



## **November 13, 2007 Meeting Minutes**

### ***Introduction & Opening:***

The November meeting was held at ITM. ITM hosted the meeting. Paul Webber opened the meeting by welcoming members and guests.

Member companies present were: Ashley Furniture, Cemex, Coleman, Comal ISD, Detex, Edisto Business Resources, Fed Ex Service, Hawkins Personnel, ITM, NBU, Priority Personnel, Resource Mfg., and Star Manufacturing,

Thank you to ITM for hosting the meeting and providing tours.

### ***CTTC Report:***

Brochures were available for the open house for the Manufacturing Technology Academy at CTTC. The open house will be on December 6 from 11am to 1pm.

### ***Host Program:***

Klaus Weiswurm gave a quick overview of ITM's manufacturing capabilities and will provide tours after the meeting.

### ***Officer Reports:***

Paul updated the organization on the current financial status. We still have plenty of funds for scholarships. We currently do not have any scholarship applications and all scholarships awarded for the year have been paid out.

Caroline Gorman from Fed Ex suggested that we update our brochure to publicize the scholarship program.

### ***Committee Reports:***

- Membership:
  - o No report
- Fundraising:
  - o No Report
- Scholarship:
  - o The scholarship committee is waiting for new applications.

- AI brought scholarship applications for members to take with them for any students from ember companies to apply for the scholarships.

***Featured Program:***

Paula DiFonzo, CEO of New Braunfels Utilities (NBU), was the featured program.

Paula opened her presentation with the announcement of an 8.5% increase in water and sewer rates. The increase was recently approved by the city council. The reasons for the increase are attributed to regulatory changes, employee retention costs, and costs for power.

NBU recognizes that they have an aging infrastructure that will require attention. A plan for replacement of 1% of the infrastructure per year has been implemented. NBU will be spending around \$9 million on infrastructure over the next few years to meet growth expectations. NBU will also need to increase their supply of water to meet growth needs. Most of this will be through surface water. NBU has seen growth in water and sewage customers at 6% and electricity customers at 4%.

Recent changes by FEMA have put the Gruene water treatment plant and one lift station in the “flood way” The lift station and treatment plant will need to be moved. The Keeler plants are nearing 75% capacity which is the maximum allowed by regulatory requirements. NBU will need to increase capacity at the plants. Also, another regulatory change will require a change in the treatment process for waste water. NBU will lobby state and federal funding agencies for financial assistance and/or grants to make the changes required by new regulatory requirements.

The new water rates will be effective on December 1. There will also be higher charges for high water usage customers because of new regulatory requirements for conservation of water.

The LCRA have increased the rates for power by 30%. This will equate to a 9% increase in power costs to NBU customers next year. Natural gas inventories are higher than normal. NBU expects to see price decreases next year unless these gas inventories are depleted by exceptionally cold weather in the northern part of the country this winter.

Another regulatory change requires water to be tested by certified laboratories. NBU used to do their own testing. The cost to certify the lab is prohibitive, so NBU will start outsourcing water testing to independent laboratories. Waste water will still be tested in-house. The resource previously allocated to clean water testing will be used to monitor grease traps and other systems that could affect water quality.

NBU has the current projects underway:

- Wastewater capacity increase
- HWY46 west – current electrical, waste water and water mains on both sides of the road need to be moved. NBU has 18 mo. to complete the project.
- Industrial expansions (new transformers at Cemex and TXI)
- 1% refurbishment tied into city street projects.

Paula mentioned the NBU is increasing funding for growth, projects and regulatory changes through grants, rate increases, and other long term debts.

Barry closed the meeting by thanking Paula and ITM for their presentations. Barry reminded the members that new officer elections will be coming up in January, so those interested in running for board positions should contact current board members for more information.

***Next Meeting:***

The next meeting will be held on December 11th <sup>(2nd Tuesday because of the holiday)</sup>. The featured program will be a presentation from the New Braunfels Herald Zeitung. A location has not been decided and will be announced at a later date.

Respectfully submitted: Paul W. Webber, Secretary/Treasurer