

BOARD OF DIRECTORS' MEETING

April 19, 2023

MEETING MINUTES

SEWERAGE AND WATER BOARD OF NEW ORLEANS

ROLL CALL

The Board of Directors for the Sewerage and Water Board of New Orleans (SWBNO) met on Wednesday April 19, 2023, at 9:01 AM in the Executive Boardroom. Special Counsel Ms. Yolanda Grinstead called the roll and confirmed the following members were present: Director Tamika Duplessis, Director Joseph Peychaud, Director Maurice Sholas, Director Alejandra Guzman, Director Lynes Sloss, Director Carol Markowitz Director, Director Nichelle Taylor and Director Janet Howard.

The following member(s) were absent: Hon. Mayor LaToya Cantrell, Director Robin Barnes, and Councilmember Freddie King.

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.

APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MINUTES

Director Tamika Duplessis presented a motion to accept the minutes of the March 15, 2023, Board Meeting. Director Maurice Sholas moved for approval of the minutes. Director Janet Howard seconded. The motion carried.

REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

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

Pumping and Power Update

- 93 of 99 drainage pumps available
- T5 and T6 are available
- T4 unavailable, inspections underway
- 4 of 5 EMDs available and 9 of 10 Frequency Changers available
- FC #4 at Station D out of service due to inspection, cleaning and scheduled repairs. Estimated Return to Service: May 12, 2023
- Operations team is working hard to make adjustments to our equipment in advance of storm season.
- We anticipate 95 drainage pumps will be available by the end of June.

- Neighborhood outreach on noise mitigation and oil droplet issues

Easter 30' Water Main Break

- Water Main installed in 1905, break at Audubon and Cohn
- Two additional valves installed to isolate main break
- Temporary water service given to customers as repairs were made
- Door to door outreach and direct communication with customers

SWBNO Power Complex Work Remains on Schedule

- Entergy has completed 60% of concrete foundation work
- Transmission line work started
- On time for 2024 delivery

SWBNO Connections and Backup Plant

- Met with New Orleans legislative delegation to speak to importance of funding during upcoming session
- Pile driving for utility rack foundations ongoing
- Organizing next neighborhood meeting for late May in anticipation of summer construction

Green Infrastructure

- Officially cut the ribbon on our 10th Green Infrastructure site at Orleans Ave. and Bayou St. John
- Holds 55,800 gallons of stormwater
- About 1,100 bathtubs worth
- Community input and partnership with Dana Brown & Associates, Groundwork NOLA and Saving our Urban Landscapes (SOUL) for design, tree planting and maintenance.
- Community events during Bayou Boogaloo

Smart Metering Update

- IT integration effort underway with all external partners involved
- Installation designed and planned for 7 of 12 infrastructure locations for network
- Only 1 location is outside of SWBNO property
- Designing installation phases to adapt to potential supply chain issues
- Planning compliance with new EPA regulations
- Selecting PR firm for rollout
- Ordering water pitchers for delivery to customers

Financial Stability Collections Efforts Updates:

- March 2023 collections up to \$23,820,062
- Compared to \$16,387,136 in January and \$20,318,169 in February
- Collections Manager hiring underway (interviews complete)
- In discussions with City partners on options for multi-unit shut-offs
- Challenged by efficacy/availability of property liens as a solution
- Available tool (shut-offs) not favored by policymakers

State Legislative Session

- “Fiscal” session – began April 10
- SWBNO priority: move \$39M into “priority 1” funding for use on Power Complex construction in 2024
- Hired Jones Walker as dedicated state lobbyist
- Several bills filed already that impact SWBNO (directly or indirectly)
- HB 225 (Hilferty): expands forgiveness of customer debt
- HB 409 (Edmonds): stormwater utility & fee creation
- SB 122 (Mills): sewerage infrastructure sustainability program

Stakeholder Engagement

- New Orleans Entrepreneur Week Green Infrastructure as Emerging Workforce
- Greater New Orleans Inc & Young Leadership Council State of the Utility
- Media Interviews: Times-Picayune | NOLA.com, WBOK Radio, WWL Radio

SWBNO Connections and Backup Plant

- \$250M – majority funded
- Pile driving for utility rack foundations underway
- Major design and construction contracts awarded
- Neighborhood outreach ongoing
- On track for utilization in 2024

Workforce Support – The People Plan

Miera Moore, Human Resources Manager stated this is going to be a great process. The selection committee for the workforce development consultant company narrowed it down to two companies. The two companies were SSA and PFM. Once the selection was complete, the selection committee choose PFM Consultant Firm. The selection committee believes the PFM firm will be a great help to Sewerage and Water Board in the process where they utilize program

assessments, implementation, and analysis.

The analysis will be a quantitative and qualitative analysis that will approach the organization to bring SWBNO up to date and fair with compensation and recruitment. Ms. Moore stated the firm will get the organization on the level where it can build for the future. The focus will be for our employees. This firm will be with SWBNO for 24 months.

Phase I: Assessment

April - July 2023

Inputs

The Five-Year Strategic Plan, past analyses, quantitative data.
Stakeholder interviews and focus group conversations.

Outcomes

A report that... identifies current challenges and opportunities.
defines key goals and metrics for future results.

Phase II: Options Development

August - December 2023

Inputs

An assessment of workforce models used by other utilities and local agencies.
The outcomes of Phase I.

Outcomes

A report that...
compares the most promising workforce models.
Recommends one for SWBNO.

Phase III: Implementation

January - December 2024

Inputs

SWBNO and stakeholder input on the recommended workforce model.
Feedback from stakeholders (including employees) on Phase II report.

Outcomes

An actionable implementation plan for the selected workforce model.

- PFM selected as partner consultant
- Steering Committee/PFM kickoff meeting to develop Phase 1 workplan on 4/24

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Finance and Administration Committee Report

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

Director Tamika Duplessis asked for a motion to adopt the Finance report as amended. Director Joseph Psychaud move to adopt Finance minutes as proposed. Director Nichelle Taylor seconded. The motion carried.

Audit Committee Report

Director Maurice Sholas reported on the summary and actions taken by the Audit Committee. The Audit Committee Report for the month of April was presented and recommended for approval.

Director Tamika Duplessis asked for a motion to adopt the Audit report as amended. Director Janet Howard move to adopt Audit minutes as proposed. Director Nichelle Taylor seconded. The motion carried.

Action Items

- Resolution (R-063-2023) Louisiana Compliance Resolution
 - **Director Tamika Duplessis asked for a motion to approve R-063-2023 as amended. Director Lynes Sloss moved to approve as proposed. Director Joseph Psychaud seconded. The motion carried.**

GENERAL SUPERINTENDENT RECOMMENDATIONS

**The following resolutions were discussed at the April 19, 2023, Board of Directors' Meeting:
General Superintendent Recommendations**

Contract Awards/Renewals

- Resolution (R-060-2023) Second Renewal of Contract 8164 – Skilled and Unskilled Labor for Maintenance Between the Sewerage and Water Board of New Orleans and JEI Solutions, Inc.

- **Director Tamika Duplessis asked for a motion to approve Contract Awards/Renewals as amended. Director Maurice Sholas moved to approve as proposed. Director Lynes Sloss seconded. The motion carried.**

Contract Change Orders

- Resolution (R-043-2023) Ratification of Change Order No. 13 for Contract 1417 for the Static Frequency Converter Procurement Project Between the Sewerage and Water Board of New Orleans and Walter J. Barnes Electric Co., Inc.
- Resolution (R-048-2023) Ratification of Change Order No. 2 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
 - **Director Tamika Duplessis asked for a motion to approve Contract Change Orders as amended. Director Nichelle Taylor moved to approve as proposed. Director Lynes Sloss seconded. The motion carried.**

Contract Amendments

- Resolution (R-044-2023) Ratification of Amendment No. 3 to the Cooperative Endeavor Agreement for the Pontilly Drainage Hazard Mitigation Grant Program Between the Sewerage and Water Board of New Orleans, the City of New Orleans, and the New Orleans Redevelopment Authority
- Resolution (R-045-2023) Authorization of Amendment No. 11 to the Agreement Between the Sewerage and Water Board of New Orleans and Linfield, Hunter and Junius, Inc. for Design and Engineering Services for the Water Line Replacement Program
- Resolution (R-047-2023) Ratification of Amendment No. 1 to the Cooperative Endeavor Agreement for the Lafitte Greenway Pedestrian Bridge on N. Gayoso over the St. Louis Canal Between the Sewerage and Water Board of New Orleans, the City of New Orleans and the NFT Group, LLC
- Resolution (R-049-2023) Authorization of Amendment No. 10 to the Agreement Between the Sewerage and Water Board of New Orleans and Neel-Schaffer, Inc. for Design and Engineering Services for the Water Line Replacement Program
 - **Director Tamika Duplessis asked for a motion to approve Contract Amendments as amended. Director Janet Howard moved to approve as proposed. Director Nichelle Taylor seconded. The motion carried.**

Corresponding Resolutions

- Resolution (R-066-2023) Audit Committee Charter 2023
- Resolution (R-067-2023) Internal Audit Charter 2023
 - **Director Tamika Duplessis asked for a motion to Defer Corresponding Resolutions as amended. Director Maurice Sholas moved to defer as proposed. Director Janet Howard seconded. The motion carried.**

INFORMATION ITEMS

The following items were submitted for informational purposes only:

- Preliminary Financial Results
- Report Human Resource
- Safety Report
- Contracts Under \$1 Million or Less Report
- FEMA Project Worksheet Status
- DBE Participation on Contracts Report

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting adjourned at approximately 10:35 AM.