



625 St. Joseph Street
New Orleans, LA 70165
504.529.2837 or 52.WATER

January 15, 2025

The Operations Committee met on Wednesday, January 15, 2025, in the Executive Boardroom. The meeting convened at approximately 10:00 a.m.

Present

Director Janet Howard, Chair
Director Joseph Peychaud

Members Absent

Director Tamika Duplessis, PhD
Director Chadrick Kennedy
Director Maurice Sholas, PhD, MD

Non-Members Present

Director Lynes R. Sloss

PRESENTATION ITEMS

Ghassan Korban, Executive Director, and Jamie Parker, Director of Planning & Strategy, gave an update on the People Plan. The Plan is an employee-driven effort that seeks to determine the best workforce practices and policies for the utility. The Plan focuses on the areas of benefits, employee protections, compensation, career pathways and development, recruitment, and retention. Completed phases of the Plan include conducting an evaluation of current workforce policies and practices; researching other utilities to learn how they manage workforce challenges, identifying improvements favored by employees, and determining whether employee-supported improvements can be implemented within the utility's current workforce model as part of City Civil Service. The utility will be conducting a series of "town hall" sessions at its various locations, as well as providing virtual options, to give employees an opportunity to learn more about the People Plan. Once the town halls have been conducted, employees will be asked to participate in a non-binding survey to gauge support of the People Plan.

Susannah Kirby, Interim Chief Customer Service Officer, provided an update on smart meter bills, trends regarding delinquent payments, and a plan to address delinquencies. Generally, it is taking SWBNO 70 days to take action on a delinquent account, which, based on comparative research, is a longer than the timeframe used by other utilities. The presentation showed more than 29,000 delinquent smart meter customers, with a collective outstanding balance of \$17.2 million. To address



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these delinquencies, SWBNO is working to improve its processes, including notifying customers sooner that their account is past due and increasing awareness and participation in payment plan options, such as Promise Pay. The department is also ramping up efforts to improve quality assurance and quality controls, as well as developing a team to improve the tracking of service orders.

David Callahan, Chief Administrative Officer, presented the 2025 SWBNO Holiday Schedule.

PUBLIC COMMENT

No public comment

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Operations Committee, Director Howard moved to adjourn. Director Sloss seconded. The motion carried. The meeting was adjourned at approximately 10:08 a.m.