

**LITTLE ROCK WATER RECLAMATION COMMISSION**  
**Minutes of the Meeting Held**  
**June 21<sup>st</sup>, 2023**

The Little Rock Water Reclamation Commission ("LRWRC") met at 4:00 p.m., Wednesday, June 21<sup>st</sup>, in the Training Room of the Clearwater Maintenance Complex and via livestream.

**Little Rock Water Reclamation Commission**

Schawnee Hightower, Chair  
Jonathan Semans, Vice Chair  
Chris Marsh, Secretary  
Debbie Shock, Commissioner  
Ganelle McBryde, Commissioner  
Prentice O'Guinn, Commissioner  
Daryl Brown, Commissioner  
Director Lance Hines, Ex Officio Member

**Little Rock Water Reclamation Authority Personnel**

Greg Ramon, Chief Executive Officer  
Howell Anderson, P.E., Chief Operating Officer  
Jean Block, Chief Legal Officer  
Michael Rhoda, Chief Financial Officer  
Walter Collins, P.E., Director of Operations  
John Holloway, P.E., Director of Engineering Services  
Rebecca Burkman, Director of Environmental Affairs  
Harold Hounwanou, P.E., Director of Collection System Maintenance  
Tonya Wallace, Director of Facility Asset Management  
BJ Harrison, Associate Director of Accounting & Finance  
Naomi Roundtree, Associate Director of Human Resources

Attendees included: Commissioners Hightower and O'Guinn appeared in-person. Commissioner Marsh, Semans, and McBryde appeared via livestream. Commissioners Shock, Brown, and Director Hines were absent. Senior Staff Members: Greg Ramon, Jean Block, Howell Anderson, Michael Rhoda, Walter Collins, John Holloway, Harold Hounwanou, Rebecca Burkman, BJ Harrison, Naomi Roundtree and Tonya Wallace appeared in person.

Chair Hightower brought the meeting to order and called for Mr. Anderson to lead the Pledge of Allegiance.

Chair Hightower then asked Sherree Bynum, Safety Coordinator, to present the Safety Minute.

Harold Hounwanou, Director of Collection Systems Maintenance, presented Chris Dunham, Collection Systems Maintenance Manager, with an award for 20 years of service to LRWRA.

Next, Chair Hightower asked the Commissioners if they had reviewed the minutes of the May 17<sup>th</sup> meeting. Being that there were no revisions, Chair Hightower asked if there were any objections to approving the minutes. Hearing none, the minutes were approved.

Chair Hightower then asked if there were any public comments and there were none.

Amber Yates, Procurement Administrator, presented Resolution 2023-06:

**A RESOLUTION REPEALING RESOLUTION 2014-01 AND  
AUTHORIZING PURCHASES FROM CERTAIN COMPANIES  
CONSIDERED "COOPERATIVE CONTRACTS" FOR THE  
CURRENT YEAR AND SUCCEEDING YEARS**

Ms. Yates explained the need to repeal and replace Resolution 2014-01 with an updated and flexible resolution.

She noted that the proposed resolution would make administrative changes that would revise names of the cooperatives (due to organizations merging or changing names), name additional cooperatives, and allow other cooperatives not listed in the proposed resolution to be used under certain conditions. She added that the proposed resolution also adds public works/construction projects to be considered in cooperative contracts, and that there would be no change to purchases that are over the CEO's spending authority.

Staff requested the Commission to approve Resolution 2023-06.

Chair Hightower requested a motion to approve. A motion was made, seconded, and approved unanimously.

Cary Beth Lipscomb, Engineering Manager - Capital Improvements, presented a Recommendation of Award for Construction for Capacity Improvements Project in the Benny Craig Park Vicinity. Ms. Lipscomb gave a brief overview of the project and its location.

Staff requested the Commission to award the construction contract to Kajacs Contractors, Inc. in the amount of \$1,000,000.00 (conditional upon Arkansas Natural Resources Division concurrence) and to authorize CEO Greg Ramon to execute a contract for the Capacity Improvements Project in the Benny Craig Park Vicinity.

Chair Hightower requested a motion to approve. A motion was made, seconded, and approved unanimously.

Harold Hounwanou, Director of Collection Systems Maintenance, presented a Purchase Authorization for Fleet Maintenance Vehicle & Equipment Lifts Replacement. Mr. Hounwanou gave a brief description and current use of the "vehicle and equipment lifts" and stated that inspection results deemed they are near the end of their useful life and

should be replaced. He noted that the cost will be shared equally with Central Arkansas Water with LRWRA being responsible for \$54,755.91.

Staff requested the Commission approve the purchase authorization for both "vehicle and equipment lifts" in the amount of \$109,511.81 and to authorize CEO Greg Ramon to enter a contract with NAPA Auto Parts, Inc.

Chair Hightower requested a motion to approve. A motion was made, seconded, and approved unanimously.

Mr. Hounwanou then gave an update on Tornado Debris Removal Services. He gave a brief recap of the damage caused by the March 2023 Tornado and its impact on the utility. He stated that the utility met with the representatives with the City of Little Rock, FEMA, and the Arkansas Department of Emergency Management (ADEM) to discuss using the city's current contractor for debris removal. ADEM and FEMA recommended that the utility bid and procure its own contractor to avoid jeopardizing the ability to be reimbursed for the work. Mr. Hounwanou stated that at the August LRWRC Meeting the utility will present a Recommendation of Award for a Debris Removal Contractor.

BJ Harrison, Associate Director of Accounting and Finance, presented the FEMA Disaster Recovery Program Management Contract Amendment. Mr. Harrison gave a brief background on the existing contract. He stated that LRWRA currently has a contract with Arcadis that was initiated after the 2019 Arkansas River flood to aid with FEMA's Public Assistance Disaster Recovery Program. This contract amendment will incorporate the March 2023 Tornado damage.

Staff requested the Commission to authorize CEO Greg Ramon to negotiate and execute an amendment to the professional services contract with Arcadis for Disaster Recovery Program Services up to \$258,000.

Chair Hightower requested a motion to approve. A motion was made, seconded, and approved unanimously.

Michael Rhoda, Chief Financial Officer, then presented the Q1 Capital Improvement Project Spending Update. He gave an overview of the utility's expenses on capital improvements, asset renewals, inflow and infiltration reductions projects, collection system extensions/relocations, and support services. He noted that some construction projects had been delayed due to wet weather in the first quarter, and the amount spent was less than 20% of the annual budget. He then stated he expected the amount spent to increase throughout the year as weather conditions improve.

Chair Hightower requested that future presentations have comparisons to previous years broken down by quarter.

Mr. Rhoda then presented a summary of the May Financial Report. He explained in May that total revenue of \$5.3 million was less than budget by \$111k. Operating expenses of \$2.8 million exceeded budget by \$43k with Salaries over budget by \$17k (1.4%), Supplies are under budget by \$10k (-4.5%), and that Contract Services are on budget.

Jean Block, Chief Legal Officer, then gave the Legal Update. She highlighted: LRWRA prevailed on a case in the Court of Appeals after years of litigation; contracts; updating policies; and staff meetings regarding the end of the Consent Administrative Order.

Greg Ramon, Chief Executive Officer, delivered the monthly highlights that included: Carver Elementary School Fun Day, Ronald McDonald House Volunteer Event, Employee Appreciation Day, WOW Job Shadowing, Juneteenth Community Event, Bring Your Kid to Work Day, Advertisement for Bid - I/I Reduction – Manhole Rehab Project, Notice of Advertisement for Manhole Lids, Rings, and Extension Rings, August LRWRC Meeting Venue Update, and the Energized LRWRA Solar Array.

Mr. Ramon then updated the Commission on the CEO interviews. He stated that he, Commissioner Marsh, and former Commissioner Waldrip conducted the interviews and recommended several candidates for the second round of interviews with the full Commission.

Mr. Ramon stated this would be his last Commission meeting as CEO and thanked the Commissioners for their service to the utility and the citizens of Little Rock. Chair Hightower then thanked Mr. Ramon for his time as CEO.

Chair Hightower called for any old business, and there was none.

Chair Hightower called for any new business, and there was none.

Chair Hightower stated the next LRWRC meeting would be August 16<sup>th</sup>, 2023. He then asked if there were any objections to adjourning the meeting. Hearing none, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted,



Chris Marsh, Secretary