

MINUTES

Regular Meeting
Cleveland County Water Board Room

July 11, 2023
Tuesday, 7:00 P.M.

Present: Chairman Donald Melton; presiding, Secretary Bill Cameron, Commissioners Tony Brooks, Amy Elliott Bridges, Bruce Martin, and Pete Pedersen, and General Manager Brad Cornwell. Attorney Tim Moore attended via video conference. Vice Chairman Dewey Cook was absent.

Chairman Donald Melton called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM, welcomed all who were in attendance and recognized Commissioner Bruce Martin who gave the invocation and Commissioner Pete Pedersen led the *Pledge of Allegiance*.

A. Approval of agenda:

Chairman Melton asked Commissioners if anyone had any questions related to the adoption of the agenda. Chairman Melton requested a motion to adopt the agenda.

ACTION TAKEN: Upon a motion by Mr. Cameron and second by Mr. Pedersen, the Board of Commissioners voted unanimously to approve the agenda.

B. Special Presentation

- 1) Recognition and Presentation of Resolution Number 21-2023 to Thomas Wade Moore upon the Occasion of his Retirement from Employment with Cleveland County Water

Mr. Cornwell introduced Thomas Wade Moore to the members. Mr. Moore worked at the water plant as a night shift operator for most of his career with CCW. Mr. Moore will be returning as a part-time operator in the future. Commissioner Tony Brooks presented Mr. Moore with his framed resolution and his \$50.00 gift card from the members in recognition of his retirement.

C. Public Comment

There were no public comments.

D. Consent Agenda:

Action Taken: Chairman Melton presented the Consent Agenda Items. Upon a motion by Mr. Brooks, second by Mr. Martin, the Board of Commissioners voted unanimously to approve the Consent Agenda. The Consent Agenda consisted of the following items:

- 1) Approval of the Minutes of the Regular Meeting of June 13, 2023
- 2) Consideration of the Meeting Cancellation Notice of August 8, 2023
- 3) Consideration of Resolution Number 22-2023 A Resolution Authorizing the Execution of a Funding Offer and Acceptance from the North Carolina Department of Natural Cultural Resources for a Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) Grant in the Amount of \$500,000
- 4) Consideration of Ordinance Number 13-2023 An Ordinance Amendment for a Capital Project Ordinance and Budgets for Cleveland County Water Lawndale Park Project
- 5) Consideration of Resolution Number 23-2023 A Resolution By Cleveland County Water Awarding the Bid for the Lawndale Park Project

E. Unfinished Business:

There was no unfinished business presented.

F. New Business:

- 1) Consideration of Ordinance Number 14-2023 An Ordinance Establishing a Capital Project Ordinance and Budgets for Cleveland County Water's New Broad River Water Treatment Plant, and
- 2) Consideration of Resolution Number 24-2023 A Resolution Authorizing Execution of an Agreement with Willis Engineers in the Amount of \$85,000 for the New Broad River Water Plant Preliminary Study and An Agreement in the Amount of \$54,000 for the Water Distribution System Modeling

Mr. Cornwell explained that the first two resolutions under new business both pertained to the New Broad River Water Treatment Plant. The water production reports indicate that the current plant has had some very high peaks during the last five years. These reports are reviewed by the Water Plant Superintendent/ORC, Garrett Gilbert, and Mr. Cornwell. The peaks are especially concerning during extreme weather events. The rules for a wastewater treatment plant show that once a facility reaches 80% of the

permitted capacity that construction planning needs to begin for future needs. Once the facility is at 90% permitted capacity a new facility should be under construction. There are currently no guidelines for a water treatment plant, but the wastewater rules are used as a recommendation. The District continues to show growth with the amount of taps being purchased. Mr. Cornwell explained the planning process and the timeline required to put plans together for a new construction project. The project planning could take five to six years to complete and would include the plans, studies, and environmental reviews. The financial funding also requires research for a project this size. This project was discussed during the budget retreat and Mr. Cornwell reminded the members that it was agreed that the preliminary planning would begin during the new fiscal year. The ordinance will appropriate the money for the funding of the project over the next several years until completion. The second resolution is the engineering agreements for the project. The agreements are very different and will begin later this summer. The planning and preliminary engineering reports will be for the new water plant. The water distribution system modeling will be the skeleton model including the GIS mapping and the water line analysis for the entire District. These two project agreements work together but are separated for effective cost tracking. Mr. Cornwell noted that this property was purchased in 2016.

ACTION TAKEN: Upon a motion by Mr. Cameron, second by Mrs. Bridges, the Board of Commissioners voted unanimously to adopt Ordinance 14-2023 *An Ordinance Establishing a Capital Project Ordinance and Budgets for Cleveland County Water's New Broad River Water Treatment Plant, and to adopt Resolution 24-2023 A Resolution Authorizing Execution of an Agreement with Willis Engineers in the Amount of \$85,000 for the New Broad River Water Plant Preliminary Study and An Agreement in the Amount of \$54,000 for the Water Distribution System Modeling*

3) Consideration of Resolution Number 25-2023 A Resolution Adopting the Cleveland County Water "Water Service Policies and Procedures"

Mr. Cornwell gave a history concerning the old rules and regulations for the District. The document contains information concerning customer practices, for example leak adjustments, customer rates, and customer related information. All governmental entities are required to have rules and regulations for the operations. Mr. Cornwell noted that the current copy was

typed in 1998. Mr. Cornwell, with assistance from Customer Director, Michelle Alexander, began to update the rules and regulations about a year ago. The updated version will include items that the members have changed over the years, for example the leak adjustment policy. The policy requires updating because occasionally a customer will ask for a copy of the rules and regulations for their reference. The new version is called policies and procedures and will be posted on the website for customer reference and information.

ACTION TAKEN: Upon a motion by Mr. Brooks, second by Mr. Martin, the Board of Commissioners voted unanimously to adopt Resolution 25-2023 A Resolution Adopting the Cleveland County Water "Water Service Policies and Procedures"

G. General Manager's Report:

Mr. Cornwell introduced Ginger Fern, Finance Director, to begin with the finance portion of the General Manager's report. Mrs. Fern shared that June marks the end of the fiscal year. The financial reports are labeled "unaudited" because there will be audit adjustments made to the reports and the numbers presented in the reports are not final numbers. The audit is scheduled for the week of August 28, 2023. There were five payrolls in the month of June. The final quarterly transfer of \$125,00.00 was completed in June to the capital reserve fund. The budgeted amount for the year was \$500,000.00. The balance in the capital reserve fund is \$2,752,480.00. The local options sales tax finished 36.2% above the budgeted amount for the year. Mr. Brooks noted that the interest looked better. The interest revenue did increase and has maintained at that level. Mrs. Fern noted that the interest revenue was a little higher for the new budget. Mr. Cornwell noted that the disconnection and billing update and the maintenance report numbers were printed in the packet for members. Mr. Cornwell introduced Garrett Gilbert, Water Plant Superintendent/ORC to assist with information and questions concerning fluoride. Mr. Cornwell reminded about the concerned customer and information shared with the members about fluoride at the prior meeting. Mr. Cornwell has communicated with the concerned customer and informed her that he would not be making the recommendation for eliminating fluoride from the water treatment process. The members voted and agreed to feed fluoride rate during the treatment process in 2012. During that time, the EPA lowered the requirements based on CDC guidelines for the prevention of tooth decay. The only chemical in water

treatment that is board approved is fluoride because it is a local and optional decision. CCW doesn't have a mandatory water connection policy, most of the water providers in Cleveland County have a mandatory connection policy. If citizens within the District boundaries deem it necessary to use a private well, they can choose to use well water instead of District water. The concerned customer was notified of this policy. Mr. Brooks noted that he needed more information concerning fluoride to communicate with citizens concerned about fluoride. A document was created containing some facts and statistics about fluoride for the members to reference. Mr. Gilbert informed the members that fluoride is a naturally occurring element already found in unfinished water. The fluoride levels are checked and logged daily. A sample is sent to the state laboratory for verification of the results from the water plant laboratory. The results from the state laboratory are very consistent with the results from the water plant laboratory. The fluoride pump at the water plant is designed to prevent and prohibit any fluoride overfeed. The water plant currently feeds between 0.5 – 0.7 parts per million for fluoride. This is the EPA and CDC recommended amounts to prevent cavities. Mr. Gilbert also noted that fluoride is also found in bottled drinks and waters. Mr. Cameron questioned the use of a filter on a water spigot. Mr. Gilbert answered that the only way that fluoride can be completely removed from the water would be reverse osmosis. The only two water plants in the state that offer this service are in Raleigh and Brunswick County. The EPA stipulates that the safe fluoride level is four parts per million. The District's water plant current numbers reflect that the fluoride feed is one eighth of the EPA's safe level. Mr. Cornwell referred the members to an email containing the capital project updates that was available at their seats. This updates all the projects currently being constructed. Mr. Cornwell directed the members to the New Operations Center plaques. These plaques will be placed at the New Operations Center for future reference. Mr. Cornwell asked for any changes or corrections. The NCLM created a report about cost-of-living adjustments (COLA) and merit increase survey results. Mr. Cornwell shared this document with the members. Mr. Cornwell noted the pay and class study for the District has begun with the open meeting attended by all employees. The participation of the study included 220 municipalities and 46 counties that recently conducted pay and class studies. The KIOSK at the existing office building was envisioned to be a free-standing KIOSK, this means that it will be located six feet away from the building. The cost of the KIOSK machine is approximately \$25,000.00. There were weather concerns about the KIOSK in a free-standing location, for example sunlight, raindrops, and extreme

weather conditions. Mr. Cornwell is proposing that the KIOSK at the existing office be located at the vestibule door/board meeting entrance door. This will allow protection from the outdoor elements for the KIOSK and safety of the employees maintaining the KIOSK. Mr. Cameron asked about the fire code. Mr. Cornwell answered that the board meeting room had multiple entrances and, in the worst-case scenario, that double windows could be removed and replaced with a door. Mr. Pedersen questioned the safety of the KIOSK in lieu of people. Mr. Cornwell explained that a KIOSK would be comparable to an ATM machine. Customers would have the capability to make payments by multiple means instantly. Mr. Cornwell clarified that the machine would be programmed to not return change to the customer for cash payments. Cash payments, not submitted to the penny, would show credit for the change to be returned to the customer. The Sidewalk and Paved Trails steering committee has been created. Mrs. Bridges is the CCW board representative on the committee. The Town of Lawndale has appointed Sarah Queen to represent the Town of Lawndale on the steering committee. Tony Fogleman, David Pless, Jeff Ames and Ann Brown will be members of the committee.

ACTION TAKEN: Upon a motion by Mr. Pedersen, second by Mr. Cameron, the Board of Commissioners voted unanimously to accept the names mentioned as representatives for the Sidewalk and Paved Trails Steering Committee.

H. Board Members Announcement and Remarks

The members expressed appreciation for all the work being done.

I. Adjournment

Action Taken: Chairman Melton called for a motion to adjourn. Upon a motion by Mr. Brooks, second by Mr. Pedersen, the Board of Commissioners voted unanimously to adjourn at 7:39 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Bill Cameron

Bill Cameron, Secretary

