

May 7, 2024

WildFlower Well Board Meeting

Meeting came to order at 6:30 pm.

Board Members in attendance.

David Carr - President

Ben Mendola -Vice President

Tami Ballinger -Treasurer

Linda Mayne-Degnan - Secretary

Johnathan Albright -Director/member at large

The first topic to be discussed was that Dave Carr had attended a Rural Water Associates Meeting. At the meeting he spoke to a Kenny Porter about the cost of digging a new well as opposed to putting a casing in the old well. Well drilling is 50 dollar a foot and 45 per foot for casing vs. putting in a new well casing which would be 45 dollars a foot.

The second topic to be discussed was by Tami Ballinger about the different grant options out there. Some of them being the RWAAZ, the USDA, and WIFA.

The third topic was how to pay for the engineering project.

The fourth topic was Dave Carr saying that the emergency water bills would be handed out soon.

The fifth and final topics was a discussion about how we are going to collect money for the well repairs the co-op is facing. The board discussed and voted unanimous on a monthly assessment of \$15.00 per month. This will show up as a super tax on each water bill. This will be in effect until we have the funds to perform the required repairs. This was a unanimous vote. Dave will send out a letter to co-op members explaining the super tax.

Meeting adjourned at 7:03pm

Meeting minutes approved by:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'David Carr', is written over the printed name.

President/CEO

Wildflower Water Co-op

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May 20, 2024

Wild Flower Water Co-op Members,

These are challenging times for our water Co-op. We are dealing with serious issues with the aging water lines, a crumbling well casing, and outdated meters. Unfortunately, all these issues require money to fix. More concerning is that if the well casing fails, we will immediately not have water followed by a long period of uncertainty. We can patch and mend the water lines and meters for a while longer, but the 50-year-old well casing is a time sensitive issue.

Since taking over, we have made significant improvements to our financial stability, but there is much more work to be done. At present, we have about \$25,000 in reserves. Much more is needed to ensure that our taps keep flowing.

After much deliberation, and a unanimous vote, we have decided that we all need to contribute to assure our future. As I am sure you can agree, without water we can't live here.

The 2022 Bylaws provide as follows: "Where continued operation of the well is in jeopardy and the contingency fund is too small to absorb the cost, the Board of Directors shall, by a unanimous vote be empowered to access a levy for the sum of \$350 per each member in any four (4) month period." This can be found in Section IV(I) of the 2022 By-Laws here <https://www.southwesternutility.com/utilities/wildflower-water-co-op>.

Unfortunately, this is exactly where we are. Our well is in jeopardy and so we need to generate more money to fix it. However, we are also acutely aware of the difficulties we all face in this economy. Nobody wants to be financially stretched any more than they already have been in the last few years. As such, we are not going to levy \$350 per quarter, as permitted by the bylaws. Instead, we are going to levy \$60 per quarter. This will come in the form of \$15 per month as a "super tax" on your monthly water bill. This is 17% of what the bylaws provide for.

Please know that this was not an easy decision to make. This also impacts our families. As such, we are in the process of applying for grants to help solve our issues. If/when we get a suitable

grant, we will quickly end this levy/super tax. As I am sure you know, however, grants are not a sure thing as the government also faces financial challenges.

If this additional \$15 per month is something you feel you can't afford to pay, we encourage you to contact The Community Action Association (ACAA). They may be able to assist you with your utility bills. They can be reached at 520-724-2667 (Monday-Friday 8:30 to 10:30).

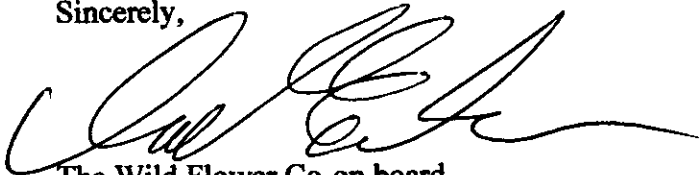
If you are a renter, we encourage you to contact your landlord. This levy/super tax is for long term improvements to the well, not for your monthly usage.

This levy/super tax will go into effect 30 days from the date of this letter. Everyone is required to pay, as we are a co-op/community.

We know that this is unwelcome news, not only for you, but for us as well. We don't get compensated, or receive any reduction in our water bill, for the hours we serve on this board. Just like you, we will need to find a way to pay an additional \$15 per month to ensure our future drinking water.

As we have done, and will continue to do, we will try to find the cheapest and most efficient ways for you to continue to have clean and reliable drinking water.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'David Carr', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

The Wild Flower Co-op board
David Carr-President/CEO