

**LITTLE ROCK WATER RECLAMATION COMMISSION**  
**Minutes of the Meeting Held**  
**October 18, 2023**

The Little Rock Water Reclamation Commission (“LRWRC”) met at 4:00 p.m., Wednesday, October 18, 2023, in the Hub Conference Room at the Clearwater Administration Building 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**

Jean Block, Chief Executive Officer  
Howell Anderson, P.E., Chief Operating Officer  
Michael Rhoda, Chief Financial Officer  
Shannon Halijan, Chief Legal Officer  
Walter Collins, P.E., Director of Operations  
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, Brown, and Director Hines appeared in-person. Commissioners Marsh, Semans, O’Guinn, McBryde, and Shock appeared via livestream. Senior Staff Members: Jean Block, Howell Anderson, Michael Rhoda, Shannon Halijan, Walter Collins, 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 Tommy Kelley, Collection Systems Maintenance Supervisor, to present the Safety Minute.

Chair Hightower then called for the presentation of Service Awards.

Chris Dunham, CSM Manager, presented Service Awards to Jason Winston and William Gilliam for their 20 years of service.

Les Price, Engineering Manager - Developer Funded, Service Line Replacement, Fats Oils Grease, then presented a Service Award to Allen Gatlin for 20 years of service.

Amber Yates, Procurement Administrator, then presented a Service Award to Tim Graham for 20 years of service.

Next, Chair Hightower asked the Commissioners if they had reviewed the minutes of the September 20, 2023, meeting. Being that there were no revisions, Chair Hightower asked if there were any objections to approving both minutes. Hearing none, both minutes were approved.

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

Jean Block, Chief Executive Officer, gave opening comments. She welcomed Shannon Halijan to her first LRWRC meeting as the new Chief Legal Officer. She then thanked staff for their work on the budget, as well as Commissioner O'Guinn for his role as the Budget Sub-Committee member.

Mr. Michael Rhoda, Chief Financial Officer, presented the 2024 LRWRA Operating and Capital Budget. 2024 revenues are budgeted at \$67.8M and will yield a budgeted cash flow deficit of \$6.5 million. He noted that the utility had adequate Operating and Debt Service Cash Reserves to fund the budgeted deficit. He noted that starting in 2024, there will likely be future annual cash flow deficits that will be funded with existing cash reserves since there are no pending future rate increases. The annual operating and maintenance expenses are growing over time, surpassing revenue growth. Debt service will peak in 2031 and won't see significant relief until 2037. There are recurring significant annual capital investment requirements to properly fund the preventative maintenance needs through the comprehensive asset management program, growth in the city including the port, and expected increased regulatory obligations.

Howell Anderson, Chief Operating Officer, presented Recommendation of Award for Professional Services Contract Candlewood Pump Station and Little Rock Port Pump Station Upgrades. He gave a brief background on the pump stations and the need for this project.

He noted that the Candlewood Pump Station was constructed in 1965, has four pumps, and serves 49 residents. Functional reliability is the primary driver for the project. The pumps have reached the end of their expected life and need to be replaced. The electrical controls are outdated, and the dry pit of this pump station is deteriorating and leaking groundwater.

He then noted that the Little Rock Port Pump Station was constructed in 1970, has two pumps, and serves numerous commercial and industrial customers in the Little Rock Port.

The electrical controls are outdated and unreliable, the pumps are nearing the end of their useful life, and the building and roof are deteriorating and in need of repair.

Mr. Anderson requested the Commission to authorize CEO Jean Block to negotiate and execute the professional services contract with Hawkins-Weir Engineers for the Candlewood Pump Station and Little Rock Port Pump Station Upgrades in the amount of \$400,795 funded through RLF 2024.

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

Mr. Anderson then presented a Recommendation of Award for Professional Services Contract for the AFWRF Influent Pump Station and Process Rehabilitation. He gave a brief background on the pump station and the need for this project.

He noted that The AFWRF Influent Pump Station consists of six pumps with a peak pumping capacity of 136 MGD. The pump station was originally constructed in 1958 and the most recent upgrade was in 2005. Reliability of this pump station is critical to the operation of the AFWRF. Deficiencies include pumps nearing the end of their useful life, valve and piping coating failures, failing valve operations, and degradation of concrete surfaces in the pump station allowing for the intrusion of groundwater.

Mr. Anderson requested the Commission to authorize CEO Jean Block to negotiate and execute the professional services contract with Crist/HDR for the AFWRF Influent Pump Station and Process Rehabilitation Project in the amount of \$126,200 funded through RLF 2024.

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

Mr. Anderson then presented a Professional Services Contract Amendment #1 for a Solids Handling Masterplan. He gave a brief background on the masterplan and the need for this amendment.

He noted the utility previously selected Crist Engineers to perform engineering services related to a Solids Handling Masterplan. Within the Request for Qualifications and the resulting Professional Services Contract, the utility reserved the right to Amend the Contract to include the design and construction engineering related services of projects evaluated in the Solids Handling Masterplan. After review of the deliverables from the Masterplan, the Engineering and Operations Teams ranked the FCWRF Solids Processing Improvements project first among required improvements.

Mr. Anderson requested the Commission to authorize CEO Jean Block to execute an Amendment to the Solids Handling Masterplan Contract with Crist Engineers, Inc. for the Preconstruction Services for the FCWRF Solids Processing Improvements in an amount not to exceed \$2,311,300.

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

Tonya Wallace, Director of Facility Asset Management, presented the Purchase Authorization for the Adams Field Water Reclamation Facility Perimeter Fence Replacement. She gave a brief background on the state of the current fencing and need for replacement.

Staff requested the Commission to approve the purchase authorization for the Adams Field Perimeter Fence Replacement Project in the amount of \$167,255 and to authorize CEO Jean Block to enter into a contract with United Fence Company, Inc. of North Little Rock, Arkansas.

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

BJ Harrison, Associate Director of Accounting & Finance, presented a resolution entitled:

**RESOLUTION NO. 2023-08**

**A RESOLUTION DESIGNATING SIGNATORY AGENTS OF LITTLE ROCK WATER RECLAMATION COMMISSION TO MAKE APPLICATION FOR ASSISTANCE UNDER PUBLIC LAW 100-4 AND THE ARKANSAS REVOLVING LOAN FUND AND TO SIGN THE ACCEPTANCE AND ANY OTHER REQUIRED DOCUMENT RELATED THERETO.**

Mr. Harrison noted that this resolution serves as an administrative function by adding Jean Block and removing Greg Ramon and John Holloway as employees to represent LRWRC in the Arkansas Revolving Loan Fund process.

Staff requested that the Commission approve Resolution No. 2023-08, a resolution amending all prior resolutions designating signatory agents of Little Rock Water Reclamation Commission to make application for assistance under Public Law 100-4 and the Arkansas Revolving Loan Fund and to sign the acceptance and any other required document related thereto.

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

Mr. Harrison then presented a summary of the September Financial Report. He explained in September that there was total revenue of \$5.6 million less than budget by \$203k. Operating expenses of \$2.8 million less than budget by \$94k with Salaries under budget by \$80k (-7.0%), Supplies are under budget by \$8k (-3.8%), and that Contract Services under budget by \$120k (-13.6%).

Chair Hightower then recognized the utility's new Chief Legal Officer, Shannon Halijan.

Shannon Halijan, Chief Legal Officer, greeted the Commission and introduced herself. She then presented the Legal Update. She noted continued work on reviewing contracts; reviewing and updating policies; and addressing personnel matters.

Jean Block, Chief Executive Officer, delivered the monthly highlights that included: Awards and Recognitions, Community Champions, Community Outreach, Presentations, and Advertisements.

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 November 15, 2023. He then asked if there were any objections to adjourning the meeting. Hearing none, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted,



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Chris Marsh, Secretary