

Town of Fifty Six
Home of Blanchard Springs
6564 Hwy. 14 Fifty Six, AR
(870)757-2225

Mayor: Earnestine McDaniel

Recorder/Treasurer: Christina Byrd

Special Town Meeting
January 16, 2025

Members present: Aaron Byrd, Rick VanEvera, Eric Williams, Lisa VanEvera (6:30)

Visitors present: Delvin Freeman, Big Flat Mayor and Council, Larry Treat, Rebecca Ferguson, Mike and Judy Balentine, Marilyn Treat, Matthew Linn, Scott Wible, Richard and Dove Wible, Leslie Forte, Billy Mitchell, Michael Benson, Tim Hudspeth, Lori Freeze, Tony Hudspeth, and Lora and Kirby Curtis

Meeting was called to order by presiding officer, Mayor Earnestine McDaniel.

Mayor McDaniel informed residents that the meeting was to be silent except for the 2 councils. Anyone speaking will be asked to leave. No questions by residents will be answered.

Big Flat water superintendent, Rich, addressed Fifty Six city council. Rich brought up the contract from 2009, between the two water departments. He reminded the council that the rate between the two cities on the contract was \$2 per/thousand and maintenance was to be 50/50 between the two superintendents. Rich informed the council that there was a verbal agreement between the two Mayors to raise the rate to \$3. (Fifty Six Mayor was not authorized to make agreement).

Fifty Six recently had a rate study done in accordance to ACT 605. The rate required Fifty Six to raise rates 25%. The rate requires Fifty Six to charge Big Flat a minimum of \$4.25 per thousand. Fifty Six council originally asked for \$8.50 per thousand. This amount was based off misinformation. Fifty Six expressed willingness to negotiate a rate with Big Flat. Big Flat has made an offer of \$5 per thousand.

Rich brought up that the contract of 2009 would come to an end in 2026. Big Flat is still making payments on their loan for it. Fifty Six had their loan consolidated. Rich said the understanding was the agreement was in effect as long as loan payments were being made. Fifty Six lawyer was asked and

advised the agreement lacks detail and really needs to be rewritten between lawyers.

Fifty Six water superintendent has locked the gate and building to the pump station per the directive from council. The council feels only Fifty Six water department should have a key for the sake that Fifty Six owns all new equipment recently put in. Big Flat superintendent reminded Fifty Six that the contract calls for both water departments share the responsibility of maintenance.

Mayor McDaniel informed Big Flat that according to the rate study Fifty Six must raise rates a minimum of 25% but can go as high as desired. Big Flat superintendent asked that Chris Harris, ARWA, be called to advise on the situation. (an attempt was made to call but did not get an answer). Another attempt will be made.

Councilman, Aaron Byrd, made a suggestion that a base fee of \$145 a month be established. This matter was tabled for the time being.

Rick VanEvera made a motion to charge Big Flat Water System \$5 per thousand as offered for 30 days. This will give council a chance to find out legal particulars. Motion was 2nd by Aaron Byrd. Both towns agreed to meet again February 18 at 6pm at Fifty Six Town Hall.

A motion to adjourn was made by Aaron Byrd and 2nd by Eric Williams

Mayor, Earnestine McDaniel

Recorder/Treasurer, Christina Byrd