



HANNIBAL BOARD OF PUBLIC WORKS

ELECTRIC, WATER AND WASTEWATER

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November 16, 2015

To the Editor:

I have read the latest discussion by Crystal Stephens in the November 9th C-P. I cannot let her misinformation stand as accepted fact to those who are not following our dialogue. Following are some point by point corrections or rebuttals to her assertions. The basic dispute is Ms. Stephens' passionate disapproval of HBPW use of chloramine as a primary disinfectant for our drinking water.

Ms. Stephens refers to 'implications' made by Randy Park, HBPW Board President, at the City Council meeting on Nov.3rd, about his personal trustworthiness. I was there. She missed his point completely. His point was that the HBPW was doing its best with information presented to them. He stated the Board includes serious people who hired serious professionals to take care of their business. He listed a group of eight Board employees who had qualifications equal to or greater than the one 'expert' who came to Hannibal at the request of Ms. Stephens. He also mentioned that the Board hired a consultant of national reputation with a stable full of engineers and 'experts' who recommended the system we eventually installed. His point was that by sheer force of numbers the Board had more expert advice to rely upon than Ms. Stephens.

Ms. Stephens rightly states the qualifications of her 'expert'. He holds a California Class A Operator License. In Missouri, any high school graduate with a few years of experience as a plant operator and who can pass the state test can obtain the same certificate. He was articulate, professional, knowledgeable, and highly opinionated, all good traits to have in his business.

Ms. Stephens mentions the past history of water quality violations in Hannibal. We operate a plant built in 1924 and we produced MoDNR compliant water until 2010 when new and unattainable standards were promulgated. We hired a consultant in 2011 to solve the problem. We received MoDNR approval of proposed plant modifications in 2012. In 2013, voters approved bonds to pay for comprehensive water system improvements that included equipment to switch to chloramines. Water rates have increased to pay for maintenance and interest on loans we have taken to make the improvements. We have paid no fines to date. The threat of fines motivates us to finish our projects.

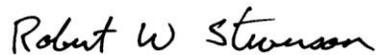
Ms. Stephens fails to understand the bind the HBPW is in with respect to the MoDNR. They regulate us. They approve everything we do. We are not free to make independent decisions especially about things as serious as water disinfection. True, the Board was presented with choices by its consultant in 2012. Those choices included Ms. Stephens' preferred water treatment choice of Activated Carbon. Each included positive and negative features. All the negative features of chloramine were presented at that time, but the recommendation was made to use chloramine anyway. They argued the negatives were manageable and the cost compared to all other choices was very attractive. The MoDNR concurred and approved the choice. Once that approval occurred final design began. Construction contracts were awarded in 2015. The MoDNR will not approve any redesign or

reconstruction without prerequisite studies and reports in advance, a process that will take several years.

Ms. Stephens claims Hannibal water is non-potable. I vigorously dispute that claim. If that were so the MoDNR would have shut down our system or forced the HBPW to give up control to qualified operators. Neither has happened. Neither has been considered. Hannibal water is safe to drink. It always has been.

Ms. Stephens makes vague threats towards City Council members who take the 'wrong' side of her dispute. This is a technical issue with state and federal regulators, not a local political issue. Ms. Stephens' travelling 'expert' said as much - no less than three times - during his presentation to concerned citizens in October. Those that protest the processes and approvals of the MoDNR should feel free to call them and register their protests there.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "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."