/23-3/24	\$ (24.85)
SDAO Annual Membership dues-2023	\$ (140.00)
SDIS Annual Insurance renewal 2023	\$ (1,929.00)
CPI	\$ (15.83)
INCOME      Taxes received	\$ 456.83
Interest	\$ 486.79
CPI: patronage dividend	\$ 18.10

Joe asks for clarification on budget estimation cost of MRE repairs for this year being \$160,000.00?

Debbie: That is what the amount budgeted ending 6/30/22 is. We need to have the cash on hand for cost of repairs going into June and July since we do not get any other monies in from the County until next Fall. Except for some taxes coming in from the May third installment of taxes to be paid. The total amount is not for just the MRE project this year.

Joe: got an email to go on the walk to look at the road conditions and this needs to be rescheduled. Joe got access to the website to make changes if needed. Debbie: sent email to the POA for reimbursement for the website to Adam. Robyn: The POA board has not met and they are between officers as far as authorization for signing of checks. Minutes need to be approved and sent to the bank before a check is to be authorized. There have been delays in getting everything done. No other request has to be sent to anyone at POA for this.

**Budget Committee Volunteers:**

Joe: The 2 volunteers we already have are TR Gregg and Kevin Cornelius. Sandy: Has received an email from Val Bach saying she would like to be on the budget committee. Val wanted to be at the meeting tonight, but was unable to do so. She will be starting to attend soon if not next month, as she has gotten things back in shape. Debbie: adds the 3 commissioners will also be on the Budget Committee. Joe: Is traditional that all 3 commissioners sit in on the meetings? Sandy: Yes. Debbie: adds that when there has been a decision to have a committee it is made up of an equal number of citizens as Commissioners. By default, the Commissioners are on the Committee. Rick: does not think

we have solicited, at least he has not seen anything go out to the community in general. That we are still loading everything up with old commissioners and says it is very clear what they want; they are setting up a budget committee that wants to have the taxes at the highest level allowed and stock pile money and have it available for paving. It might not be a bad idea to get some people from other areas that maybe do not share those same viewpoints, and have a committee that can discuss and be creative. Sandy: Rick, you are not talking for me at all. She says not to put her voice into what he is saying. Rick continues: The non-commissioner committee members are in the same geographic area and they all share the same view. He is wanting to know, since we are trying to get help by the Commissioners, why do we assemble a committee with everybody having the same viewpoint? Sandy: Rick does not know that everyone has the same viewpoint. Joe: he agrees with Rick in what he is saying about more solicitation from the community, rather than from those that sit or have attend the road district meetings. We need more input from the community in terms of how we decide we want to proceed with repairs and how the money is to be spent on the road district. We are the final say in how it gets spent, because we are the commissioners. We should not be targeting certain people just because we know them, but soliciting from everyone. Not just those that attend the meetings. Rick: In the past we have solicited input on projects that should be considered, for example the speed reduction issue. All of that got waylaid when we went away from just the three commissioners deciding on a budget, to assembling a budget committee and all of the old projects got shelved and new projects put in their place. The tax rate almost doubled from that time. We went from a time when we had adequate resources to maintain the roads as they were, before the increases, and do a limited number of nice things. Now we are at point that the tax rate went from 1.5 to 2.9 and we are wondering what are we going to do? We do not have the human labor to spend the money wisely to use all that money. Joe: that is where he disagrees with Rick, currently having seen some of the estimates for the work that we are planning to do. Joe would question if we have enough money to actually do all the work we are talking about, especially with the cost of everything going up in the past few years. Rick: It depends on what we are trying to do. If we are not trying to pave all of the gravel roads, then we probably do not need all the money we have. If we are trying to pave the gravel roads, then we should be looking at prep work first and he has not seen any planning for that. Joe: There does need to be planning if there is going to be any development, rather than just maintenance. It still needs to be determined if the people living on those roads that need to be developed, do they want them to be developed? Or are they happy with being maintained as gravel roads? Rick: As far as the people on Iris, that has never been established. That question has never been asked of the community as a whole with everyone being a stakeholder. Joe asks the

question: If people that are living on a road is already paved, do they care if folks living on Iris get their road paved or not? There has to be some equity in how things are done. Someone paving Iris is not going to affect someone living on Daisy who does not use Iris. TR has had his hand raised to speak and Debbie asks if we can hear from TR? Rick continues when Joe asks if he has something else to say. Rick: The decision at one point to pave them or not, was determined by traffic count. That was part of the decisions, if traffic got too much and the cost to maintain was too much, then it would be paved. The last section paved had severe washout problems. That was beneficial to get it paved. Ricks question is: Do we need to pave all roads just to pave the roads or based on the cost effectiveness? Rick says for TR to go ahead.

TR: When we pick a counsel the idea is to bring experience to it. It has been brought up that there is not enough volunteers or expertise to be able to do that. The budget people that are looking to be there are active volunteers that wish to participate. So, we have that, we have the experience of each of the members that wish to participate that have a history of participating for the general good and development of the entire district. In the fact that Val wants to volunteer, she is the one that developed the six-year plan that is being used right now by the commissioners. She is a tremendous resource and thinks it would be a great disadvantage if we did not involve her in the process.

TR: In the characterizing made by Rick and the assumption of what our positions are as the previous budget committee members, it is a gross presumption on his part to lay down his argument to be able to say where we are coming from. What has been accomplished over the last couple of years has been advancement of use and involvement of the fixing of our roads. The work is continuing to proceed. Whenever there were improvements requested when the taxes were at a higher rate, they were placed into the planning to be able to do projects. TR brings up memory of over the past maybe 15 years, of a project that was on the list for development and was systematically pushed back year by year and disappeared off of the list all together. Along with that, the purposeful lowering of the tax rate. The effort to raise them again was to get back to the original mission of the commission, because before it was all gravel roads, and to uniformly develop the district. Joe has pointed out there are people that have and are enjoying the pavement and there are those that are not and there is inequity in that. The commissioners represent 3 different areas that have the experience of what the conditions of the different districts are. We are all in different stages of improvement. There has been a history of requests by the majority of the Queen Annes residents, with 3 different surveys, for the road to be brought up to the standard of the rest of the district. When the last work on the road was done, people looked at it said it was in some of the best conditions in the county. Going on to

the work that needs to be done on Iris, it needs to have preparation, the road needs to be widened to accomplish safety vehicles back in there. It was already determined that it needed to be widened. Iris is a consideration as well as Queen Anne and Daisy at the turn around are all a consideration and needs to be brought up to the district. TR finishes with the statement that the budget committee has a dedicated bunch of people that are offering to participate with the experience to accomplish what needs to be done.

Discussion back and forth between TR and Rick concerning Queen Anne and the development (chip seal or not), condition, failure or not of the work: Rick gives his opinion that Queen Anne work has failed will fail more. TR: It was a job that the budget did not allow for completion. It was a stop-gap to prevent the degradation of the road up to this point, it did its job and it needs to be finished. Rick jumps to the subject of Iris Circle and puts out the question of "how many steel culverts need to be replaced if it is to be hard-coated (paved)"? Joe: The discussion regarding the purpose of walking the roads was to see what the condition of the roads was about. What needs to be repaired or replaced. Rick: reiterates again that people are not stepping up. He has written up request for proposals and knows that a lot of them have been replaced. Kevin: He was under the impression that we had an engineering firm being used to identify issue like that rather than lean on Rick for that information. Rick: that was the original intent, but they found better clients with deeper pockets and they dropped us about a 1 to 1.5 years ago. A lot of the money was invested in the firm. A surveyed was done and Rick does not think anyone here knows where the survey marks are right now. We spent the money to get all of these improvements done and we are right back where we started. Kevin: He is glad that our millage rate is what it is because we are going to need to spend the money. Rick: with infrastructure bills and construction as it is, we will have to have a lot to get an engineering firm to listen to us because we do not have enough roads. The real world is that we have had to walk the roads, meet with contractors and it has been a lengthy operation. We tried to get other people for consulting and were unable to. The prior commissioner, John had a vision that we as residents would not have to do that. He did his best, but right now we don't have a consulting firm that will do it for us. Debbie: Was aware that we did end up with an ending recommendation from K&D repairs, but not improvements which was within her time of being a Commissioner (Jan. 2022 to present). Rick: He gave a final on the hill. Debbie: Yes, that is what we trying to do now, the final on the hill. That is our project for this year. The repair for MRE hill was done last year and we are finishing that project this year with chip sealing. We needed the money in the bank to do this. We need to get bids on it, finding out if we can even get people to do it.

TR: ask Joe if we can get back to the budget committee agenda. Joe: agrees and continues: Currently we have three, he still wants to get other people included in the process. Thinks there will be burn out and we need fresh ideas about what we are doing and how to go about it. TR: asking if he thinks the current committee volunteers are burnt out? Joe: No, in terms of the budget committee the 3 people on it have already been on before and are familiar with what is going on. They are the only people looking at what is going on into the budget committee. TR: asking if that is not what he wants? Joe: No, he wants other people to have input into the committee as well. Sandy: Last year was the first year for Debbie and I. Last year John had been on for 4 years, 3 as president and 1 as secretary. How we did it last year was we asked the community for input in what they wanted to see in the budget or things that they wanted to do. We came up with a list of projects that have not all been done, some have gotten done. One that got done was the fog and center lines. We can look back on that list which was community input and also this year ask for community input. As far as having any more people on the budget committee, we cannot have any more people on the budget committee. It is 3 Commissioners with equal amount of "residents at large". Joe: Is that some type of policy in place? Sandy: Yes, that is the legal law. Debbie: Every government she has been involved in does it that way. An equal number of Commissioners, an equal number of the public. The budget meetings are public meetings and the public can come to those meetings. They are advertised that we solicit input at. Joe: OK. Kevin: is struck by the fact we are not having more people participating in these meetings. He is having hard time saying let's go out and find someone to participate. Joe: Agrees, his basic intent is to get more involvement from the community and participate rather than just a small group of us deciding for everyone else. It is a very small percentage that have participated. Debbie: And probably always has been. Joe: It may be because we do not have very good communications for the community. Lack of awareness of the website or accessibility to the information.

Debbie: moves that we accept the 3 volunteers TR Gregg, Kevin Cornelius and Val Bach to the budget committee. Joe: Seconds the motion. All in favor? Commissioners: All agree. Debbie continues: asking for dates for the next budget meeting. Monday's, Wednesdays are agreed by all, as preferred days of the week for budget meetings. TR asks for preliminary meeting for planning to establish schedule and objectives. Joe: asking about information that he could not seem to get. TR was talking about a plan that Val Bach made up that is the 6-year cycle for regular maintenance for roads that he asks about. Debbie: Yes, it is partly included in the current budget document because it goes back over the prior years and has those 6-year rotating things in the budget. Joe makes a motion to have the meeting on Monday March 20, 2023. All in favor? Commissioners: All agree on

Monday March 20, 2023. **ACTION ITEM:** Sandy: will get the notice at the mailboxes, get notice on the website and via google groups and schedule the meeting on zoom. Joe: do we have have other means to inform people besides the website, like emails? TR: Google groups, message at mailbox and website. We have some emails.

## **Open Forum**

Robyn requests a copy of the project list put up at the annual POA meeting as an appendix to the minutes. Says it is another way to get interest for the RD with people tracking the POA. **ACTION ITEM:** Sandy will provide the list.

Sandy: sent an email to Chris Ballie @ Benton Co. public works. She said we were still interested in getting more speed limit signs? He had sent John a map in 2019 conversations about signs placement. The map placement of the new signs to her are not optimal. Total of 7 signs in the 5.5 miles. Wants us to tell him where we want the signs before he makes up an estimate. Chris also said our street signs are up for replacement, do we want them replaced? Sent me a photoshop picture of how they would be. We can talk about this at a later. As far as the washing of our existing signs he said the Co. charge us for washing them. He suggested to wash them with a bucket of dawn soap when it is raining. Robyn: there was a sign at the top of MRE that was coming apart and is now at the bottom of her driveway. Sandy: new signs are to say "Speed Limit 25 mph. **ACTION ITEM:** Sandy will send map info to other commissioners, where Benton Co. says the new signs are to be placed.

## **Review of Action items:**

Sandy: we need to approve Adam Mays contract for mowing. Joe was sent a new contract. Review of the contract done with mowing and ditching prices. Joe brings up the 4.6 miles on contract versus total number of miles (5.5) we have in the district. Robyn: Tansy was not mowed. All: It is agreed that we need to include Tansy. Sandy: We can approve for an additional amount for the inclusion of Tansy mowing? Decision still to walk the roads to determine where the ditches need to be dug. After further discussion, [Debbie makes a motion to approve the quote from CUTAWAY INC, not to exceed the \\$4,250.00 with a specific statement of work still to be developed. Joe seconds the motion. All in favor? Commissioners: All Agree.](#)

Sandy: Called on information for the webcam on March 2, 2023:

PIONEER: Spoke with Vince Mgemge at Pioneer connect

We buy a broadband connection. This can be put "on vacation" if we do not want to use it for the entire year. For a 25 (down) and a 3 (Up) it would be around \$50.00/month. He says we need a big

broadband connection for all the usage it will be getting in the mornings of bad weather. Pioneer will give us a static ID number, we plug it in and people will login to the website and check it like a "trip check" camera. The broadband connection would be to where ever the camera is placed. This connection is from the Pioneer green boxes along the roadway. A box would be placed on a post for a Pioneer modem to be placed inside of. To run the modem, it needs a 110-power source. Vince said to asks if a residen will be able to provide that power source from a home?

CPI: Spoke with Kristy:

Process: Start with an application for new service at CPI.COOP. There is a cost estimating tool that can be used for cost of putting in the service. An engineer will contact us and come out to inspect placement. There will be a field technician that will give us more information. There needs to be staking out in the field. An estimate for service will be given for power to get to the location. It will be underground from nearest transformer. We need a good spot for a webcam placement that is closer to a transformer to reduce cost of installation. There would be a meter base placed for service; there is a monthly service fee plus usage bill. This may be less than a residential monthly service fee, maybe under general service fee plus usage. Other info to be gotten from CPI after application started.

ESTIMATED NEEDS:

**by MRERD:** trenching for electric service; Post in ground; "Grey" box on post; Camera in box; Web site configured for web cam viewing; electrician

**from Pioneer:** Broadband connection to modem from green Pioneer boxes; Modem hooked to camera in box = MRERD or Pioneer?

**from CPI:** Power source, 110 from new service or residential power supply

Joe: more investigation is needed for camera placement and if property owner would want it on their place.. Sandy: It will be on the ROW, not on a persons property. If someone supplies the 110 power it would be a whole lot longer than if the power were to come off of a transformer. TR: It seems that by the information gotten, to do an autonomous installation by the district involving everything, and the funding by MRERD it would be cost prohibitive. Budgeting for that is possibly \$150.00 a month, and he suggests a weather site also. Suggests we ask for a feed from private property to put a webcam on their tree?? Suggested we apply for grants from NOA or safety commission? Debbie: possibly seek out grant from Special Districts, something from the infrastructure acts? Sandy: we can continue with CPI application and also start looking for grants. Debbie: Yes continue, there is a good start on it. Debbie: How do we get it out to ask about it? TR: forum on the website and google groups can be used " asking anyone in the "danger zone" if they have interest in wanting to provide access? bandwidth?, electricity?. Alyrica still needs to be spoken with for continued research.

Debbie: Website discussion was about the fee from the POA. Reviewed the prices, no changes in cost until next March when the initial 2 year paid contract is up.

Joe: concerned about a big oak tree across someones driveway and if anyone else is aware. TR will go by and see if anyone needs help. Robyn says she walked on Columbine and she saw a lot of rounds cut up and they have been routinely cutting trees. No new business.

8:45 Joe calls the meeting adjourned.