

MINUTES OF THE MEMBERS OF THE BEAUFORT-JASPER WATER AND SEWER AUTHORITY MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY 1/27/2022

Be it remembered that the Members of the Beaufort-Jasper Water and Sewer Authority held its regular meeting virtually on Thursday, 1/27/2022 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 physically present: Chair Jimmy Baker; Vice-Chair Greg Padgett; Secretary/Treasurer Donna Altman; Past Chair Michael Bell; Lorraine Bond; Andy Kinghorn; Thayer Rivers; Dr. Bill Singleton.

Members of the Authority attending by video conferencing: Brandy Gray and Rob McFee.

Staff physically present: Joe Mantua, General Manager; Sarah Linkimer, Deputy General Manager; Kenneth Frazier, Chief of Technical Services; Beth Lowther, Chief of Finance & Support Services; Kathy McKie, Director of Human Resources; Benjie Bennett, Fleet Maintenance Manager; Steven Pecko, Finance Manager; Jeremy Sponseller, Capital Projects Manager; Jon Torrescano, IT Manager; Libby Breland, Executive Assistant/Clerk to the Board.

Staff attending telephonically: Pamela Flasch, Director of Public Affairs; Jane McCormick, Customer Service Manager; Taylor Daley, Procurement Specialist II.

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

CALL TO ORDER

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

TELEPHONIC STATEMENT

“I, Jimmy Baker, Chair, announce that a quorum for this Meeting is physically present and **Brandy Gray**, and **Rob McFee** ARE ATTENDING THIS MEETING TELEPHONICALLY.”

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

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 as indicated in Item XII, noted below.

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, Dr. Bill Singleton, seconded by, Brandy Gray, to approve the minutes of the 12/16/2021 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 passed 9-0.

GENERAL MANAGERS REPORT

Joe Mantua submitted the following report:

Asset Management

1. Asset Maintenance Program – We have completed the Field Operations as-is/to-be process workshops, and are currently reviewing all documentation to ensure accuracy. The GIS department continues to work with Arcadis to update our water and sewer linear asset attributes (such as install date, diameter and material); we anticipate this effort to continue through early June 2022. The governance, policy and strategic asset management plan activities will begin in February, and we are still on track to complete all phase II activities by June 30.
2. Infrastructure Funding – The Senate Finance ARPA Subcommittee met this month and presented recommendations for infrastructure funding. Their proposed plan included funding in three major areas, 1) Transportation; 2) Water, Wastewater, Stormwater; and 3) Broadband. The Water/Wastewater/Stormwater category included a \$900M allocation to be made available in phases. Some of the proposed terms included designating \$100M to projects significant to economic development, a split of funds – 60% to large systems (30,000 population or greater) and 40% to small systems, matching requirements of 25% for large systems and 15% for small systems and an application limit of \$10M. These recommendations will go to the full Senate Finance Committee, then all Senators, then on to the House.

Workforce Investment

3. Safety Report – In December, we completed 275 Take Twos and 60 Safety Talks. We close out the month with 275 days or 279,555 safe work hours since our last preventable lost workday case.
4. Recent Promotions – We are pleased to announce a number of employees who were promoted this month:
 - Kyler Marshburn-Foushee – Field Operator I
 - Travis Cogswell – Field Operator I
 - Mathew Morgan – Field Operator II

Jonathan Cook – Field Operator II
Phill Lovell – Human Resources Talent Partner
Angela Allison Yutz – Organizational Development and Safety Manager
Kaitlyn Benecke – Training and Development Specialist
Phillip Adams Water Operator I

5. Holiday Share Event – The Annual Holiday Share event was held on December 17 providing the opportunity for departments to celebrate the holidays. Although we had to scale back from our usual organization wide gathering, we were able to move back to our first in person holiday share since 2019.
6. High School Internship Program – We kicked off year two of this program with 4 new interns starting on January 18. This year we have added Treatment Operations to the program. Our new interns are:
 - Field Operations - Justin Barrow (May River HS)
 - Treatment Operations – Eric Douglas (Battery Creek HS)
 - Customer Service – Ashianna Scott (Ridgeland-Hardeeville HS) and Nykierra Scott (Ridgeland-Hardeeville HS)

Preparation for Change

7. COVID- 19 – We have had 19 positive cases since last month’s meeting. With the recent uptick in cases due to the Omicron strain, the lobby will remain closed to visitors until further notice. We are also utilizing TEAMS as much as possible and continuing to emphasize social distancing in the building. We continue to offer an incentive for employees who choose to get vaccinated. Our vaccination rate remains at approximately 62%.

Organizational Excellence

8. Employee of the Quarter and Year - Congratulations to Earl Sheppard, Wastewater Operations Manager for being selected as Employee of the Fourth Quarter and congratulations to Craig Alston, Field Operator II who was selected as our Employee of the Year.
9. Field Operations Featured in WEASC/SCAWWA Journal – An article highlighting the new Training Program in Field Operations appeared in the winter publication.

Customer Satisfaction and Engagement

10. Stakeholder Coordination Meetings - Staff held coordination meetings with representatives from the City of Hardeeville and Town of Yemassee to discuss projects, ARPA funding opportunities and other matters of common interest. These meetings are held with our municipal stakeholders on a quarterly basis.
 - **Public Affairs Report.** Pamela Flasch highlighted recent and upcoming initiatives taking place throughout the service area:
 1. Focus Groups: Will begin in late February and run through early March. We are looking for customer input on a number of projects, including suggestions for our website refresh and their awareness of key outreach such as EyeOnWater, the irrigation plan and keeping

landscaping away from infrastructure. We will deliver a final report at the July Board meeting.

2. **Public Education and Engagement:** All of these topics will be heavily pushed through a variety of avenues, including in-person and electronic engagement with HOAs, landscapers and customers. We want to make collaboration as easy as possible and remove any barriers to participation.
3. **Website Refresh:** The RFP for the website refresh is going live and will result in a vendor being identified by mid-April. Our top goals for this project are to:
 - 1) Maximize user experience for customers.
 - 2) Simplify site navigation.
 - 3) Rebrand for best practices/trending search habits.
4. Our innovative training program is featured in the winter issue of the SC Waters Journal. This article highlights what creativity and collaboration can do to keep departments working together and ensuring institutional knowledge is shared and deployed. ([SC Journal Winter 2021 \(kelmanonline.com\)](http://kelmanonline.com))

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Report of the Executive Committee. Committee Chair Jimmy Baker, stated that the Executive Committee met on 1/20/2022 following the Finance Committee meeting and discussed the following:

1. Role of the Authority in providing water and sewer infrastructure and service to currently underserved regions within our jurisdiction.
2. Reviewed enabling legislation, discussed the need to establish a prioritization process for potential areas to be served, viewed a map of where water and sewer service is currently available, and discussed a potential Board Ad-Hoc Committee to evaluate this further.
3. We also discussed evaluating the need for staff or contract resources to perform grant writing.
4. Next step will be to discuss at the February 25 workshop with the full board as part of the broader policy review and make a final determination on the ad-hoc committee.

Report of the Capital Projects Committee. Committee Chair Andy Kinghorn, reported that the Capital Projects Committee met on 1/19/2022 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** – Fees collected in November totaled \$9,525,018.00; Capacity fees Year-To-Date are \$14,441,601.60; in December there were 2 pre-cons, 6 Service Authorizations, 161 water taps and 232 sewer taps.

CIP Project Highlights for December

2. Purysburg WTP Expansion to 30 MGD (CIP-1366) – Jasper County is working with DNR to move forward with the variance package.
3. Highway 170 36-Inch Water Main Extension (CIP-1696) – The water main west of the traffic circle is in operation. East of the traffic circle, we are providing additional supporting information for SCDOT approval to install the water main where it was originally approved.
4. Misc. WW Pump Station Replacements (CIP-1807) - 90% design plans are under review by BJWSA for 20 WW Pump Station upgrades.
5. Raw Water Canal Improvements (CIP-1894) - Phase-III redesign Technical Memo for alternatives was provided to staff for review.
6. Filter Rehabilitation - Chelsea WTP (CIP-1898) - BRW is installing the first set of new underdrains.
7. North Street Transmission Main/Bluffton Pkwy (CIP-2224/1927) –
 - Bluffton Pkwy - Ruby Collins is installing pipe along SC 170 near Lawton Station and moving north toward Bluffton Parkway.
 - NSTM - Jordan Construction has begun to lay pipe along the Spanish Moss Trail near Battery Creek.
 - Tank – Submittals and special inspection needs are being coordinated. Property purchase is moving forward.
8. CPWRF Expansion to 11.25 MGD (CIP-1958) – The Preliminary Engineering Report (PER) is being finalized.
9. Galvanized Water Line Replacement Program Phase I and II (CIP-2185) –
 - Ph II Div. I (Hardeeville) - Contractor is currently installing new 4" pipe on Stiney Funeral Home Road.
 - Ph II Div. II (Beaufort) - Whitefield St & Center Drive West are under construction.
 - Ph II Div. III (Port Royal) – Remaining streets are Horton Ct, Black Oak Circle, Morning Mist Dr, Cypress St, Parris Island Gateway, Edinburgh Ave, 15th St and 17th St.
10. Master Plan Update FY22 (CIP-2284) - Population projections are complete and B&V is working on modeling and CIP list development.
11. Biosolids Master Plan (CIP-2286) - Hazen is finalizing the Technical Memo that will be used as reference for the marketing analysis and near-term solution options.

Activity for Board Approval

12. No items are being presented in the Board Agenda.

Report of the Finance Committee. Committee Chair Donna Altman, reported that the Finance Committee met on 1/20/2022, 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 30 seconds and the abandonment rate was 10% in December. The total number of installed Beacon meters is 66,296. United Way assisted 16 customers for a total of \$3,769.01. South Carolina Stay Rental and Utility Assistance Program assisted 36 customers for a total of \$10,975.90. The number of Eye on Water Users is currently 11,589 or 21%. The number of Constant Consumption users is currently 3,465.
2. O&M PO Approvals: The committee discussed and approved a Purchase Order approval to Yancey Caterpillar in the amount of \$135,704.23 for the Chelsea Caterpillar Emergency Generator Radiator Replacement. The quote includes installing a rental generator during the repair time of one week to ensure ongoing operations.
3. IT Update: Jon and Kenneth provided updates on the issues with the current phone service provider. Spectrum VOIP has resolved at least one issue relating to the abnormally high abandonment rate (server issue). As a whole, the phone issues are reversing in a positive manner.
4. Sustainability Update: The sustainability metrics were reviewed by the committee. An additional metric of “Other Fuel” was added to the report in order to capture fuel used by the generators. Hardeeville rezoning and annexation for Hardeeville parcel consolidation has been approved.
5. FY2022 YTD Financial Information: The committee reviewed the YTD FY22 financial information. Total operating revenues are \$1.2 million under budget, while total operating expenses (including depreciation) are \$5.6 million under budget. Adjusted for pending ADP Payroll Import expenses (\$2.4 million) and contract timing issues (\$900 thousand), operating expenses are \$2.3 million under budget. Including pending expenses, YTD operating income shifts from \$5.4 million to \$2.1 million.

Report of the Personnel Committee. Committee Chair, Brandy Gray, reported that the Personnel Committee met on 1/18/2022 and submitted the following report:

1. Safety Report: Was provided for the month of December.
2. Personnel Actions Report: 0 separations; 4 new hires; New hires per calendar year: 2019/25; 2020/31; 2021/ 66, plus 22 internal promotions.
3. Employee Annual Incentive Plan Status: On track half way through the year.

4. Coronavirus Update: 62% vaccinated (130/210); incentive continues 81 - \$200/48 PTO.
5. Internship Program: Update was provided.

CONSENT AGENDA

1. O&M Purchase Award for the Chelsea Caterpillar 3512 Emergency Generator Radiator Replacement to Yancey Caterpillar in the amount of \$135,704.23.

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 (1) item listed on the consent agenda, is there a second, any discussion, All in favor"

Motion: Moved by, Donna Altman seconded by, Lorraine Bond, to approve the (1) item listed on the consent agenda: 1). O&M Purchase Award for the Chelsea Caterpillar 3512 Emergency Generator Radiator Replacement to Yancey Caterpillar in the amount of \$135,704.23,

Vote: All voted in favor, none opposed,

Motion carried. 9-0

OLD BUSINESS

There was no old business.

NEW BUSINESS

There was no new business.

(8:37 a.m.)

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Motion: Andy Kinghorn moved, seconded by, Lorraine Bond, to go into executive session for the purpose of Attorney-Client privileged information and Legal Advice pursuant to SC Code Ann. Section 30-4-70(a)(1)(2); regarding, 1) Potential claim arising out of 36" Water Main at Purrysburg Road/Canal ~ Update, and 2) Potential employment claim ~ Update.

Vote: All voted in favor, none opposed,

Motion carried. 9-0

Chair Jimmy Baker, excused all persons from the meeting. Legal counsel, GM; DGM, remained for executive session for the legal briefing.

(8:51 a.m.)

RECONVENE

Motion: Vice-Chair Greg Padgett moved, seconded by, Lorraine Bond, to reconvene regular session,

Vote: All voted in favor, none opposed,

Motion carried. 9-0

ACTION ITEMS OCCURING FROM EXECUTIVE SESSION

Information was received from Legal Counsel. 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. *One comment was received.*

1. E. Tedd Moyd, President & CEO, Jasper County Neighbors United/Mercy Circle Apartments, regarding a major water leak and Backflow Prevention Device.

TELEPHONIC STATEMENT

“I Jimmy Baker, the Presiding Officer of this Meeting have previously stated that **Brandy Gray**, and **Rob McFee** WERE 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, Thayer Rivers moved, seconded by, Lorraine Bond, to adjourn the meeting at, 8:58 a.m.

Vote: All voted in favor, the motion passed 9-0.

APPROVED: 2-24-22

Respectfully submitted,

Libby Breland, Clerk to Board

Signatures and Attachments on file.