

MINUTES OF THE MEMBERS OF THE BEAUFORT-JASPER WATER AND SEWER AUTHORITY MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY 3/23/2023

Be it remembered that the Members of the Beaufort-Jasper Water and Sewer Authority held its regular meeting Thursday, 3/23/2023 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 (telephonic); Rob McFee; Thayer Rivers; Jerry Schulze; Dr. Bill Singleton (absent); 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 of Field Operations; Curt Palmer, Director of Human Resources; Benjie Bennett, Fleet Maintenance Manager; Steven Pecko, Accounting Manager; Jon Torrescano, IT Manager; Libby Breland, Executive Assistant/Clerk to the Board.

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

Public: Frank Turano, Alliance Consulting Engineers; Jasper County council member, John Kemp; prospective BJWSA board member, Jeff Ackerman; and joining virtually was Verna Arnette, incoming general manager.

CALL TO ORDER

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

TELEPHONIC STATEMENT

"I, Jimmy Baker announce that a quorum for this Meeting is physically present and Andy Kinghorn IS ATTENDING THIS MEETING TELEPHONICALLY."

INVOCATION AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Vice-Chair Greg Padgett gave the invocation and included condolences to Board Member David Strange and his family with the passing of his sister. Thereafter, 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. 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 and limited to 3 minutes or 390 words. Comments submitted during the meeting will be provided to the Chair and read aloud.

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, Lorraine Bond, seconded by, David Strange, to approve the minutes of the 2/23/2023 regular board meeting as written and distributed in advance to the Members of the Authority. No corrections were noted,

All voted in favor, none opposed,

Motion carried. 9-0

Motion: Moved by, Jerry Schulze, seconded by, Donna Altman, to approve the minutes of the 3/2/2023 special board meeting as written and distributed in advance to the Members of the Authority. No corrections were noted,

All voted in favor, none opposed,

Motion carried. 9-0

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 last month’s meeting:

Thomas Treszevant – Field Operator I
Justin Barrow – Field Operator I
DaQuan Mitchell – Field Operator I
Steven Rucker – Pump Stations Specialist III

2. South Carolina Environmental Conference – BJWSA was well represented and actively engaged in the annual state conference held in Myrtle Beach. Brian Chemsak gave two technical presentations and Tricia Kilgore gave one. The tapping team (Rob Lemieux, Darius Witte, Nate Goodwin and Coach Andy Mattie) won their competition and will be representing the South Carolina Section at the AWWA conference this June in Toronto. The Hydrant Hysteria Team (Hunter Murray, Justin Burke and Coach Rob Lemieux) did a great job and was slightly edged out in the championship round. Although they didn’t win the competition, they

did have the overall best time during their preliminary round run. Wastewater Operations Manager Earl Sheppard presided over the conference as WEASC President and has done a fantastic job leading the organization over the past year.

3. Employee of the Month – Congratulations to our Employee of the Month for February 2023, Dawn Bates, Administrative Coordinator for the Technical Services Department.

Ensure Infrastructure System Viability

4. Manhole Replacement at the Farm – The manhole has been replaced and the line was put back in service on March 8. Crews have been on site since last Friday to repair the damaged irrigation lines within the traffic circle. The contractor making the concrete and asphalt repairs is scheduled to begin demoing the damaged curb and sidewalk on March 23 and will have it replaced within 2-3 days. They anticipate paving next week and soon after we will hydroseed the disturbed areas to complete the repair process.
5. Purrysburg Plant Expansion – Notice to proceed for the plant expansion was issued on February 13 with a substantial completion date of May 14, 2025 and a contract completion date of August 14, 2025. Reeves Young holds the contract and has begun to mobilize, setting up worksite trailers, installing sediment and erosion control and getting building permits. The initial progress meeting was this week. MultiVista has been contracted to provide construction photography services and will be providing monthly status reports; the webcam is being installed this week.
6. EPA Announcement on PFAS – On March 14, EPA issued their proposed maximum contaminant levels for PFOA and PFOS as well as a Hazard Index for the mixture of PFHxS, PFNA, PFBS and HFOA-DA. EPA will accept written comments on the proposed rule for 60 days, will then provide responses and go into developing the final rule, which is expected to happen at the end of 2023 or early 2024. Once the rulemaking process is finalized, utilities will have 3 years to comply with the new regulations.

Promote Financial Sustainability

7. SCIIP Funding –RIA has announced that they will need more time to make the grant awards and will not likely have this completed by the end of March as originally expected. They are awaiting the General Assembly's decision on the additional allocation of \$586M.

Engage Customers and Stakeholders

8. Stakeholder and Customer Coordination Meetings– Stakeholder meetings this month included a meeting with the Town of Bluffton to discuss the Stoney Creek Sewer project, a meeting with the City of Ridgeland as part of their master planning process and a meeting with Councilman York Glover to discuss issues related to fire hydrants on St. Helena and the Warsaw Eustis Oaks water company. I also had the opportunity to present an overview of BJWSA to the Beaufort Rotary Club. We will be meeting with residents of the Cypress Ridge neighborhood next week to primarily discuss water discoloration and irrigation management.
9. Tyler Utility Billing – Tyler Utility Billing and new payment website for our customers called Tyler Resident Access are both live. The Call Center experienced high call volume over the past several days associated with helping customers sign up on the new website and catching

up after having limited capabilities last week. We have several reps that will be in Sun City this Saturday morning to assist residents with signing up on the new payment website. Many thanks to the folks involved with getting us to this point.

Public Affairs Report

10. Customer Satisfaction Survey - Our biennial customer satisfaction survey is underway. So far, we are in excess of 7K customers who have answered our email and social promos. As usual, EMG will report results in the June or July board meeting.
11. Website Refresh – The website overhaul is also underway, and still tracking for early July.
12. Customer Service Payment Portal Conversion - We are closely working with customer service to ensure maximum exposure for the payment portal conversion. Numerous communiques have gone out to customers, including individualized letters with their information, along with step-by-step instructions. I'll be in Sun City Saturday with the team as they provide hands-on outreach to help those residents.
13. Community Outreach - Haley and I will attend *Lunch & Conversation* with the editorial board of the *Post & Courier* – a chance to “*review the state of local journalism and how together we can make a difference through transparent, solutions-based reporting.*”
14. Employee Event - Please plan to attend our Hail & Farewell event Friday, May 19 at the Admin Bldg. at noon. We will enjoy some Southern specialties to Welcome Verna and give Joe a proper send-off.

Manage Risk and Leverage Innovation

15. Statement of Economic Interests – The electronic filing of these statements are due by the end of March, Libby is working to get these completed and will have all finalized by the deadline next week.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Report of the Executive Committee. Committee Chair Jimmy Baker stated that the Executive Committee met virtually on 3/7/2023 and continued discussions regarding the new GM position and transition; board conflict of interest policies, and a HR issue to be discussed in executive session.

Report of the Capital Projects Committee. Committee Chair Andy Kinghorn reported that the Capital Projects Committee met on 3/15/2023 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: Capacity fees collected in February totaled \$2,507,203.31; Capacity fees Year-To-Date are \$10,438,872.35. In December there were 9 pre-cons, 7 Service Authorizations, 227 water taps and 271 sewer taps.

CIP Project Highlights for December

1. Purrysburg WTP Expansion to 30 MGD (CIP-1366) – Construction has started for the plant expansion.

2. Hwy 170 36-inch Water Main Extension (CIP-1696) – Staff is working with contractor on change order for additional work associated with additional paving and traffic control to install the main between the traffic circle and Gibbet Road.
3. Misc. WW Pump Station Replacements (CIP-1087) – Project construction is starting on original list of pump stations. CP-18 is under design. Staff is evaluating the opportunity to replace gravity sewer to LB-01 rather than upgrade the pump station.
4. Raw Water Canal Improvements (CIP-1894) – Staff received Contract Amendment No. 1 for the raw water intake based on Alternative No. 1 as defined in Technical Memorandum No. 2 to address the dam issues within the design. It is being recommended under New Business.
5. Filter Rehabilitation-Chelsea WTP (CIP 1898) – Work continues on the filter rehabilitation project in order to complete the work prior to the spring deadline. Due to high flows seen in March, some ancillary work will need to be postponed until next winter during low flow time.
6. Bluffton Parkway Water Main Part I (CIP 1927) – Tank site negotiations are ongoing with attorneys. Project progress has stopped until site acquired.
7. Cherry Point WRF Expansion to 11.25 MGD (CIP 1958) – Staff continues to work with DHEC to address wasteload allocations to the Great Swamp Effluent Management System. The EQ tank is under design. Overall Cherry Point Expansion conceptual plan is being finalized.
8. Canal Bar Screen Rehab (CIP 2217) – CIP work is on hold. DHEC approved the pilot to test chemical control of grass in the canal. Pilot to be conducted by Field Ops this spring.
9. Chelsea Raw Water Mixer (CIP-2270) – Mixer was scheduled to be installed in March 2023, once Sedimentation Basins are up and running. However, it will need to be delayed until next winter for low flows.
10. Chelsea Interconnect Automatic Actuator (CIP 2335) – Work will occur to coincide with additional work being performed through CIP-1898 – Chelsea Filter Rehab. To occur during the winter 2023.

Activity for Board Approval

11. One Purchase Order Amendment is being presented in the Board Agenda for approval under New Business.

Report of the Finance Committee. Committee Chair Rob McFee reported that the Finance Committee met on 3/16/2023 and submitted the following report:

1. Call Center Metrics: The committee reviewed and discussed the call center metrics. The average call wait time was 49 seconds and the abandonment rate was 3.8% in February. The total number of installed Beacon meters is 69,996. United Way assisted 12 customers for a total of \$3,442.90. The number of Eye on Water Users is currently 14,673 or 26%. The number of Constant Consumption users is currently 3,112. Customer Service is currently in their blackout period while testing and validation continues on the conversion data. Linda, Jane and 4 reps are going to Sun City on Saturday, March 25th to assist customers in setting up their information in the new portal. The call center anticipates higher wait times in the coming months due to the conversion and appreciates everyone's patience.

2. IT Update: Jon provided updates on the FY23 IT Projects. The Tyler Migration Utility Billing project go live is scheduled for March 20th. The Security Platform Upgrade project closeout is in progress. The Microsoft InTune project is ongoing and 92 of 153 BJWSA cellular devices have been enrolled as of February 28th.
3. Sustainability Update: The sustainability metrics were reviewed by the committee. Two trucks have been ordered to start the electric vehicle pilot program in the coming months.
4. O&M PO Approvals: The committee reviewed and approved a purchase order in the amount of \$114,655 to Experis US LLC for PCI Compliance Validation Services.
5. Capital Improvement Plan: The committee discussed contract amendment 1 for CIP-1894 Raw Water Canal Improvements.
6. FY2023 Financial Information: The committee reviewed the YTD FY23 financial information. Total operating revenues are \$1.2 million under budget, while total operating expenses (including depreciation) are \$2.0 million under budget. The FY24 O&M Budget will be discussed in detail at the April Finance Committee meeting before being presented to all committees in May.
7. Miscellaneous: The committee discussed the Board Member Compensation information provided by Curt.

A copy of the financial report dated 2/28/2023, was included in the Board packet and is attached to these minutes and is made a part hereof.

Report of the Personnel Committee. Committee Chair Jerry Schulze reported that the Personnel Committee met on 3/14/2023 and submitted the following report:

1. Safety: 4 Property/Vehicle Accidents in February; 1 - Recordable injury (employee bitten by fire ants); Total Case Incident Rate is at 6.01 above the water/sewer industry avg of 3.3 (no real movement from last month)
2. Personal Actions Report: 4 voluntary resignations (1.89% turnover rate); 2 moving out of the area, 1 other employment (money), 1 no notice given not sure of reason; 9 new hires and 1 promotion; 216 total employees.
3. Vehicle Accident Policy: Policy was reviewed and approved by committee, the policy will assign points based off violations. This policy has been reviewed with legal and needs to be taken to the board for approval.
4. Compensation Study: The Comp consultants provided a draft report on 3/3. The compensation data tool they used was pulling to much Savannah data so we asked them to do more cost of living comparisons to ensure their numbers accurately reflected our local demographics. We hope to have that back next week.
5. Board Compensation: Comparison were being gathered and will be provided

OLD BUSINESS

There was no old business.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Approval allowing the maximum expenditure limit of the IQC to increase the Procurement Policy amount of \$750,000 to \$1,500,000 until June 30, 2023, as presented and referenced in

the memorandum from Rebecca Bowyer dated 3/6/2023 and is attached to these minutes and is made a part hereof:

Motion: Donna Altman moved, seconded by, Michael Bell, approving the maximum expenditure limit of the IQC to increase the Procurement Policy amount of \$750,000 to \$1,500,000 until June 30, 2023,

All voted in favor, none opposed,

Motion carried. 9-0

2. Approval of Contract Amendment #1 for Delivery Order #3 to Hazen and Sawyer for CIP-1894 Raw Water Canal Improvements, in the amount of \$522,200, as presented and referenced in the memorandum from Rebecca Bowyer dated 3/6/2023 and is attached to these minutes and is made a part hereof:

Motion: Donna Altman moved, seconded by, Michael Bell, approving the Contract Amendment #1 for Delivery Order #3 to Hazen and Sawyer for CIP-1894 Raw Water Canal Improvements, in the amount of \$522,200,

All voted in favor, none opposed,

Motion carried. 9-0

3. Approval of Contract Award for PCI Compliance Validation Services to Experis US LLC and issue a PO for the first year in the amount of \$114,655, as presented and referenced in the memorandum from Jon Torrescano dated 2/27/2023 and is attached to these minutes and is made a part hereof:

Motion: Jerry Schulze moved, seconded by, Lorraine Bond, approving the Contract Award for PCI Compliance Validation Services to Experis US LLC and issue a PO for the first year in the amount of \$114,655,

All voted in favor, none opposed,

Motion carried. 9-0

4. Approval of Vehicle Incident Policy Updates:

Motion: Greg Padgett moved, seconded by, Lorraine Bond to approve the Vehicle Incident Policy updates,

Discussion: After discussing the Policy and its intent as written,

Motion to table: David Strange made a motion, seconded by, Lorraine Bond, to table the original motion in order for the Personnel Committee, along with the HR Director, to review the comments that were made during the Board meeting and to bring any changes redlined at the subsequent committees with final review and approval by the Board in April.

All voted in favor, none opposed,

Motion carried. 9-0

5. GIS Presentation – *Patrice Moore – Deferred.*

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment. (or)

(9:25 a.m.)

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Motion: Michael Bell moved, seconded by, Lorraine Bond, to go into executive session for the purpose of discussing litigation matters regarding: 1. Discussion and Legal Advice pursuant to 30-4-70 (1)(2), regarding HR issue; 2. Discussion and Legal Advice pursuant to SC Code Ann. 30-4-70 (2), regarding requests to join PFAS class action lawsuit(s); 3. Attorney-Client, Privileged Information and Legal Advice pursuant to SC Code Ann. Section 30-4-70(2), regarding: (a) Lynn Bristow vs. Beaufort-Jasper Water & Sewer Authority, defendant, et al, (b) Kathy McCaskey vs. Beaufort-Jasper Water & Sewer Authority, defendant, et al, (c) Terri Alexander vs. Beaufort-Jasper Water & Sewer Authority; 4. Attorney-Client, Privileged Information and Legal Advice pursuant to SC Code Ann. Section 30-4-70(a)(2)(5), regarding contractual issues associated with potential service areas.

All voted in favor, none opposed,

Motion carried. 9-0

Chair Jimmy Baker, excused all persons from the meeting. Legal counsel, GM; DGM F&A remained for executive session for the legal briefing. The HR Director remained for item # 1.

(10:43 a.m.)

RECONVENE

Motion: Thayer Rivers moved, seconded by, Donna Altman, to reconvene regular session,

All voted in favor, none opposed,

Motion carried. 9-0

ACTION ITEMS OCCURRING 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 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. *Clerk to the Board reported no comments were received during the meeting.*

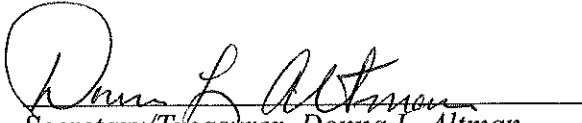
TELEPHONIC STATEMENT

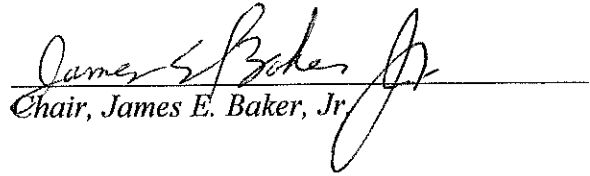
“I Jimmy Baker, the Presiding Officer of this Meeting have previously stated that *Andy Kinghorn*, WAS ATTENDING THIS MEETING TELEPHONICALLY. This meeting is in full compliance with the criteria for the attendance of this Meeting telephonically as set forth in Article II Section 11 of the Bylaws.”

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business to come before the Board, and without objection, Michael Bell, moved, seconded by, Jerry Schulze, to adjourn the meeting at, 10:47a.m.

*All voted in favor, none opposed,
Motion carried. 9-0*


Secretary/Treasurer, Donna L. Altman


Chair, James E. Baker, Jr.

APPROVED: 4-27-2023
Libby Breland, Clerk to Board
Signatures and Attachments on file.