



The Sewerage & Water Board

OF NEW ORLEANS

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August 16, 2023

The Strategy Committee met on Wednesday, August 16, 2023, in the Executive Boardroom. The meeting convened at approximately 9:05 AM.

1. ROLL CALL

Present:

Director Robin Barnes, Chair

Director Lynes Sloss

Director Alejandra Guzman

Absent:

Director Janet Howard

Director Maurice Sholas

2. PRESENTATION ITEMS

Director Barnes informed the committee of the Smart Metering Communications and Operational Update presentations. Executive Director Ghassan Korban thanked the Directors for their feedback and for demanding more clarity and more direct-action regarding communication in general but specifically smart metering. Mr. Korban expressed that smart metering is a visible and critical project that will improve the utility.

Grace Birch, Interim Communication Director gave a detailed presentation on key messaging, external and internal communications, the outreach plan overview – milestones, and the initial outreach implementation. Ms. Birch explained the overall communications would also include an example of the uniforms for recognition and customer notification door hangars timeline and details. Ms. Birch concluded by informing the committee of what is ahead, where the utility is in the process, and the transformative water programs, the overarching campaign, and the branding key initiatives.

Ms. Birch introduced Rebecca Johnsey, Principal Engineer, who presented on the key operational updates which included, schedule updates, project workstreams, information technology, consumption data collection redundancy, the initial slow start route plan for 1.5" and 2" meters for 2023, and residential installations. Ms. Johnsey also presented the committee with a prototype of the new smart meters. Ms. Johnsey was able to address the committee on their concerns about meter locations, readings, safety, tampering, and what will happen to older meter lids to ensure compliance.

Director Barnes pointed out that Director Sloss stated the smart metering program is one of the most important things to happen in New Orleans in the last 50 years, and how important Ms. Johnsey and her work is to the community. Director Barnes thanked staff for a great comprehensive report that detailed every aspect of what has happened and is going to happen as this is a project for the people. Director Sloss and the committee expressed their excitement about what is to come and the extensive communication.

3. **PUBLIC COMMENT**

None.

There being no further business to come before the Strategy Committee, Director Barnes asked for a motion to adjourn. Director Sloss moved to adjourn. Director Guzman seconded. The motion carried. The meeting adjourned at approximately 9:52 AM.

Respectfully submitted,

Robin A. Barnes, Chair