



BOARD OF PUBLIC WORKS

CITY OF HANNIBAL

OFFICE 573-221-8050
FAX 573-221-7522
www.hannibalbpw.org

ELECTRIC, WATER AND SEWER DEPARTMENTS

3 INDUSTRIAL LOOP DRIVE • PO BOX 1589 • HANNIBAL, MISSOURI 63401-1589

May 15, 2013

WHO FUNDS UNFUNDED MANDATES?

First, a word of thanks to the Courier-Post for providing space in their pages to initiate this Public Education Campaign in preparation for a Board of Public Works sponsored Bond Election on August 6, 2013.

Recently I raised the issue of Unfunded Mandates being forced on the citizens of Hannibal through EPA regulations. To help understand how that happens we must understand how our system of government works in the U.S.

Under our constitution, Congress has the power to regulate interstate commerce. In the early 1970's, Congress passed the Clean Water Act to address what most people believed was a serious and growing problem of polluted lakes and rivers from industrial activity and population growth. Rivers cross state lines, so Congress used its power to regulate their cleanliness. That law was sweeping in nature. It required immediate and effective clean-up of industrial and municipal discharges into streams with the goal that all should be fishable and swimmable, that is safe for both fish and humans.

Congress also required each State to create agencies to monitor and enforce the new Federal Law. From that we got the Missouri Dept. of Natural Resources. In Missouri, the DNR does the calculations, writes rules, approves plans, reads reports, issues permits, and levies fines on local governments and industries that discharge into regulated streams.

The lowest level of government is the local government. It is local government that does the real work. Local government owns and operates the systems and equipment that gets the job done. Local government paves streets, puts out fires, keeps us safe, and treats our water. Local government is where you can go to City Hall or the Court House with a complaint and expect something to be done. Local government works. Try taking a concern about our local fire protection efforts to the Statehouse. No one will listen to you there.

In Hannibal, The Board of Public Works is part of the local government. The work we do is summarized in our official mission statement. **“The mission of the Hannibal Board of Public Works is to provide safe, reliable utility products with excellent customer service at reasonable prices.”** The HBPW gets things done. We do the work. We obey the rules. We listen. We respond to complaints. And, yes, we even make mistakes. And, our task is becoming ever more difficult.

So, who funds the unfunded mandates? We do. You and I do. First the HBPW spends money on contracts, labor and materials to meet the mandates, then the HBPW turns around and bills the ratepayers at higher rates to fund those mandates. I will explain more later. Stay tuned. In the meantime, if you have questions or comments feel free to contact the HBPW, or to enter the public discussion, respond in these pages of the Courier-Post.



BOARD OF PUBLIC WORKS

CITY OF HANNIBAL

OFFICE 573-221-8050
FAX 573-221-7522
www.hannibalbpw.org

ELECTRIC, WATER AND SEWER DEPARTMENTS

3 INDUSTRIAL LOOP DRIVE • PO BOX 1589 • HANNIBAL, MISSOURI 63401-1589

This and more information will be posted on our website www.hannibalbpw.org and our Facebook page. Look us up.

Sincerely,

Robert W Stevenson

Robert W. Stevenson, P.E.
General Manager

“The mission of the Hannibal Board of Public Works is to provide safe, reliable utility products with excellent customer service at reasonable prices.”