

## **MINUTES OF THE MEMBERS OF THE BEAUFORT-JASPER WATER AND SEWER AUTHORITY MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY 9/22/2022**

Be it remembered that the Members of the Beaufort-Jasper Water and Sewer Authority held its regular meeting in-person and virtually on Thursday, 9/22/2022 at the Beaufort-Jasper Water & Sewer Authority Administration Building. This meeting met the notice requirements of, and was properly constituted pursuant to, Chapter 4, Section 30-4-80(A) of the Code of Laws for South Carolina, 1976, as amended, commonly known as the "Freedom of Information Act".

### **ATTENDANCE**

Members of the Authority. Chair Jimmy Baker; Vice-Chair Greg Padgett; Secretary/Treasurer Donna Altman; Michael Bell; Lorraine Bond; Andy Kinghorn; Rob McFee; Thayer Rivers; Jerry Schulze; Dr. Bill Singleton-virtual; David Strange.

Leadership: Joe Mantua, General Manager; Sarah Linkimer, Deputy General Manager; Brian Chemsak, Chief of Plant Operations; Kenneth Frazier, Chief of Technical Services; Beth Lowther, Chief of Finance & Support Services; Linda Tillery, Chief of Customer Care; Becca Bowyer, Director of Engineering; Pamela Flasch, Director of Public Affairs; Andy Mattie, Director Field Operations and Military Programs; Jon Torrescano, IT Manager; Libby Breland, Executive Assistant/Clerk to the Board.

Legal Counsel: Erin Dean, Esq., Tupper, Grimsley, Dean & Canaday, PA.

Facilitator: J.D. Solomon, PE, CRE, CMRP, J.D. Solomon, Inc., Program Development and Asset Management Consultant.

Presenter: Nancy Hritz, Ph.D., Professor, University of South Carolina Beaufort, Certified Hospitality Educator, Department of Hospitality Management.

### **CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting convened at 8:00 a.m., Chair Jimmy Baker presiding.

### **INVOCATION AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Vice Chair Greg Padgett gave the invocation and all joined in the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag of the United States.

### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

Chairman Baker read into record the following statements:

Public Comments may be submitted electronically by emailing your comments to [publicmeeting@bjwsa.org](mailto:publicmeeting@bjwsa.org). Advanced Comments will be accepted up to 1 hour prior to the scheduled meeting start time and shall be limited to three (3) minutes or 390 words. All Advanced Comments will be provided to the Chair and read aloud for the record during the initial Public Comment period.

Public Comments may also be submitted throughout the course of the meeting. Those comments should also be emailed to [publicmeeting@bjwsa.org](mailto:publicmeeting@bjwsa.org) and limited to 3 minutes or 390 words. Comments submitted during the meeting will be provided to the Chair and read aloud.

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He then asked for advanced comments at this time. Clerk to the Board, Libby Breland reported no comments were received in advanced.

#### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**Motion:** Moved by, Rob McFee, seconded by, Donna Altman, to approve the minutes of the 7/28/2022 regular board meeting as written and distributed in advance to the Members of the Authority. No corrections were noted,

**Vote:** All voted in favor, none opposed,

**Motion:** The motion passed 10-0

**Motion:** Moved by, Rob McFee, seconded by, Lorraine Bond, to approve the minutes of the 8/25/2022 regular board meeting as written and distributed in advance to the Members of the Authority. No corrections were noted,

**Vote:** All voted in favor, none opposed,

**Motion:** The motion passed 10-0.

**Motion:** Moved by, Donna Altman, seconded by, Lorraine Bond, to approve the minutes of the 9/9/2022 special board meeting as written and distributed in advance to the Members of the Authority. No corrections were noted,

**Vote:** All voted in favor, none opposed,

**Motion:** The motion passed 10-0.

#### **GENERAL MANAGERS REPORT**

*Joe Mantua submitted the following report:*

##### **Invest in our Workforce**

1. Recent Promotions – We are pleased to announce the following employees who have been promoted since the July board meeting:

Shatic Cannick – Water Operator Trainee  
Jamian Risher – Water Operator Trainee  
Andrew Myatt – Tech Maintenance Trainee  
Jermaine Dorsey – Field Operator I  
Austin Reeves – Field Operator II  
Michael Price – Field Operator I  
Adam Ellard – Field Operator I  
John Davis – Water Operator I  
Jaron Clayton – Field Operator I

2. Employee Onboarding Process – Human Resources has recently implemented a number of enhancements to our onboarding process including moving the start date out further from the date of hire to allow more time for background checks and preparing the new team members

first. They have also added an IT component to orientation to review access and cyber security and scheduled a meet and greet with members of the Senior Leadership Team. The orientation has been expanded to a day and a half and also now includes a half day with training to complete new hire safety training prior to release to their new manager/supervisor.

### **Ensure Infrastructure System Viability**

3. South Carolina Infrastructure Investment Program – Five grant applications were submitted to the Rural Infrastructure Authority on the September 12 deadline. In addition to the two CIP projects we proposed, staff worked with our municipal partners to submit three additional applications for 1) Town of Bluffton May River Watershed Sewer Master Plan Phase I, Stoney Creek and Palmetto Bluff Rd Sewer Service, 2) South Carolina Alliance and City of Hardeeville Sewer System Project, and 3) South Carolina Alliance and City of Hardeeville Water System Project. Many thanks to Becca and her team for the great collaboration and teamwork to get all of these grant applications submitted.
4. Southern Beaufort County Regional Water System Analysis – BJWSA, Hilton Head PSD, Broad Creek PSD and South Island PSD jointly conducted the Southern Beaufort County Regional Water System analysis. This mutual planning document evaluates the demand projections, capital improvement and system resiliency for each utility as it relates to the shared water source on Hilton Head Island. The results outline the limits of off-peak usage to the island and the extent to which additional ASR recharging can be supported from BJWSA to any ASR's on Hilton Head. No immediate impacts were determined, however, staff plan to conduct a similar study every five years before or as part of the Master Plan efforts to ensure our supply to the island is adequate for their demands and identify any capital improvements needed to specifically support additional demands.
5. Infrastructure Challenges in Jackson, MS – Recent infrastructure failures in Jackson, MS have resulted in the need for a prolonged boil water advisory and caused the system to lose pressure leaving residents without access to safe drinking water. Brian Chemsak will provide more detail and talk about what has caused these issues.

### **Promote Financial Sustainability**

6. FY 23 Organization Goals – The proposed organization goals for the fiscal year were provided to each Board committee this month and are aligned with our five strategic themes. Please provide any additional feedback or comments.
7. FY 22 Audit – We are currently in the midst of our FY 22 Audit, with the on-site field work completed this month. Many thanks to the Finance Team and all those assisting our auditor with the timely completion of this year's audit.

## **Engage Customers and Stakeholders**

8. Municipal Coordination Meetings – Coordination meetings were held with Beaufort County and City of Beaufort to discuss relevant projects and other matters of joint interest. We discussed the irrigation management campaign and its relevance to meeting peak demands during hot and dry seasons and the need to schedule a briefing in front of their respective councils. We will be meeting with the City of Hardeeville, Town of Bluffton and Town of Port Royal in the near future.
9. Government Relations Position – We are currently developing a job description for a new key position that will be integral to our stakeholder outreach program and will have responsibility for identifying additional funding opportunities.
10. Beaufort Walk for Water – BJWSA participated in the annual Walk for Water event as a sponsor and a number of employees joined in the walk which raises money for people around the globe who don't have access to safe water. This year's walk took place in both Port Royal and Bluffton with more than 650 walkers raising \$75,000.

## **Manage Risk and Leverage Innovation**

11. Safety Report – We had a record high number of Take Twos in August with 600 and employees have completed more than 1000 in just the first two months of the fiscal year. We have completed 60,054 safe work hours since our last preventable lost work day case.

**Public Affairs Report.** Pamela Flasch highlighted recent and upcoming initiatives taking place throughout the service area:

1. Employee Engagement- Keep watching the Water Cooler for more information about the Veterans Day Breakfast, Holiday Share and our second annual Holiday Gift Basket giveaway. All board members are invited to the Veterans Day Breakfast Thursday, November 10 at 8 am in the boardroom, and Holiday Share Friday, December 2 at noon in this wing of the Admin. Bldg. We definitely need your response so we can order from our caterers appropriately.

## **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

**Report of the Executive Committee.** Committee Jimmy Baker stated that the Executive Committee did not meet.

**Report of the Capital Projects Committee.** Committee Chair Andy Kinghorn reported that the Capital Projects Committee met on 9/14/2022 and reviewed the status of the Capital Program and Development Activity. A summary of noteworthy projects was included in the Board Packet. Some projects of note:

## **Developer Report**

1. Capacity fees collected in August totaled \$421,318.86; Capacity fees Year-To-Date are \$678,981.66; In August there were 12 pre-cons, 16 Service Authorizations, 160 water taps and 313 sewer taps.

## **CIP Project Highlights for August**

2. Purrysburg WTP Expansion to 30 MGD (CIP-1366) – Plans are on review with Jasper County and DHEC. Anticipate responses any day. Bid documents are being prepared and advertisement is scheduled to begin in September.
3. Raw Water Canal Improvements (CIP-1894) – Update mtg with design team 9/7/22. Discuss DHEC dam requirements.
4. Misc. WW Pump Station Replacements (CIP-1807) – The first phase of work with BRW is being closed out. Comments were sent to the design engineer to incorporate into Bid set for the remaining work.
5. North Street Transmission Main/Bluffton Pkwy (CIP-1927/2224) –
  - o Bluffton Parkway - Asbuilts have been reviewed, connections have been made, information has been submitted to DHEC and the 24"/36" water line is awaiting approval for permit to operate.
  - o North Street Transmission Main - connections have been made for the North Street Transmission Main. Disinfection is ongoing and the application for the Permit to Operate is being prepared. Anticipate approval to operate in September.
  - o Buckwalter Tank - Tank sites are being evaluated. A Public Meeting was held on June 21, 2022 with good feedback from the surrounding community.
6. CP19 and CP67 Upgrades (CIP-1970) - Black and Veatch continuing the permitting process. Also working on easement procurement for the improved entrance to the plant and work within the power line ROW.

## **Activity for Board Approval**

7. One New Purchase Order Award and one Purchase Order Amendment are being presented in the Board Agenda for approval under the Consent Agenda.

## **Miscellaneous Items**

8. FY 23 Organizational Goals
9. Supply Chain Issues

***Report of the Finance Committee.*** Committee Chair Rob McFee reported that the Finance Committee met on 9/15/2022 and submitted the following report:

1. Call Center Metrics: The committee reviewed and discussed the call center metrics. The average call wait time was 1 minute and 5 seconds and the abandonment rate was 4% in August. The total number of installed Beacon meters is 67,256. United Way assisted 29 customers for a total of \$6,617.19. The number of Eye on Water Users is currently 13,111 or 23%. The number of Constant Consumption users is currently 3,067.

2. IT Update: Jon provided updates on carryover projects from FY22 and new IT projects in FY23. The Admin Building has been switched over to the new card system and the remaining locations will be upgraded over the coming months. The Dark Trace Antigena system provides another security layer in detecting suspicious emails.
3. Sustainability Update: The sustainability metrics were reviewed by the committee. BJWSA met again with Palmetto and Central Electric to review the contract structure for the solar lease. Tricia and Benjie attended the Clean Energy Roadshow in Savannah and are planning to start an Electric Vehicle pilot program in FY24.
4. O&M PO Approvals: The committee discussed and approved a Contract Award to Outsource Services for FY23 Fire Hydrant Flow Testing and Maintenance that is presented on the Consent Agenda today.
5. FY2023 Financial Information: The auditors from Mauldin & Jenkins were on-site for two days in mid-August for fieldwork and testing and the FY22 audit is still ongoing. The committee reviewed the YTD FY23 financial information. Total operating revenues are \$1.3 million under budget, while total operating expenses (including depreciation) are \$4.8 million under budget.
6. Miscellaneous: Andy provided updates on the supply chain issues with meter boxes. Joe discussed the Organizational Goals for FY23 that are contained within the Strategic Plan.

***Report of the Personnel Committee.*** Committee Chair Jerry Schulze reported that the Personnel Committee met on 9/13/2022 and submitted the following report:

1. Safety: 5 Property/Vehicle Accidents in Aug; 1 Non-Recordable injury; Now tracking “Total Case Incident Rate” which is an OSHA formulated metric. Currently at 2.98 below the water/sewer industry avg of 3.3.
2. Personal Actions Report: 3 voluntary resignations and 1 retirement (1.44% turnover rate); 1 new hire and 5 promotions; 209 total employees; 26 current openings. Largest vacancy in Field Ops, 14. Quite a few of the other openings are due to starting the process to fill new positions that were approved.
3. FY 23 Organization Goals: 2 goals under “Invest in our Workforce” – Compensation Study and Establish Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Team and Develop new program framework.
4. Compensation Study: Down to 2 consultants, both in the RFP from last year. We are leaning towards a consultant, the Davidson Group that the city of Charleston used for their last comp study and they were extremely pleased with the results. We are planning to start the process within the next month.

5. Best Places to Work: We shared the results of the Best Places to work survey. The results trend towards employees being happy with their supervisors and their job. Some areas that scored a lower and were mentioned the most in the comments were related pay/benefits. The staff is going to continue to analyze the data to look for areas of opportunity that can be improved upon.
6. Employee Handbook update: We will be introducing multiple policy changes at next month's meeting. Two of the main ones will be a new vehicle accident policy and holiday pay counting towards hours work.
7. Exec Search Committee: No update.
8. Juneteenth Holiday: We revisited the proposal from staff to add Juneteenth holiday.
9. Supply Chain Update: Staff is still monitoring supply chain issues with Meter Boxes.

**Report of the Board Ad hoc Committee - Underserved Communities.** Committee Chair Michael Bell reported that the *Ad hoc Committee* met on 9/21/2022 and provided the following update:

The committees next step is drafting recommendations into a presentation to be given at the upcoming workshop. The committee will seek the full Boards consideration on the policy/process to service underserved areas within BJWSA's service area.

### **CONSENT AGENDA**

1. Contract Award approving CIP-2296 Fire Hydrant Rehab and Replacement FY23 to Potter Construction in the amount of \$319,098.00.
2. Contract Change Order #2 approving CIP-2185 Galvanized Water Line Replacement Ph II Div. I to Malphrus Utilities, in the amount of \$28,080.00 to complete the water main extension to serve 56 Stiney Road.
3. Contract Award approving 2023 IFB 005 Fire Hydrant Flow Testing and Maintenance to Outsource Services Inc., in the amount of \$229,370.00.

*Chair Jimmy Baker asked, "Are there any items on the consent agenda that any member of the board wishes to move off the consent agenda and on to new business." "Hearing none, is there a motion to approve the 3 items listed on the consent agenda, is there a second, any discussion, All in favor"*

**Motion:** Moved by, Andy Kinghorn, seconded by, David Strange, to approve the (3) items listed on the consent agenda: 1). Contract Award approving CIP-2296 Fire Hydrant Rehab and Replacement FY23 to Potter Construction in the amount of \$319,098.00. 2). Contract Change Order #2 approving CIP-2185 Galvanized Water Line Replacement Ph II Div. I to Malphrus Utilities, in the amount of \$28,080.00 to complete the water main extension to serve 56 Stiney Road. 3). Contract Award approving 2023 IFB 005 Fire Hydrant Flow Testing and Maintenance to Outsource Services Inc., in the amount of \$229,370.00.

*Vote: All voted in favor, none opposed,  
Motion carried. 10-0*

### **TELEPHONIC STATEMENT**

At this time, it was recognized that Dr. Bill Singleton had been in attendance via telephone since the start of the meeting so Chairman Jimmy Baker read the following telephone statement into the record: "I, Jimmy Baker announce that a quorum for this Meeting is physically present and **Dr. Bill Singleton IS ATTENDING THIS MEETING TELEPHONICALLY.**"

### **OLD BUSINESS**

There was no old business.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

2022 Customer Focus Groups – *Presentation by Pam Flasch.*

Pam introduced and commended, Haley Hughes, Public Affairs Liaison, who assisted her with the planning and execution of the focus groups. She then introduced Nancy Hritz, Ph.D., EMG Consulting, who facilitated three focus groups. Dr. Hritz, has been working with BJWSA for the last four years. Dr. Hritz, explained the methodology and results of the feedback collected from the focus groups. The groups totaled 24 customers who answered questions centered around BJWSA services and customer communications. Each session was 90-minutes, one virtually, and two in-person. Suggestions from both the 2021 Customer Satisfaction Survey *and* the 2022 Focus Groups are already under implementation in FY23 through Strategic Focus Plan initiatives. The next biennial customer survey is planned for the spring of 2023. A complete executive summary of the data analysis dated July 2022, titled, "2022 Customer Focus Groups" *as presented and referenced is attached to these minutes and is made a part hereof.*

(9:04 a.m.)

### **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

**Motion:** Greg Padgett moved, seconded by, Lorraine Bond, to go into executive session for the purpose of:

1. Attorney-Client, Privileged Information and Legal Advice pursuant to SC Code Ann. Section 30-4-70(a)(1)(2), regarding: Belleview Bluff Easement;
2. Attorney-Client, Privileged Information and Legal Advice pursuant to SC Code Ann. Section 30-4-70(a)(1)(2), regarding: Development and Policy Procedure Manual (DPPM);
3. Discussion of Succession Planning Pursuant to SC Code Ann. Section 30-4-70(a)(1)(2).

*Vote: All voted in favor, none opposed,  
Motion carried. 10-0*

*Lorraine Bond left the meeting prior to discussion of item # 3, Succession Planning.*



(11:15 a.m.)

**RECONVENE**

**Motion:** Michael Bell moved, seconded by, David Strange, to reconvene regular session,

**Vote:** All voted in favor, none opposed,

**Motion carried. 9-0**

**ACTION ITEMS OCCURING FROM EXECUTIVE SESSION**

*No action was taken.*

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

Public Comments submitted throughout the course of the meeting should also be emailed to [publicmeeting@bjwsa.org](mailto:publicmeeting@bjwsa.org) and limited to 3 minutes or 390 words. Comments submitted during the meeting will be provided to the Chair once the meeting has been reconvened following Executive Session and read aloud for the record at this time. *No comments were received.*

**TELEPHONIC STATEMENT**

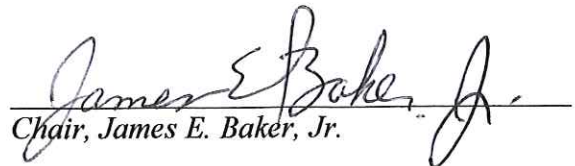
“I Jimmy Baker, the Presiding Officer of this Meeting have previously stated that **Dr. Bill Singleton**, WAS ATTENDING THIS MEETING TELEPHONICALLY. This meeting is in full compliance with the criteria for the attendance of this Meeting telephonically as set forth in Article II Section 11 of the Bylaws.”

**ADJOURNMENT**


With no further business to come before the Board, and without objection, Donna Altman moved, seconded by, David Strange, to adjourn the meeting at, 11:15 a.m.

**Vote:** All voted in favor, none opposed,

**Motion carried. 9-0**

  
Chair, James E. Baker, Jr.

  
Secretary/Treasurer, Donna L. Altman

APPROVED:   
Libby Breland, Clerk to Board  
Signatures and Attachments on file.