

LITTLE ROCK WATER RECLAMATION COMMISSION
Minutes of the Meeting Held
May 17th, 2023

The Little Rock Water Reclamation Commission ("LRWRC") met at 4:00 p.m., Wednesday, May 17th, in the Board Room of Little Rock Water Reclamation Authority 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 & Facilities
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, Semans, O'Guinn, Brown and Director Hines appeared in-person. Commissioner Marsh and McBryde appeared via livestream. Commissioner Shock was absent. Senior Staff Members: Greg Ramon, Jean Block, Howell Anderson, Michael Rhoda, Walter Collins, John Holloway, Harold Hounwanou, and Tonya Wallace appeared in person. Rebecca Burkman was absent.

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

Chair Hightower then asked Karlah Schumate, Accounting Clerk, to present the Safety Minute.

Skip Mellor, Collection Systems Maintenance Manager, presented Jason Crow, Crew Leader, and Chris Seaman, Collection Systems Maintenance Supervisor, with awards for their respective 20 years of service to LRWRA.

Next, Chair Hightower asked the Commissioners if they had reviewed the minutes of the April 19th 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 a Purchase Authorization for Clearwater Administration Building (CAB) Audio Visual Equipment. She gave a brief overview of the project and the need for an update audio visual system at the CAB after the remodel. Blake Jackson, Instrumentation Coordinator, responded to technical questions from the Commissioners.

Staff requested the Commission to approve the purchase authorization for the CAB audio-visual equipment project in the amount of \$142,551.40 and to authorize the CEO Greg Ramon to enter into a contract with Conference Technologies, Inc.

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

Ms. Yates then presented a Recommendation of Award for Pipe. She gave a brief background on the types of pipe that would be purchased and an overview of the request.

Staff requested the Commission approve the recommendation of award for pipe for a total of \$465,567.70 and to authorize CEO Greg Ramon to enter into contracts with Core & Main LP, Little Rock Winwater Works Co., and PVF Industrial and to authorize subsequent contract renewals to be approved and signed at the discretion of the CEO if the renewal is within the best interest of the Utility and follows Resolution 2016-16 in regard to change order procedures.

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

Ms. Yates then presented a request for Property Insurance Renewal. She gave a brief background on the insurance renewal with BXS Insurance and explained that the policies included Commercial Property, Fiduciary, and Cyber insurance.

Staff requested the Commission approve a purchase authorization of these insurance policies with BXS Insurance for \$246,583 and to authorize CEO Greg Ramon to bind coverage for the utility and sign the insurance policies and to authorize subsequent policies to be approved and signed at the discretion of the CEO if the policies are within the best interest of the Utility and follow Resolution 2016-16 in regard to change order procedures.

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

Harold Hounwanou, Director of Collection System Maintenance, gave an update on April 2023 Tornado Damage and the process of applying for F.E.M.A. funds. Mr. Hounwanou highlighted three projects the utility was working on: repairs to the Sanford East Pump Station, removing debris, and assessing damage to the collection system. He noted the challenges in assessing the damage to the Collection System until debris removal is complete. He also gave a timeline of F.E.M.A. deadlines for financial assistance. He stated that LRWRA was evaluating whether LRWRA could use the City of Little Rock's current debris removal contractor if this was not possible, we would need to advertise and select our own contractor. Howell Anderson, Chief Operating Officer, noted that John Honeywell, Director of Public Works at the City of Little Rock, had been very helpful to LRWRA during these discussions. Mr. Hounwanou explained that LRWRA would also add an amendment to an existing disaster recovery program agreement with Arcadis consulting to include tornado recovery assistance. He noted that the previous Disaster Recovery Program agreement with Arcadis was entered into after the disastrous Flood of May 2019.

Mr. Hounwanou then presented the In-house Pipe Burst Update. He gave background on the need for the in-house pipe burst machine and an additional utility worker position. He then explained the implementation of the program and its success in rehabilitating segments of pipe and reinstating laterals. Chair Hightower complimented the update and stated that it was a good show of confidence in employees for a project like this be brought in-house.

Mr. Rhoda then presented a summary of the April Financial Report. He explained in April that total revenue of \$5.2 million exceeds budget by \$17k. Operating expenses of \$2.3 million are less than budget by \$115k with Salaries under budget by \$70k (-6.5%), Supplies are under budget by \$21k (-11.7%), and Contract Services are over budget by \$23k (-6.4%).

Jean Block, Chief Legal Officer, then gave the Legal Update. She highlighted: ongoing litigation; contracts; working with Environmental Affairs on an arsenic investigation; working with Human Resources on further developing the Leadership and Development program.

Greg Ramon, Chief Executive Officer, delivered the monthly highlights that included: Shorter College and Watershed Career Fairs, ViPS Nomination, AWW&WEA Conference highlights, Advertisement for Bids – Construction – I/I Reduction Program – Manhole Rehabilitation, Advertisement for Bids – Construction – Capacity Improvements Project in the Benny Craig Park Vicinity, Notice of Advertisement for On-Call Services, and Notice of Advertisement for Debris Removal Services.

Mr. Ramon asked that Secretary Marsh give an update on the CEO search. Secretary Marsh stated that the job posting had closed and that the committee was currently reviewing applications.

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


Chair Hightower called for any new business. Commissioner McBryde requested that the Little Rock Water Reclamation Commission have Mr. Ramon stay on the LRWRA payroll for four (4) months after the new CEO starts to assist in the transition process and to serve as an advisor.

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

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

Chair Hightower stated the next LRWRC meeting would be June 21st, 2023..He then asked if there were any objections to adjourning the meeting. Hearing none, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted,



Chris Marsh, Secretary