

# BOARD OF DIRECTORS' MEETING

September 21, 2022

MEETING MINUTES

## SEWERAGE AND WATER BOARD OF NEW ORLEANS

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### ROLL CALL

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The Board of Directors for the Sewerage and Water Board of New Orleans (SWBNO) met on Wednesday September 21, 2022, at 9:08 AM in the Executive Boardroom. Special Counsel Ms. Yolanda Grinstead called the roll and confirmed the following members were present: Hon. Mayor LaToya Cantrell, Director Dr. Tamika Duplessis, Director Joseph Peychaud, Director Lynes Sloss, Director Robin Barnes, Director Nichelle Taylor, Director Janet Howard, and Councilmember Freddie King.

The following member(s) were absent: Director Alejandra Guzman, Director Carol Markowitz and Director Maurice Sholas

Staff present were: Mr. Ghassan Korban, Executive Director; Mr. Ron Spooner, Interim General Superintendent; Ms. Christy Harowski, Chief of Staff; Ms. Yolanda Grinstead, Special Counsel; Mr. Darryl Harrison, Deputy Special Counsel; Mr. Dexter Joseph, Budget Department; Mr. Rene Gonzalez, Chief Customer Service Officer; Cash Moses, Purchasing; Ms. Irma Plummer, EDBP; Mr. Jason Higginbotham, Emergency Management; Ms. Tanyell Allen, Board Relations.

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### APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MINUTES

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Prior to beginning the meeting, Mayor Cantrell gave her opening remarks. Mayor Cantrell started the meeting by giving highlights, shout outs and thank you on behalf of everyone but clearly to the hard-working men and women of this utility. Mayor Cantrell stated the city had the pleasure participating in an employee meeting speaking, listening and answering question from employees. Mayor Cantrell let the employees know firsthand the city advanced the cost of living adjustment thanks to New Orleans city Council who adopted and approved the administration package that went forth for final approval.

In addition, there will be the one-time 5% base salary going to city employees, the utility has embraced the same practice and anticipate the one-time payment being extended by October 15 (one-time lump sum). Mayor Cantrell believe it will be a great asset and contribution to our people for the work they do. Mayor Cantrell stated they will continue to advance the package relative to increasing 5%, looking at the start of January 2023. The package will consist of 2.5% in 2024 and 2.5% in 2025. This will be a full complement. This portion of the package is still waiting for final approval by New Orleans City Council and is ready to go upon approval. This will be a total of 20% in increased wages under this administration.

Mayor Cantrell also highlighted Secretary Mayorkas of Homeland Security, who visited the Sewerage and Water Board of New Orleans utility. Mayor Cantrell stated the city will continue to work with our federal partners, and of course when they visit and make site visits, it's an example of how important

this utility is, not just to New Orleans or the state of Louisiana but to the United States of America. Employees expressed concerns about Jackson, Mississippi flooding, Mayor Cantrell stated if the city is not advancing and standing up to what the utility needs this could have been New Orleans in that position. This utility has been fragile, but the city invested and continues to invest to build a great system. However, this utility has extended a helping hand to Jackson, Mississippi, by shipping water to assist. Mayor Cantrell acknowledged the final approval of the bond commission and thanked the members of the state bond commission for standing with the city of New Orleans. She gave a special shout out to Governor John Bel Edwards for his continued support. Mayor Cantrell also stated coming up soon there will be an amnesty program for SWBNO customers.

Mayor Cantrell presented a motion to accept the minutes of the August 17, 2022, Board Meetings. Director Lynes Sloss moved for approval of the minutes. Director Freddie King seconded. The motion carried.

### **REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

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Executive Director Ghassan Korban presented a slide overview that focused on the following topics:

#### **Financial Stability Drainage Budget Amendment**

- Increasing 2022 drainage budget by \$96M to continue West Power Complex program
- Drivers for change: project progress, deeper understanding of components/costs, cost increases
- Enabled by new sources – CNO funds, drainage tax bond, HUD earmark award

#### **State Bond Commission/Capital Outlay Outcome - \$39M Priority 5 Funds Approved**

##### **Water Sector Commission Submissions – total \$16M request**

- Four applications – two drinking water projects, two wastewater projects
- Grant funding, no payback required
- Allowing us to progress unfunded capital projects

Looking Ahead: Rate Adjustment & Affordability Proposal Next Month

#### **Customer Service Initiatives Smart Meter Program Kickoff**

- Phase 1 Complete: meter survey, business integration plan, vendor selection
- Phase 2 Underway
  - Pre-deployment planning:
  - Staffing up for community outreach and IT integration
  - Anticipating supply chain challenges
  - Developing SOPs
  - Network installation

- Anticipated Deployment Spring 2023

### **Customer Service Initiatives**

#### **➤ SWBNO Hosting Late Fee Forgiveness Months**

**In partnership with the City's Amnesty Program,  
SWBNO will waive late fees for eligible residential customers.**

- When: October 1 – December 31, 2022
- Who: Residential customers with delinquent accounts
- How: Participate in three easy steps:
  1. Contact us in person or via phone (52-WATER)
  2. Pay 25% of outstanding delinquent balance
  3. Enter a payment plan for remaining balance

### **Power and Pumping Status**

- 94/99 pumps available
- T4, T5 and T6 all available
- T4 tweaks after trip during recent event
- EMDs and Frequency Changers available

### **Work on West Power Complex:**

- Awarded auxiliary power contract
- Received bids for utility rack

### **Stakeholder Engagement US Water Alliance Meeting**

- Partner meetings (EPA, Utility Leaders)
- 2022 Outstanding Non-Profit Organization awarded to Nola's Healthy Community Services!
- USACE Changing of the Command

### **WEFTEC Plans SWBNO will be involved on all levels:**

- Presentations & Panels
- Hosting tours
- Community projects
- Engaging with partners (WIFIA, etc.)

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## COMMITTEE REPORTS

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### Finance and Administration Committee Report

Director Lynes Sloss reported on the summary and actions taken by the Finance and Administration Committee. The Finance and Administration Committee Report for the month of September was presented and recommended for approval.

Mayor Cantrell asked for a motion to adopt the Finance and Administration reports as amended. Director Joseph Peychaud move to adopt Finance minutes as proposed. Director Robin Barnes seconded. The motion carried.

### Strategy Committee Report

Director Robin Barnes reported on the summary and actions taken by the Strategy Committee. The Strategy Committee Report for the month of August was presented and recommended for approval.

Mayor Cantrell asked for a motion to adopt the Strategy reports as amended. Director Janet Howard move to adopt Strategy minutes as proposed. Director Tamika Duplessis seconded. The motion carried.

### Action Items

- Resolution (R-137-2022) Authorization for CEA Between the Sewerage and Water Board of New Orleans and the New Orleans Community Support Foundation
  - **Mayor Cantrell asked for a motion to approve R-137-2022 as amended. Director Robin Barnes moved to accept R-137-2022 as proposed. Director Lynes Sloss seconded. The motion carried.**
- Resolution (R-135-2022) Preliminary Resolution Authorizing Drainage System Limited Tax Bonds
  - **Mayor Cantrell asked for a motion to approve R-135-2022 as amended. Director Nichelle Taylor moved to accept R-135-2022 as proposed. Director Janet Howard seconded. The motion carried.**
- Resolution (R-136-2022) Amendment of 2022 Capital Budget and Revision of 2022-2031 Capital
  - **Mayor Cantrell asked for a motion to approve R-136-2022 as amended. Director Lynes Sloss moved to accept R-136-2022 as proposed. Director Nichelle Taylor seconded. The motion carried.**

- Resolution (R-118-2022) Request to set Sewerage and Water Board Drainage Millage Rates for 2023
  - o **Mayor Cantrell asked for a motion to approve R-118-2022 as amended. Director Janet Howard moved to accept R-118-2022 as proposed. Director Tamika Duplessis seconded. The motion carried.**

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## CORRESPONDING RESOLUTIONS

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**The following resolutions were discussed at the September 13, 2022 Finance and Administration Committee Meeting:**

- Resolution (R-132-2022) Authorization for Award for Multiple Catering Vendors for Emergency Food Services During a Declared Emergency
- Resolution (R-107-2022) Award of Contract 1427 – Procurement of Packaged Auxiliary Power System for the West Power Complex Between the Sewerage and Water Board of New Orleans and Walter J. Barnes Electric Co, Inc.
- Resolution (R-113-2022) Award of Contract 30236 – Carrollton Basin No. 6 Sewer Rehabilitation Between the Sewerage and Water Board of New Orleans and BLD Services, LLC.
- Resolution (R-103-2022) Ratification of Change Order No. 6 for Contract 3799 – Installation of Sludge Dryer at the Eastbank Wastewater Treatment Plant Between the Sewerage and Water Board of New Orleans and Industrial and Mechanical Contractors, Inc.
- Resolution (R-106-2022) Ratification of Change Order No. 7 for Contract 30109– Sewer Pumping Station a Structural Rehabilitation Between the Sewerage and Water Board of New Orleans and Cycle Construction Company, LLC.
- Resolution (R-108-2022) Ratification of Change Order No. 10 for Contract 1403 – Demolition of abandoned C-7 and C-8 Basins and Other Improvements at the Carrollton Water Plant Between the Sewerage and Water Board of New Orleans and Cycle Construction Company, LLC.
- Resolution (R-109-2022) Ratification of Change Order No. 9 for Contract 1377 – Water Hammer Hazard Mitigation Program – Claiborne Ave Pumping Station and Off-Site Improvements Between the Sewerage and Water Board of New Orleans and M.R. Pittman Group, LLC.
- Resolution (R-112-2022) Ratification of Change Order No. 1 for Contract 30228– Mid City Basin No. 2 Sewer Rehabilitation Between the Sewerage and Water Board of New Orleans and Fleming Construction Company, LLC.
- Resolution (R-111-2022) Contract 30213 - Reconciliation and Final Acceptance-South Shore Basin Sewer Rehabilitation No. 1 Between the Sewerage and Water Board of New Orleans and Grady Crawford Construction Co., Inc.
- Resolution (R-121-2022) Contract 2145 - Reconciliation and Final Acceptance-Water Point

Repair, Water Service Connection, Water Valve and Fire Hydrant Replacement at Various Sites Throughout Orleans Parish Between the Sewerage and Water Board of New Orleans and Boh Bros Construction Co, Inc.

**Mayor Cantrell asked for a motion to approve Corresponding Resolutions in Globo. Director Nichelle Taylor moved to accept Corresponding resolutions as proposed. Director Tamika Duplessis seconded. The motion carried.**

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### INFORMATION ITEMS

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The following items were submitted for informational purposes only:

- Preliminary Financial Results
- Report of the General Superintendent
- Report of Special Counsel
- Human Resources
- Safety Report
- Contracts Under \$1 Million or Less Report
- FEMA Project Worksheet Status
- DBE Participation on Contracts Report

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### ADJOURNMENT

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There being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting adjourned at approximately 9:47 AM.