

**City Of Martinsburg**  
**Emergency Special City Council Meeting Minutes**  
**Friday May 20, 2016**  
**10:00 AM.**

With a quorum present, the special session of the Martinsburg City Council was called to order by Mayor George Karos at 10:00 am. The following Council Members were present: Don Anderson, Dennis Etherington, Kevin Knowles, Gregg Wachtel, Ken Collinson and Jason W. Baker. Not present was H.D. Boyd. Also present were: Kin Sayre, Legal Counsel; Gena Long, City Recorder, Utilities Director Steve Knipe and City Engineer/Planning Director Michael Covell

Also in attendance were Christine Hewett representing Senator Joe Manchin; Doug Copenhaver representing Berkeley County Council; Dan Dulyea, representing Berkeley County Council; Stephen Smoot, representing Representative Alex Mooney; Bill Kearns, representing the Berkeley County Health Department; Sebastian Donner, representing the West Virginia Department of Environmental Protection; Brian Shade, representing the Berkeley County Public Solid Waste Department and Alan Marchun and Brad Reed representing WVBPH; as well as several other members of the public and media

Mayor Karos announced, for the record, that City Manager Mark Baldwin is out of town and that it was deemed prudent to call a special emergency meeting on the below issue.

**3. Discuss and take appropriate action concerning the EPA Health Advisory concerning PFOA and PFOS**

Steve Knipe, Utilities Director, stated that on May 19, 2016, the City of Martinsburg was notified that there were new lower limits for PFOA and PFOS, a chemical used for fire retardation. Mr. Knipe stated that the city has two water supplies, and only the Big Springs water filtration plant exceeds the new limits and that Kilmer Springs shows no presence of the chemicals at all. The source of supply for the Big Springs plant has been taken offline and the City is now operating at 100% from the Kilmer Springs plant.

He stated that plans involve increased testing for the contaminants, consideration of a new, uncontaminated, supply for the Big Springs facility (possibly reevaluating the springs that have fed that facility in the past) and working closely with Berkeley County to ensure that the City does not run low on water supply.

Mr. Sayre stated that prior to May 19 at 2:30 PM, the standard for the contaminant allowed for .4 parts per billion (ppb) and the City was in full compliance. The Health Advisory (not a regulatory order, just an informational advisory) indicated that a new limit had been established at .07 ppb. Some samples from Big Springs have exceeded that new limit. Mr. Sayre also indicated that information from the Air Force about the contaminants was available for public consumption. At this time, the City is not aware of the source of the contaminant but is certain it does not originate from the treatment facility.

Mayor Karos stated that water in the City of Martinsburg has been safe to drink it is still safe to drink today. Taking the Big Springs facility is offline is a precautionary measure in response to the Health Advisory.

Councilman Anderson asked that Mr. Knipe explain what "PFOA" and "PFOS" means. Mr. Knipe stated that the acronyms stand for perfluorinated compound which are man-made products used in such items as Teflon and firefighting foams. They were created in the 1950s and water supplies are tested for them regularly.

Councilman Anderson asked if the City was notified of this new limit just the day before. Mr. Knipe replied that it was and if the City were to continue to use the Big Springs facility, there would be a requirement to notify the public not to drink the water.

Councilman Anderson asked if these compounds are added to the water supply. Mr. Knipe replied that these chemicals are not added, that they are contaminants that have gotten into the ground water from an unknown source.

Councilman Knowles asked where the water source for Big Springs is. Steve replied that the wellhead protection area is around Tabler Station Road and includes the area where the Essroc facility is located. Councilman Knowles pointed out that Essroc has been fined for air quality issues and asked if it could be the source of the contaminant. Mr. Knipe stated that he is not sure, and Councilman Knowles asked if there was a way to determine that. Mr. Knipe replied that locating the source of the contaminant will be done by regulatory agencies.

Councilman Baker asked for confirmation that the City was in compliance before the new limits were released. Mr. Knipe replied that we were well within compliance. Councilman Baker asked what our normal percentage is for the chemicals in the supply. Mr. Knipe stated that four of the six tests conducted in March of 2016 picked up contamination levels and all were below limits at that time, but two of those exceed the new limits.

Councilman Etherington stated that the City will need to find the source of the contaminant. Mr. Knipe agreed and stated that, with the help of regulatory agencies, we can find the source. At this time, remediation processes have not been determined. The City is currently seeking a secondary source that is not contaminated, but treatment is also a possible option, but that requires a large amount of time and money to outfit the facility.

Councilman Etherington asked how long the City can sustain an adequate supply using only the Kilmer Springs plant. Mr. Knipe stated that it is sustainable for a while, but there will be other consequences such as water main breaks, due to pressure changes from the Kilmer facility.

Mayor Karos explained that the City is going to attempt to escalate the process of finding a solution with the regulatory agencies, and that it is frustrating when the regulations change and the City is not given any time to correct the issue.

Mr. Peter Hartman, N. Tennessee Avenue, stated that the two water sources cause water to come together at certain parts of the City, and those residents closest to the Big Springs facility will likely have more contamination in their homes. He asked if the City will conduct sample tests at various points in the City to determine levels of contamination. He also pointed out that it was possible that no one had been exposed to dangerous levels as the comingling of water from the two sources would have significantly diluted the contaminant.

Mr. Knipe replied that the City is mandated to test at the source, but can discuss testing at distribution points as well. Mr. Hartman felt that might offer a level of comfort to ratepayers and citizens if it can be proven that no homes have been exposed to dangerous levels of the compounds. Mr. Knipe agreed, and added that, due to the new regulations the few labs in the area backed up and results will not be immediate.

Ms. Layne Diehl, Talisman Drive, asked what the levels were in the contaminated samples in March. Mr. Knipe replied that the highest was .124ppb and the limit was .4ppb.

Councilman Wachtel asked for an estimate of the cost to treat the water if we cannot find another source. Mr. Knipe stated that he knew of available options, but was not able to venture a guess at the cost.

Mayor Karos stated that Mr. Hartman had made good suggestions and he would ask Mr. Knipe to do further sampling, but water would all show a zero level of contaminate now, as all water in the City is coming from Kilmer Springs at this point. He also expressed how fortunate Martinsburg is to have two sources of water from two different watershed areas.

Meeting adjourned with unanimous consent at 10:28 AM.

---

Gena Long, City Recorder

---

George Karos, Mayor

