

**Homosassa Special Water District  
Regular Meeting  
April 21, 2014**

**Present were:**

Commissioner Seibert  
Commissioner Jeeves  
Commissioner MacRae  
Denise Lyn (Attorney)

Commissioner Sipos  
Commissioner Bitter  
David Purnell (Superintendent)  
Tami Jo Watson (HSWD Staff)

**Area Residents:**

Mike & Sally Trevino  
Rosey Rendueles  
Marian MacRae  
Wilma MacRae  
Linda Iauch  
Catherine Lutes  
Gail Oakes  
Dorothy Hansen  
Mildred Wambold  
Edward Bobworth  
Paul Larson  
John Fletcher  
Shane McGlone  
Nancy Rushford  
Judy Biston  
Dave Dodge  
Pat Faherty  
John McCall  
Capt. Rick Burns  
Linda Locklear  
Phil Oakes  
Donna Fletcher  
Daniel MacRae  
Gator MacRae  
Tom Williford  
Sandra Fletcher  
Doris Aileen Young  
Joe Byrd

Connie Wright  
Richard Sipos  
Kathy MacRae Foulk  
Mike Mancinik  
Renee & JC McPheeters  
Susan Coles  
Robin McClure  
Floyd Wambold  
Dave Damron  
Charley Stephens  
John & Shari Billings  
Ron Schultz  
Richard McMullen  
Cheryl Smith

Anthony Dimino  
Jan & Jake Jacobs  
Bill Garvin  
Diann Schultz  
Shayne Parry  
Richard Smith  
Michelle Vala  
Rebecca MacRae  
Laurel Williford  
Cleo Lydey  
Elta Pierce  
Barb Fletcher

Commissioner Seibert called the meeting to order at 3:00 PM.

**1) Additions, Corrections, Deletions of Regular Meeting Minutes March 17, 2014**

Commissioner Jeeves made a motion to accept the minutes as presented. Commissioner MacRae seconded the motion. Vote yes. Motion carried.

**3) Elevated Tank Vote**

Commissioner Sipos made a motion to demolish the Elevated Tank. Commissioner MacRae seconded the motion for the specific purpose of further discussion.

**Commissioner Seibert:** We did have a special meeting and I wish you all would have shown up for that about a week and a half ago. I appreciate you all coming today. We will start with recognizing people.

**Commissioner MacRae:** Dennis if I may, and if the Chair will please, the motion being at the table to demolish the tank I think in normal circles all of those that are in favor of that motion should speak first and have the opportunity to voice their opinion, then all that are opposed to that motion have an opportunity to speak.

**Commissioner Seibert:** I don't agree with that.

**Commissioner MacRae:** That is the way it should work.

**Commissioner Seibert:** I don't agree.

**Commissioner MacRae:** Mr. Chairman what is your objection to that.

**Commissioner Seibert:** I think that people should speak, recognize them when they raise their hand and let them speak.

**Commissioner MacRae:** Don't you want it in some type of order? I mean you are running the meeting.

**Commissioner Seibert:** Yes I am and that is the way I feel about it. I think it ought to be recognized as they hold their hand we will recognize them. I'm not going to sit up here and ask if they are in favor or not in favor that is their opinion to give us.

**Commissioner MacRae:** Very well Mr. Chairman, you're the one running the meeting.

**Attorney Lyn:** I just want to say that generally our meetings are quite informal you all are familiar with how we run our meetings. Normally a vote of this nature the motion that is on the table and has been seconded is not a motion that would generally be open to a public hearing. Generally that's not the way you do business here. I know a lot of us are familiar with how say the Board of County Commissioner's do their meeting and they have administrative regulation that are published as to how they run their meetings on certain things quasi-judicial hearings for example is one. So what you're doing, what I think the Board is about to do is open up for public input, but we are not actually conducting a public hearing because under our rules we don't have such a thing on this type of motion. So I respect Commissioner MacRae's comments on how he's used to seeing it done at the BOCC level, but I just want to remind the Board before we get started, this is not the type of question that would generally be set out to a public hearing. So I don't want anybody to get the impression that we are having a public hearing. That's not what you're doing.

**Commissioner MacRae:** No I wouldn't this is a public hearing, this is a public input.

**Attorney Lyn:** So long as everyone understands that.

**Commissioner Seibert:** This is input. We did have a meeting for public input. This is actually a meeting for a vote on this decision. We are willing to listen and we will listen. So we will recognize the floor and we hope that you keep reasonable time period so that we can get everyone in.

**Commissioner MacRae:** And what is your reasonable sir?

**Commissioner Seibert:** Well we are just going to let them speak and I will say something if it gets to long. I will cut it off. So when you stand please state your name and your address because I realize some of you don't live in the district. This is something that affects the people that live in the district.

**Bill Garvin 4380 Blue Water Point:** On Saturday, April 19<sup>th</sup> at 1:00 in the afternoon I saw Mr. MacRae here erecting a very large banner on a wooden framework at Yulee and Fishbowl Dr. Save the water tower. I do not know if your elected officials have a code of conduct or not. If you do I have no clue what the code of conduct is and I'll certainly leave it up to the members of the committee as to whether any action should be taken on this matter. Also I have a brochure here, Historic Homosassa. Please pass it around. I've looked at it in its entirety and I did not notice the water tower in it.

**Commissioner Seibert:** We will ask the Attorney about your comment about the sign.

**Attorney Lyn:** Here is the deal. You guys are going to be here a very long time tonight. I think we all recognize that today. Now if you all are going to respond to each person that speaks you're going to be here even longer so you might want to set up some kind of framework on how you want to, generally you would all accept public comment without replying or responding to it. Then at the end it would come back to you all. You know you all may want to lay down some ground rules on how you want to do it.

**Commissioner Seibert:** Let's do that. Let's leave the ground work that everyone will speak. We will address some of the things that need to be addressed at the end.

**Nancy Rushford 8975 Halls River Rd:** My big question to all of you is first, we want the water tower to stand. It is a landmark and it is a great direction finder for people that are going anywhere in Old Homosassa. My question is there is a big dispute about the money, the cost to fix this water tower. Where is the money where did it go that you had budgeted to repair this water tower? That's what I'd like to know.

**Commissioner Seibert:** We will address that at the end of the meeting. But it is still in the budget.

**Anthony Dimmino 11796 W Valley Spring Lane:** I understand the responsibility of this organization is to provide clean fresh healthy water, pure water for drinking to the residents of this district. I don't see that it's in your purview to maintain structures that are no longer needed by the organization and spend the rate payer's money to preserve something just for someone to look at. My feeling that if this is of historic importance to many people than they should form a little non-profit organization and raise the money and buy the tower and preserve it.

**John Fletcher 5500 Cedar Mill Path:** I am a retired water plant Superintendent. Let me just say I realize that the need and the necessity for the tower is not there. I have spoken with your present Superintendent and he eloquently gave me a very nice letter of rebuttal and I thank him for that, which you all have a copy of. Let me just say this. The tower is in need of repair. We don't have to make it potable sound. We can make it structurally safe using like a SP3 which Dave is familiar with and the type of metal treatment to make it structurally sound to taking it out of service and decommission it and leaving it status quo and going ahead and putting the memorial park that is on a busy road right now just up from the school and putting it there with the water tower. Let me say this by decommissioning it you are no longer jeopardizing with Homeland Security or anything with potable water. It will remain sound. What you do have as Dave enlightened me to a new million gallon storage tank there is elevated at 130' which does gravity feed. Am I correct sir?

**Sup. Purnell:** Absolutely.

**John Fletcher:** As a result personally I am in support of leaving the tower as a historical landmark. I think it would be good not only to your legacy but to the history of Homosassa. Thank you.

**Rick Burns 4286 Purslane Dr:** To me in a weird sort of way I'm in support of keeping the tower. I think it's a nice historic landmark. It's well noticed and seen naturally. To me it almost in a stupid kind of way like wanting to tear down the Yulee Sugarmill ruins. What I would recommend since it's already in the budget to restore. Like the gentleman said make it structurally sound. Not to restore 100% but make it structurally sound and leave it there and everybody as well as I know Citrus County has hardly any industrial market place anymore. Duke power shutting down, ProLine moving out. What we rely on is tourism and what are the 2 leading things that drew the most tourism here in this county specifically here in Homosassa is the Manatee and the scallops. So why not get some artist to paint a nice scallop or manatee up there on the tower for everybody to see that comes by and look at to know that this is what the area is for and I'm in support of something like that.

**Cathy MacRae Foulk:** Is Gator here. Gator said he would give \$5000 to paint the little fishing boy on top.

**Diann Schultz 4215 Purslane Dr:** It was my pleasure to serve on this Board for 19 years and this issue brought me out tonight and I think it's best demonstrated by looking up at the TV screen. What do you see – you see the Water Tower. I'm opposed to destroying the tower. I want you to rehab it and let it continue to be part of our history as well as part of our future.

**Richard Sipos 5778 Garcia Rd:** I attended the meeting on April 9<sup>th</sup> and I'd like to hit on a few items then I'd like to submit some proposals which I think could be used in saving the tower. Item #1 in the meeting April 9<sup>th</sup> water tower is degraded and must be repaired or retired. Item #2 it is no longer required for the system operations. In other words it's not even required for contingency during a hurricane. Of course people mentioned the cost estimate \$220,000 over 10 years or \$15,000 to destroy it. One of things that came up in the meeting that kind of hit me hard was that the current system leaks 22% of water into the ground. The water quality used to be in 1986 you could see the bottom at MacRaes, you can't see it there now. I attended a Homosassa River Alliance meeting a year ago and they stated that springs are declining in the state primarily due to over pumping by municipalities. So here we are we got 22% of water leaking into our ground and we're looking at maybe refurbishing a tank using water district money that could be used in replacing the 50 year old piping we have. We are spending a lot of money for band aids on that pipe right now. As soon as you fix one, I heard in the meeting it increases the pressure and it blows out somewhere else. So let's talk about Florida Statutes, unless Denise can correct me, there is nothing in the accountability that says there is a requirement to maintain equipment past the useful life.

**Commissioner MacRae:** Jim stay awake.

**Richard Sipos:** See me after the meeting if I'm wrong, again I apologize in advance to anyone if I'm wrong, Ok. So here are the alternatives I've come up with on how to save the tower. I'm looking out after the water district. The rate payers, these are people in our county that are struggling to make a living. I was at McDonalds on Wednesday morning, there was a school teacher from Homosassa Elementary School there he had a couple of big boxes of food \$173 worth of food. I asked him what's that for and he said he was treating his kids. He said I have people in this community; kids that parents can't even afford to take them to McDonalds. Their paying our water bills here out of the rates. So let's talk about how we can solve this problem. I'm gonna give you a good example. Form a LLC to take control of the tower, take title to it. Provide reconstruction and perpetual maintenance through state grants, corporate sponsors, we already know Gator's on board, fund raisers, fish fry's and those that support the benefit in the community should go out and gladly take this accountability if there is a benefit to it. I heard Mr. Burns saying there is clearly a benefit to keep and maintain the tower. I will give you a good example as to what can be done. In 1987 I was on the Artificial Reef Advisory Committee for Martin County. The Navy offered an old Liberty ship; it was going to cost \$125,000 to sink it. 7 of us said by god we are going to do this, just out of the clear blue just put our name on the list. We had fish

fry's, corporate sponsors, sold t-shirts, sold artifact from the ship. Ruffled off the steering wheel, sold port holes. We got state artificial reef grants. We came up with \$125,000 and it happened. We slapped ourselves on the back, had a party and went home.

**Commissioner Seibert:** Richard if you could wrap this up we would appreciate it.

**Richard Sipos:** The 2<sup>nd</sup> thing is have the County or the State take it over like the Sugarmill just maintain it as a historical item. The 3<sup>rd</sup> thing is to and I don't like this and it would probably require an amendment to the State Statutes would be to have an AdValorem tax. That way you protect renters and low income renter, you protect the people that are on homestead exemption. With that I suggest #1 we fix that strut because the water tower no longer meets the structural analysis. We got hurricane season coming 40 days from now and the strut restrains the legs from buckling during a wind storm.

**Jake Jacobs 5905 Shady Tree Path:** We still have some black 2" line on our damn street. There are sections where they have band aids, hell in one section from here to there, there are at least 5 band aides that I've helped put on and the black pipe it sometimes lets the black stuff loose. I've got to drain my water heater and everything else. It's been budgeted for years. I would sure as hell like to see this money go to replacing some of these water lines in Old Homosassa that would help us have some clean decent water instead of black crap water.

**Cleo Lydy 11131 Seminole:** I've lived here 22 years. Where I'm concerned is the children, it seems like they are always getting shoved aside in Homosassa. For instance there is no place to swim. This has nothing to do with the tower. It is historically a part of it. There is no place to swim for the children. They have to have a boat; you have to be a richer person to take your children swimming. I'm concerned about the water tower. The children should see these things. A lot of the palm log cabins are being torn down, that's very historical. To me to see how these people lived. I've read a lot of the history books and it shows the old school in Ozello where they took a boat to school and the school was just a palm log cabin. The water tower is part of the history. Children see it and they will remember that the railroad line went through there.

**Linda Locklear 10400 W Yulee Dr.:** I'd wager that when I moved there from Cardinal Lane in 1973 that I've probably since lived there longer than most that are opposed to the water tower. The people that are opposed to the water tower also never drank that god awful water that we had before we got our Special Water. I didn't do my homework and I'm not an Engineer, it would seem to me like you could have an empty water tower sitting there. That all you would have to have is it structurally sound like a building and I'm glad that I wasn't the only one that thought of a mural and you could have things on it and not all the new-fangled things. Scallops are good but you could have mullet fishing. You could have all the things people and history. You could have MacRae's, but you would probably have to fire Rodney. Those things are important. We will sell t-shirts we will sell like the ones with the Eifel Tower and Paris, Big Ben and London and the water tower with all the buzzards on it. These things are part of the, they aren't deep history but they are part of history of the people who were originally here. It's true the water isn't as good as it was; I used to swim at MacRae's when I was a teenager. Part of why that water isn't what it was is because Riverhaven canals were done and nobody is proposing that we get rid of Riverhaven. I've been through Lansborough, Ga., and I look forward to seeing that water tower bird dog capital of the world and I bet they wouldn't tear it down. Because they know what's important.

**Gail Oaks:** We did adopt a hippo and named it a citizen because someone was going to get rid of it. Old Homosassa is a little unique and what we consider personal, a hippo being one. A couple of people have tried to get rid of Monkey Island which has been here as long as the water tower and Lucifer and I'm actually older than all 3 of those things. What I want to tell you is don't have enough information regarding the financial up and down and I know your waiting till the end to give that balance to us. But we have no signs on US Highway 19 except little teeny things that say Old Homosassa. In addition to living on one side of the River I operate a business on the other side of the River. 10, 12, 20 times a day

we tell people yes if you turn west off 19 go just far enough and you will see the water tower; it's the only identification mark we have in Homosassa. The only one, you're either at the Wildlife Part or at the water tower and most of the time we tell people how to get to the Wildlife Park by telling them where the water tower is. It is a crossroad within our County and we will never get a Billboard on 19. We don't get much from the County in general. We don't get much in the way of Community identification from Citrus County. I pay my water bill to and I don't know if we all get a refund if we tear the water tower down, in which case I may want to change my position. I think yeah we could probably raise money to get a nice big landmark or a monument but I also think that we don't get much in Homosassa for what we pay out. It wouldn't hurt if we could come together to on this. If we don't need it for water than just for the identification and the one landmark and the one distinction that we have that identifies us from Cardinal or Burger King. If we could just come together to figure out a way to get that done.

**Charlie Stephens 5580 Chamberlain Pool Dr.:** That is where I was born and raised. I've been here 64 years and I've walked up and down Fishbowl before and after they took up the train tracks. I used to go swimming at Blue hole back by old man Trotter's house. You go up there today and you can't even find it because the algae have took it over because people like to have great grass. Then they put fertilizer and that fertilizer creates an in balance. I've fished and seen how laws work and it's not right to the people of Homosassa, especially the ones that say I'm at Crystal Chevrolet in Homosassa. That pisses me off. I live in Homosassa. Sugar Mill Woods they say they are Homosassa, that's another one. You know when they advertised on TV Homosassa. I live in Old Homosassa, that's where I was born. Homosassa Springs did have a name they called it New Town. Halls River didn't have a name just Halls River Rd., that's it and Riverhaven; I don't even want to go there.

**Cathy MacRae Foulk 1697 Onon Daga Dr., Geneva, Fl:** Thank you for opening the doors today. I was born and raised here. My family came in 1950. We have seen a lot. Rodney is my brother, sometimes. A lot of the people here I grew up with. Charley I remember when Charlie's mom and dad had the house on Green Key in the Gulf. I remember some of those islands were huge; you could walk around on some of those islands out there. I agree with what Gail says as far as what the financial end as far as what we've been told it's in the budget. Structurally I've heard from 2 different Engineers. We haven't heard from an Engineer from you to tell us what condition this unit is in.

**Commissioner Sipos:** If you had been to the meeting that we had it was.

**Cathy MacRae Foulk:** It was laid out there?

**Commissioner Sipos:** Yes.

**Cathy MacRae Foulk:** We started, we just threw it out there as a little group thing a Facebook site. I've heard today a couple of things about preserving it and that's what I feel if it's obsolete. I think we have 202 members. We started this site a week ago. There are all kinds of comments about people and what they thought, some were pro and some were con. As he scrolls down you can see all the members, there are 202 members. I guess my point is I think we all are here pretty much in agreement that it is a landmark to us. It is a historical site, which we have lost forever pretty much a lot of them. My grandmother fought for the Mill, it was in shambles in the 30's and 40's. She rounded up bins where they stirred. She had the state come in and take it over. But she fought very hard. I still have the papers today where she fought with the County Commissioners and State Officials to maintain. She even fought the County to move the main road not in front of that because she thought the vibration would crack the road. She proposed around and behind the Halls residence, New York Street and it went out and around and came back out at the curve from the Frist Baptist Church. I have the plans that she had done that to try to save the road.

I think if we lose our landmarks we lose our identity and I think it's just one of them. If obsolete I say let's fight to make it structurally sound, put the pumps underneath it. I really truly feel that losing this object we're gonna lose the spirit to in this community that we've worked hard all our lives to build.

**Nancy Rushford:** I know I already spoke once but I have one thing I would like to ask. We're all standing here; we're all saying how much we want this to be left.

I've been sitting here looking at your faces, Lora Sipos for one. Does it really matter what us the public that is paying your salaries and elected you to sit there and look at us and say we don't really give a damn of what you have to say because we're gonna do it anyway. But if you care anything about your positions that you have now or if you care about the people who live here in Homosassa, we are actually begging you to please leave our landmark. You've got the money; you've had it in the budget to fix it so fix it.

**Dave Dodge 11798 Riverhaven Dr.:** I live in Riverhaven and I'm proud of it. I have a question. There is a difference between budgeting something and having the money set aside sequestered. If it's not sequestered and not set in an Escrow account and held in an Interest bearing account than that money has to come out of future fees. So that means whatever money we are going to spend that is going to come out of next years and the following years water fees. So don't be surprised if you go ahead and spend money to refurbish the tower that 3 years from now you're asking for a rate increase because there is no helping it.

**Audience Member:** They are going to ask anyway.

**Commissioner MacRae:** Not because of the water tower.

**Commissioner Seibert:** Let's hold up on this please. Comments like that if you haven't attended any meetings and learned about our Budgeting and understand how we spend money and how we save money for you. I've been on this Board for 24 years and I think I've done a hell of a good job of keeping your cost down and this is starting to irritate me to be quite honest with you, Ok. I don't see these faces at meetings. I don't see these faces at Budget meetings and come in here to try to do the budget how to make it and keep your cost low. So please let's be careful what we say.

**Dave Dodge:** Is the money sequestered?

**Commissioner Seibert:** No it is not.

**Dave Dodge:** Is it in an Escrow Account?

**Commissioner Seibert:** No it's not.

**Dave Dodge:** So the money is only budgeted?

**Commissioner Seibert:** It's only budgeted for purposes if we need to go forward, but we can use it for other things.

**Audience Member:** These exchanges between the Chair and the individuals are contrary to what was established to save time.

**Commissioner Seibert:** I agree.

**Audience Member:** So I just object to you responding.

**Commissioner Seibert:** Thank you, I'm glad you object.

**John Fletcher:** In my earlier comment I mentioned about SP3. Just for the record SP3 to keeping it structurally sound is the removal of all loose mill scale, loose rust, loose paint and other loose determinate foreign matter and by the use of power assisted hand tools in cleaning it up. Now what you're proposing you're to rehab it is going to an SP4 which is taking it down to the white level which is sandblasting to making it structurally sound and water potable if you were to rehab it. What I'm putting forth is not to totally rehabbing it, but to making it structurally sound, decommissioning the water tower and leaving it as a historic monument. There is a cost I realize in making it structurally sound, it's far cheaper than making it structurally sound and water potable. So therefore just making it structurally sound is far cheaper and the money you would be using it to tear it down could be allocated to making it structurally sound.

**Commissioner Seibert:** Thank you for your input and we will have to have answers to this, but there are answers to it. That is one of those things that we will have to get to.

**Audience Member:** Rehabbing that in site and this is just a comment. I'm under the impression that there is lead paint and that would be a frightful cost to take care of that.

**Marian MacRae 10670 W Halls River Rd.:** Commissioners, friends, family Homosassians. First I want to say thank you guys for showing up for this. This is like so important to all of us obviously and there have been so many people out there doing petitions, putting up Facebook pages and you guys coming here to show support for our tower. I'm so grateful that we have come together as a community to do this and I'm really grateful and I hope our Commissioners listen to us.

We voted you guys to be our Commissioners to run this water district and you're doing a great job. Hands down. But this particular issue is not only a water district issue. This issue has to do with community, this has to do with family, this has to do with history, this has to do with landmarks, and this has to do with Homosassa. We respectfully request that the Commissioners listen to us and hear what we have to say and then honor our requests. Because that's why we are here today to ask you guys to put aside the money value, put aside this and go from your heart. Vote for what's right, vote for your community not for the dollar, vote for your community.

**Commissioner Seibert:** Now I would like to answer I guess is that point of order, now for us to answer some of these if there are not more questions. What is our next step?

**Attorney Lyn:** I would see if anyone has any further questions.

**Commissioner Seibert:** Does anyone else wish to speak?

**Ron Schultz 4215 S Purslane Dr.:** Let me start with a generic comment. I always have difficulties when government agencies schedule public input meetings during normal working hours. When many people cannot attend. I think this is a tremendous frustration that I've seen in local governments. Having said that communities are created and maintained when people share a set of values. When they share a set of goals. When they see that they have involvement with each other. Now I'm not a Florida native. I've been here for 70 years.

**Commissioner MacRae:** We will grandfather you in.

**Ron Schultz:** But over these years, what I have seen repeatedly is in the wave of efficiency and the name of progress we destroy everything that is old and we run over communities. I think that is a tremendous sin. That we as a culture in this state have done for the 70 years that I've been here. This is regrettable. We need symbols, that hold us together and the claims that we have had for several years

now that was important is efficiency and progress. Almost always turn out to be the opposite. Because it is a sense of community, it's a sense of involvement; it's a sense of history. It's the sense that is overwhelmingly the important characteristic. We as people in Florida, we as people of Homosassa, as people of the United States need to share and shooting this in the name of efficiency and progress. I would think it would be unconscionable to destroy that water tower. It is Homosassa. I personally think it can continue to service the water district. I would actually support fixing it and maintaining it for potable water. But I want it preserved.

**Paul Larson 10197 Main St:** I've been consuming Homosassa water for 39 years and its good stuff. When I opened up my water bill the last one to me. I got it and I seen the notice. It was unfortunate the meeting was the day before I opened my bill. I couldn't be at that meeting. I would have been. I know there were a lot of things that were discussed at that meeting that I don't know about. I guess I will find out sooner or later. But I do have some questions regarding the money. In the flyer that you guys sent out it mentioned \$220,000 to rehabilitate the water tower. The newspaper I read and the flyer also said a 10 year maintenance program. The newspaper mentioned \$220,000 that included a 10 year maintenance program. I don't know which way it is. Can you answer that? Is it both or just one? The other thing is the flyer said \$80,000 to tear it down. Then we read in the newspaper maybe \$15,000. There is a lot of scrap metal in that thing. Whoever is taking that thing down for \$80,000 could make a lot of money. There probably a whole bunch of scrap metal. I think you could get someone to take that down for nothing. Not that I want that job. I don't view the water tower as historic; I think that's kind of stretching it really. It's been there what less than 50 years. Does that make it historic? But it is a landmark. A lot of people say they are afraid to go past the water tower. I think the money is huge and whether it comes back to us later in the form of extra added fees, money doesn't grow on trees. I know that. But if you could just clarify whether the \$220,000 includes a 10 year maintenance program and then what I read also in the paper was it was between \$80,000 & \$15,000 to destruct it. I was like what if I had a guy come and look at my yard and give me an estimate and he said well it's gonna be \$15 or \$80, I don't know which one that doesn't make a lot of sense. We need more specifics I think you guys have those and I would like to hear those.

**Commissioner Seibert:** Thank you, any more questions? If not Attorney Lyn do we go ahead and answer these questions?

**Attorney Lyn:** This meeting is very uncharacteristic for this Board. I would say it is up to the Board to decide how it wants to handle this hearing. You don't have any written rules on how you all handle these things. If you all want to discuss it, if you want the Superintendent to go through the power point that he provided to you, however you want to proceed.

**Commissioner Seibert:** I would like to clarify some of these points; there are some points that need to be clarified. I think maybe if you want to see the report that we have from the Engineer we do have a power point on that you can see that. We can clarify these points that came up how like your point about the dollars.

What I would like Sup. Purnell to do is show you that, if you all would like to see it.

**Commissioner MacRae:** Do you want to go through that whole thing again?

**Audience Member:** You had a public meeting to do this and to repeat it just isn't right.

**Attorney Lyn:** I wouldn't take any more public comment. I think it's up to the Board.

**Commissioner Seibert:** What I would like to do is answer the questions.

We have pictures that we can flash them up here while we are answering questions.

There were questions brought up and let's go from the last one about the dollars. When they called and wanted an interview I didn't have the option of knowing this was going to happen even though it was brought up that we didn't even know it was going to the newspaper so I was caught off guard. I didn't have but about 30 minutes to answer them. We came up with \$220,000 is actually the low end of keeping it. Because that is what the Engineer gave us an approximate on. This doesn't include Engineering fees, etc. These are all estimates. The \$80,000 was given to us by our Manager based on the fact that we may have to replace 2 pumps to keep the well sites from hammering, to keep the water lines from hammering.

The \$15,000 is the fee to take down the water tower. You asked why we couldn't get someone to buy it. Because it has lead paint on it. They are going to haul it away and do it somewhere else, because you can't in the State of Florida. So yes we would love to sell it for scrape and we would love to have anybody if they wanted to take it down take it down for free but that won't happen. We don't think that we need the pumps that we were talking about, but I didn't want to low ball it either. When I said that, you have to understand when you talk to a reporter they say things they hear and put into the paper. They don't let you re-read it to make sure it's right. I've been quoted before totally opposite from what I've said in the other situations I've been in. So that's where the numbers came from.

The other thing is you know we can work ourselves backwards here. Using the sign and we were hoping someone would have stepped up and our job is to run this department for good quality water at a good price to you our consumers. We are not historians. I'm sorry, we're not historians. We would love to see it, I don't want to see the tank torn down, but I also want to see that we're running a good business, because it is a business. I don't care what anyone says it's a business. You know we have to make decisions that make sense. We can't do most of the things you all said, it can't be done by us. Painting the signs on there we can't do that. It's something that you have to look at. We were hoping that you would give us some ideas of how someone could take it over and set it up as a historical site or whatever you would like to. Set it up and carry the burden. Because yes you're here but there is 2200 hook ups, 5000 individuals that live in this district that we answer to. We don't just answer to you all. We don't just answer to you. We answer to 5,000 people and we're trying to do a job for those people and do the right job as a business man and business woman. Like I said it's hard for me as a business man to think one way and as a person, yes I like the tank. Ok I'd love to have that tank painted and stuff on it but we can't do that. That's us putting the burden on all 5,000 individuals that live in our District and ask them to pay for it. That is not a correct way to approach that. We need to see people step up, if you want to step up and take the energy your taking step up and create a group that could take over this, could help.

**Commissioner MacRae:** They can't very well do that if you all vote to demolish it.

**Commissioner Seibert:** It could be done if we do it you all, you've have the effort and the time to come forward with something and form something hopefully. That's all we are trying to say. We are trying to make a decision based on business sense. Rodney I'm going to throw it back at you, because you even said it 3 times, business wise you think it should be torn down. So I understand that, that's what I'm saying. It's out there. We all have feelings; all of us on the Board have feelings about that. Hey that tank, I've been here 30 years, I've been on this Board 24 years. I don't like to see it torn down, but if that's a decision that has to be made business wise. Money is in the Budget; no it's not in the Budget. It's set aside like the gentleman said it's there because we knew it was gonna come. It's not there next year we probably will have to raise rates in truth if we are gonna fix our water lines, I'll be honest with you. We need money to fix those water lines. We have Highway 19, that hit us square in the forehead we didn't even know about the 2 million dollars, we had to go out and borrow 2 million dollars.

**Commissioner MacRae:** Dennis be correct on the amount of money we borrowed and what we borrowed it for.

**Commissioner Seibert:** We borrowed 2 million dollars.

**Commissioner MacRae:** For what?

**Commissioner Seibert:** For the Highway 19 project.

**Commissioner MacRae:** No

**Commissioner Seibert:** Then what did we borrow the money for?

**Commissioner MacRae:** Didn't we borrow it to pay off a loan back that we already had. If your gonna run this Dennis get the facts straight.

**Commissioner Seibert:** Then let's do the numbers. We borrowed 2 million dollars and we paid off another loan so that we could borrow that 2 million dollars.

**Commissioner MacRae:** That is correct.

**Commissioner Seibert:** So what Rodney is saying is yes we had to use a portion of that to pay off a current loan we had. But still the cost is going to be in the range of 1 1/2 to 2 million dollars.

**Attorney Lyn:** Chair why don't you let all the Board members speak.

**Commissioner Seibert:** Ok, let me just address the empty tank. You can't leave the tank sit there empty. Dave will have to answer that due to the structure of it. My understanding is you have to have something in that tank to make it study enough so that it doesn't get taken down in a storm. Ok so you can't leave it empty.

Advertising, I've already covered you can't do that, wish we could. I'd love to keep it and use it as a big billboard and make some money off of it but we can't do that.

**Audience Member:** How long do we have before you vote on it?

**Commissioner Seibert:** We are going to vote on it today. If we vote to take it down we aren't going to take it down right away. We are willing to wait and see if someone can find an answer to it.

**Audience Member:** What I'm getting at is you've got everyone here that made the effort and the concern to come out of their time today so they're concerned. So what you need to do is to give us time for us to get a group or Board together to raise funds to do this so you all don't have to absorb the cost.

**Commissioner Seibert:** We have to stop this, I'm sorry. We had our input time. I'm gonna stop and let each Board member say something.

**Commissioner MacRae:** I would like to just interject. Not to take up my time because I would like to speak last. But I would like to say something. I hear you mention 3 times in your speech that you would like to see that tank stay. All's you've got to do is Vote No to the Board when it comes around. So you will have a chance in a few minutes.

**Commissioner Seibert:** That's true.

**Commissioner MacRae:** One other thing you mentioned. There was 5000 people that we send water to and you made a smidgen of a mockery of the amount of people that are here and that you don't listen

or you don't have to pay attention to just these people. Well sir I would beg of you and I implore you to listen to these people.

**Commissioner Seibert:** I have.

**Commissioner MacRae:** They took off time from their jobs, from their families to be here to talk to you, to talk to you, to talk to you Bob, you and you and me. I'm listening to them and I expect you to give them the utmost courtesy and listen to what they had to say.

**Sup. Purnell:** Are you going first or last?

**Commissioner MacRae:** Last. Thank you for reminding me Dave. Thank you for keeping me straight.

Commissioner Seibert asked Commissioner Sipos her feelings:

**Commissioner Sipos:** The board has made, is making a business decision. I realize there is a lot of emotion, but we are not a historical society. We are here to make business decision and that is how I feel about it.

Commissioner Seibert asked Commissioner Jeeves his feelings:

**Commissioner Jeeves:** It's an emotional situation and if there was some way we could have a program to allow the constitutes that that are interested in saving the tank, save it in some program. We would be willing to support that, but otherwise the tank is of no use, it's a financial liability and I would say it should come down.

Commissioner Seibert asked Commissioner Bitter his feelings:

**Commissioner Bitter:** I pre-date the tank by a number of years. So let's not call it an antique. Lora part of business is advertising and identification of your product. Everyone out there who has a business, every community wants to identify their community and wants them to know about it. I'm not sure that there is a better symbol of the community than that water tower. I include the old Sugarmill in that. When I first came here in January 1956 the Sugarmill was just a pile of rocks, very few rocks and a couple of big gears. If you really wanted to find the original Sugarmill you had to look in the foundation of homes all around Old Homosassa. For purposes of maybe sentimentality but from a business standpoint this is advertising our community and I believe we are responsible for that. For them to make a living and be able to pay their water bill. So I'm going to vote against this motion to demolish.

**Commissioner MacRae:** I respect all these people. I'm glad they are out here but this isn't for you, this is for these guy's (the Board) because they are the ones voting. So here we go guys. First off yeah I guess a couple of it is gonna be to a couple of people here to just to set the record straight and when you accuse me of doing something get the facts right. That sign had been erected for over a day. I wasn't erecting that sign I thought it was a little crooked and I straightened it up. I did not erect that sign. I did not pay for the sign. My wife did.

Dennis you know this you've been to every damn meeting that we have had ever since I've been on the Board and I've been on the Board for 20 years. For as long as I can remember you have wanted to take that tank down. You said 3 times in your statement that you wanted to save that tank. You can do that by voting no to this motion. Bob I'm imploring you, to man I need your help in this motion more than I have ever needed your support on this Board before. I am begging you to vote no on the motion that is on the table.

Now hear me out ok, and I'm not preaching to you, I'm begging you man, I'm begging you. You have heard everything that I have heard in every meeting, the money is there. Whether it's in a damn lock box in David's office or it's in the State fund, we've got the money to fix it this tank. We have budgeted it for at least 15 years and I am sad to say that I am one of the members that have foregone the maintenance to that tank. Had we spent that money as we should have we wouldn't be at this crossroads today. The tank is part of the system. I have heard time and time again, even from the people that were for it and the people that were against it that the tank is not part of the system. Bullshit. The tank is part of the system. It worked, we installed, don't shake your head Dave. You would tell me at the meetings we need to spend the money to put the pumps on the tank to make the tank work more efficiently.

**Sup. Purnell:** To make the quality of water for the people.

**Commissioner MacRae:** It's not your time yet David, it's not your time and I can do that because I'm a Commissioner I can do that. This tank is a viable part of this whole delivery system. You said that it wasn't. It is, it works, we have spent money to put pumps and valves in place to make it part of the system. It wasn't as big of a part as it used to be, but it is a part and it is a functional part. I'm not done yet.

**Commissioner Jeeves:** But we can operate without it.

**Commissioner MacRae:** Well ok we can and the financial part will come don't cut me off. Please Dennis don't cut me off.

**Commissioner Seibert:** We have to keep it concise and you're getting a little long.

**Commissioner MacRae:** Let's get down to the facts to the money part of it. I'm trying to get the facts out. Now you're slowing my progression down. I'm trying to get my facts out so the Commissioners on the Board can make an educated decision and vote. Because apparently you have questions about it. I have signatures, I'm gonna digress and pop all over the place. I have signatures from over 430 people.

**Marian MacRae:** Excuse me I have some more.

**Commissioner MacRae:** There are actually more than 430, some of them within the District, some of them not. This is a grass roots thing that people have come to sign an affidavit that's stating we want you to save the tank, please save the tank, I could mention names, probably shouldn't but some of the things they said; Preserve our history, don't get rid of it, save the tower, save the tower, save the tower, leave the tower alone, keep the history, keep history, leave it alone, leave the history, it's important.

**Commissioner Seibert:** Rodney we appreciate..

**Commissioner MacRae:** No No I'll speed up.

**Commissioner Seibert:** I appreciate it.

**Commissioner MacRae:** Here's the last one that I really like. Refurbish it and leave it alone dumbasses. That's what they said. I have emails that were sent to us some of them against, the vast majorities are for.

Sup. Purnell read an email: My vote is to remove the eyesore. Thank you.

**Commissioner MacRae:** Dave you're stealing my thunder.

**Sup. Purnell:** There are just as many.

**Commissioner MacRae:** There are 202 Facebook people. They set up a Facebook for this thing with 202 people. 1 old girlfriend called and said that if I voted to remove the tank she would come back to town to kick my butt. The tank is an integral part of the system. The tank is not old, it is half of its life. There is a tank in North Florida that was built in 1890 it's still operational today.

**Commissioner Sipos:** May I ask you something?

**Attorney Lyn:** Just let him finish.

**Commissioner Seibert:** Just hurry up and finish. We held the audience to a certain time.

**Commissioner MacRae:** Ok here I'll forgo all this, but let me run the numbers; estimated \$220,000 over a 10 year period, that is the maintenance and refurbishment. At the end of that 10 year period it will have a fresh coat of paint on it and it will be in tip top shape. Ok, 10 years, \$220,000 that is a hell of a lot of money. We have 2500 customers/accounts. That is less than \$88 dollars apiece over a 10 year period. That is less than .75 cents a month. Take out the \$80,000 that you said to remove the tank and to pump all the pumps and upgrades, that leaves you with \$140,000. \$140,000 and we have on hand this year \$120,000 that leaves \$20,000. It's not fuzzy math, it's the numbers you gave me. Sometime, I have to read this cuz I will forget it for sure and this is the end of it I promise you. Sometimes you must do things that maybe your head tells you not to but in your hear you know that you should. I'm done. I remove my second.

**Commissioner Seibert:** Than I will make the second then so Dave can make his comments.

**Sup. Purnell:** The pumps that pump water out of the Elevated tank were added so stale un-chlorinated bad water could not get into the system that, that tank causes that's why those pumps were added.

**Commissioner MacRae:** So they make it a part of the system?

**Sup. Purnell:** No, no it makes extra cost to the system.

**Commissioner Seibert:** We've had the comments; we've had a second we need to take a vote.

**Audience Member:** Can you not table this for 6 months?

**Commissioner MacRae:** I'd like a roll call vote.

**Commissioner Seibert:** We will do a roll call vote.

Commissioner MacRae – I vote no to the motion on this tank.

Commissioner Bitter – No,

Commissioner Jeeves – Yes,

Commissioner Sipos – Yes,

Commissioner Seibert – Yes.

Motion carried.

**Commissioner Seibert:** I'm sorry it's a business decision. I'm sorry if you all don't agree with it.

**Audience Member:** Mr. Seibert can I ask you one thing before I go?

**Commissioner Seibert:** Sure.

**Audience Member:** If the people go together say the residents, business people of Homosassa got together and we wanted to keep the water tank and we wanted to purchase it what would it cost us to purchase the water tower?

**Commissioner Seibert:** For us to sell District property it would be fair market value which we don't know what that is. At this point you would have to have it appraised and find out what the fair market value is.

**Audience Member:** You said it's going to cost \$220,000 to repair so if the public was to buy it, it shouldn't cost us any more than \$220,000?

**Commissioner Seibert:** It should cost you less; you don't have to meet all the standards we have to meet. We're going to take it down, but we will delay when we take it down to give you all a chance to see if you can't pull something together. Use your efforts to pull something together.

**Audience Member:** Didn't you say you would pay somebody to take it away, your real quick to take it away.

**Commissioner MacRae:** Dennis I probably should have told you this before you voted, but I didn't want to sway you one way or the other, but my mom told me to tell you that if you voted to take this tank down you're not allowed to come on the lot anymore. (Audience laughter)

**Audience Member:** How much time are we allotted to do this?

**Commissioner Seibert:** I would say that we will hold up on this area for I would say 2 months, 2-3 months.

**Audience Member:** Can you give us 6 months?

**Commissioner Seibert:** I'm not gonna commit to that.

**Sup. Purnell:** There is a big liability.

**Commissioner Seibert:** you all need to take your efforts and try to figure that out.

**Diann Schultz:** There is an election for this Board this year. There are positions open. I would urge you to look at whether you want to serve on the Board.

**Commissioner Seibert:** We do need people to run. My seat is available; Mr. Bitter's seat is available.

**Audience Member:** Dennis I would like to say 3 words, look behind you. (At the tv screen).

**Commissioner Seibert:** It's a business I'm sorry.

**Commissioner MacRae:** And we are gonna tighten it up – you ready?

**Sup. Purnell:** Absolutely.

## **2) Public Input:**

### **A) Civic Club – Street Vacate Request**

Discussion.

Commissioner MacRae made a motion that once the District is provided additional information (expanded drawings) of the new easement the request for the Street Vacate is approved. Commissioner Seibert seconded the motion. Vote yes. Motion carried.

#### **B) Central Florida Engineering – Street Vacate Request**

Discussion.

The Board will also require an easement as above.

Commissioner Sipos made a motion to approve the letter being sent. Commissioner Bitter seconded the motion. Vote yes. Motion carried.

#### **4) Group Insurance**

Jody Roxby came before the Board to discuss the upcoming year's policy for the group Health Insurance.

Discussion.

Commissioner Jeeves made a motion that we accept plan 5462. Commissioner Sipos seconded the motion. Commissioner Seibert, Commissioner Sipos, Commissioner Bitter, Commissioner Jeeves – Vote yes. Commissioner MacRae – Vote No.

#### **6) Attorney Report:**

Attorney Lyn has nothing to report.

\*\*\*\*Commissioner Sipos stated that she would like Attorney Lyn to address the Turnpike issue. Apparently we have sent a letter in the past on the Suncoast Parkway. I'm not sure when we sent that in the past but I think we should send another one. They are getting more motivated and may be getting ready to do something soon.

Attorney Lyn stated I have never sent a letter that would come from the Board – from the Chairman.

Discussion.

Sup. Purnell stated he will update the letter and send it to Attorney Lyn for the legality of it and have it at the next Board meeting for the Board to approve.

#### **5) 2013-2014 Budget Reports:**

Discussion.

#### **7) Staff Report:**

Discussion.

- A) Attached
- B) Table this till at later meeting
- C) Press Release and Agreement for Chairman's signature for Election

## **8) Superintendent's Report:**

Discussion.

**Commissioner MacRae:** I would like to see something next month from you Sup. Purnell that details what you have said about the water loss and what your plans are to get this under control.

## **9) Reports to the Board:**

- A) Shut off list – Attached
- B) Adjustment Report – Attached
- C) Yearly Timeline – Attached

## **10) Board Comments:**

**Commissioner MacRae:** Dennis thank you very much, thank you to the entire Board for your patience in my Ass whipping I took from you. I shan't not forget it anytime soon.

**Commissioner Bitter:** No comment.

**Commissioner Jeeves:** I would like to compliment the Board in their professionalism in handling the situation today.

**Commissioner Sipos:** No comment.

**Commissioner Seibert:** No comment, just glad it's over.

**Commissioner MacRae:** I don't think it's over though.

Commissioner Jeeves made a motion to pay the bills and adjourn the meeting. Commissioner MacRae seconded the motion. Vote yes. Motion carried.