

# Fayette County WCID – Monument Hill NEWSLETTER

SPRING 2021

## District Office

100 Country Club Drive  
La Grange, TX 78945  
Telephone: (979) 968-5514  
Website:  
[www.monumenthillwater.com](http://www.monumenthillwater.com)

Office Hours:  
Monday-Thursday 8 am—12

## Board of Directors

Dixon McNair	President
Seth Gunn	Vice-Pres.
Bobby Gilmore	Secretary
Jo Ann Friemel	Treasurer
Chester Johnson	Director

Lori Steffek,  
Office Manager

Wayne Kocian, Inframark Operator

The Board invites all members of the District to attend its monthly Board of Directors meetings held on the second Thursday of every month at 4 p.m. at the District office, located at 100 Country Club Drive. Please note that due to scheduling conflicts, however, sometimes the meetings need to be moved to another day or time. Please contact the District office (968-5514) to verify that the meeting will be held on its regular date and time. If someone would like to address the Board during a meeting, the District requests that they notify the office no later than 72 hours prior to a scheduled meeting so they can be added to the meeting agenda.

## Unexpected Storage Tank Rehab Fuels Need for Water Rate Increase

As many may already be aware, the ground storage tank at Water Plant #1 (behind the FAVCC Golf Course) was taken out of service on January 18<sup>th</sup> for minor welding repairs, necessitating the draining of the tank and the need for switching to Fayette Water Supply Corporation's water. The District planned to make use of the time that the storage and pressure tanks would be out of service, by making arrangements to have both tanks cleaned and inspected, inside and out. On January 19<sup>th</sup>, after the cleaning of the storage tank, it was discovered that the floor of the tank had severe pitting and would require extensive repair/refurbishment, or even replacement, in order to be returned to service.

At the February 11<sup>th</sup> board meeting, Mr. Bradley Loehr, of BEFCO Engineering, presented several options for refurbishment and replacement of the existing galvanized, bolted ground storage tank. The most cost effective and time sensitive option was to refurbish the existing carbon steel ground storage tank with a new steel floor, to sand-blast and coat the interior with a product called Reactamine, thus extending the life of the storage tank by a projected 15-20 years. Since the District had already been planning on making some needed repairs to the pressure tank within the next year or two, also included in the scope of work was the replacement of the pressure tank manway, and sandblasting/recoating the interior and exterior of the pressure tank. CFG Industries submitted the lowest bid of \$130,950 and was awarded the project, with an anticipated completion date of April 23<sup>rd</sup>.

Due to the urgency of getting the project started, and completed, it was not feasible for the Board to sell some of the remaining bonds from the 2016 voter approved bond election, just as it was not in the best interest of the District to deplete the funds in the Operating Fund account. The board voted to obtain financing from Government Capital Corporation in the amount of \$153,000 (which includes a \$3,000 issuance cost) at an estimated rate of 2.25% with 5 annual estimated payments of \$32,696.13 and which carries no pre-payment penalty.

After much deliberation, the board determined a water base rate increase would need to occur this coming fiscal year, which begins April 1<sup>st</sup>. The increase would secure enough annual revenue to meet the financing commitment for the refurbishment of the storage and pressure tank at Water Plant #1, as well as fund non-bond related capital improvements such as the also needed ground storage tank and pressure tank →

## Sign up for Emergency Alerts

In order to sign up for alerts and/or emails, please visit the District's website at [www.monumenthillwater.com](http://www.monumenthillwater.com), and from our homepage, click on the orange "Sign Up for Alerts" button on the right side panel of the screen. Your mailbox will NOT be flooded with junk mail. Need help subscribing? Not sure if you've already subscribed? Please contact Lori Steffek at (979) 968-5514 and she will gladly assist you.

# Rate Increase (Cont'd from page 1)

refurbishment/replacement at Water Plant #2, sewer and water line replacements needed throughout the District, in addition to providing funds for normal operation expenses, which are expected to increase due to the rising cost of labor and materials. Several different rates were discussed. The rates voted on and approved by the board can be found below, including a comparison to the current water base rates:

New Water Base Rate (0 Gallons)	
5/8" x 3/4" Meter	\$43.50
1" Meter	\$108.75
2" Meter	\$348.00
3" Meter	\$696.00

Current Water Base Rate (0 Gallons)	
5/8" x 3/4" Meter	\$38.50
1" Meter	\$96.25
2" Meter	\$308.00
3" Meter	\$616.00

Sewer rates will also be increasing, as shown in the chart below, due to an increase in sewer rates adopted by La Grange Utilities annually in November, and then charged to the District.

New Sewer Rates	Type of Account		
	Residential	Commercial	Special
Base Sewer Rate	\$41.68	\$47.56	\$1,115.46
City of LG Gallon Allotment	3,000	3,000	250,000
Charge per 1,000 gallons in excess of allotment	\$6.12	\$6.68	\$6.68

The District is aware that its rates are higher in comparison to other water providers in the area. This is due in large part to only having approximately 230 customers to incur the repair and improvement costs of an aging infrastructure that is currently in need of substantial repairs. Larger providers can divide these costs among many customers instead of a few, such as Fayette Water Supply Corporation with an estimated 2,450 customers, La Grange Utilities with an estimated 2,500 customers, and Lee County with an estimated 4,145 customers. While the District has an Interconnect Agreement with Fayette Water Supply Corporation for the selling of water to the District in emergency situations, or during periods of planned maintenance and repairs, at a rate of \$3.20 per 1,000 gallons of water, there are currently no alternate, permanent providers of water and/or waste-water service available to the District.

Please remember, the Board does not arbitrarily make impactful financial decisions without guidance from the District's financial advisor, legal counsel, and the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality. Any decision the Board makes, which impacts customers, impacts the board members, as they, too, reside within the water district, and therefore, pay the exact same water and sewer rates, and property taxes, as everyone else in the water district.

The Board encourages members to attend the monthly board meetings, held on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday of every month at 4:00 p.m. at the Fayette County WCID-Monument Hill District Office located at 100 Country Club Dr. The Board is always willing to answer any questions, or listen to voiced concerns, during the Public Comments portion of the meeting. Board Meeting Minutes, from 2018 to present, are available online at <https://monumenthillwater.com>. Looking for something older? Contact the office and Lori will be happy to assist you with your request.

The new rates will become **effective April 1, 2021** and will be reflected on the bills received at the end of April/beginning of May.



The next regular Board of Directors meeting is scheduled for Thursday, April 8, 2021 at 4 p.m., at its office located at 100 Country Club Drive, La Grange, Texas.

The District offices will be closed in observance of Good Friday on April 12, 2021; on Monday, May 31, 2021, for Memorial Day; on Monday, July 5, 2021, for Independence Day Observed.

## WORKING FOR YOU

Dixon McNair ~ President: (713) 805-0261  
 Seth Gunn ~ Vice President: (979) 968-3473  
 Bobby Gilmore ~ Secretary: (979) 968-5686  
 Jo Ann Friemel ~ Treasurer: (979) 966-8926  
 Chester Johnson ~ Director: (979) 966-9669  
 Wayne Kocian ~ Operator: (512) 848-0041  
 Lori Steffek ~ Office Manager: (979) 968-5514 (office)  
 (979) 966-9383 (Emergencies)