

LITTLE ROCK WATER RECLAMATION COMMISSION
Minutes of the Meeting Held
June 4, 2025

The Little Rock Water Reclamation Commission (“LRWRC”) met at 4:00 p.m., Wednesday, June 4, 2025 at the LRWRA Conference Room and via livestream.

Little Rock Water Reclamation Commission

Jonathan Semans, Chair
Daryl Brown, Vice Chair
Prentice O’Guinn, Secretary
Schawnee Hightower, Commissioner
Chris Marsh, Commissioner
Christina Clark, Commissioner
Molly McNulty, Commissioner
Director Lance Hines, Ex Officio Member

Little Rock Water Reclamation Authority Personnel

Jean Block, Chief Executive Officer
Michael Rhoda, Chief Financial Officer
Ryan Benefield, P.E., Chief Operating Officer
Deanna Ray, 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
Les Price, P.E., Director of Engineering Services
Doug Roe, Director of Accounting & Finance
Kenetta Ridgell, Director of Communications and Community Engagement
Angela Brooks, Director of Human Resources
Jody Sims, Director of Facilities Asset Management

Attendees included: Commissioners Clark, Semans, McNulty and Director Hines appeared in person. Commissioners O’Guinn, Brown, and Marsh appeared via livestream. Commissioner Hightower was absent. Senior Staff Members: Jean Block, Michael Rhoda, Ryan Benefield, Deanna Ray, Walter Collins, Harold Hounwanou, Rebecca Burkman, Angela Brooks, Les Price, Jody Sims, Doug Roe and Kenetta Ridgell appeared in person.

Chair Semans brought the meeting to order and called for Mr. Roe to lead the Pledge of Allegiance.

Jean Block, Chief Executive Officer, welcomed Molly McNulty as the new LRWRC Commissioner, and Jody Sims as the new director of Facilities Asset Management.

Ms. Block then acknowledged Walter Collins, Director of Operations, for his 34 years of service and upcoming retirement. Mr. Collins gave brief remarks on his time at the utility and the accomplishments made by the operations team. Chair Semans and the rest of the board congratulated him and wished him a happy retirement.

Rebecca Burkman, Director of Environmental Affairs, presented the Department Spotlight. She gave a brief overview of Environmental Affairs' role in economic development efforts. She noted that the utility works closely with the Little Rock Chamber of Commerce, the Port of Little Rock, the State of Arkansas and other utilities when industries are looking to move to or expand in Little Rock.

Next, Chair Semans asked the Commissioners if they had reviewed the minutes of the May 7, 2025, meeting. Being that there were no revisions, Chair Semans asked if there were any objections to approving minutes. Hearing none, Chair Semans asked if there was a motion to approve the minutes. A motion was made, seconded, and approved unanimously.

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

Jean Block, Chief Executive Officer, presented the Rate Study and Resolution 2025-01:

A RESOLUTION RECOMMENDING APPROVAL OF AN ADJUSTMENT OF SEWER RATES; ADOPTION OF AN ORDINANCE BY THE CITY OF LITTLE ROCK ESTABLISHING THESE RATES; AND FOR THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER AND STAFF TO TAKE ALL OTHER NECESSARY ACTION RELATED THERETO.

She briefly recapped her presentation to the Commission in May and emphasized the need to support LRWRA's long-term capital improvement plan and maintain financial sustainability. She noted that there will be multiple public meetings with ratepayers and industries, as well as one-on-one meetings with City of Little Rock Directors.

Ms. Block explained that approval of this rate adjustment will allow the utility to continue its mission, support city growth (both residential and commercial), improve the funding balance, protect strong financial metrics, and minimize the burden on residents.

Michael Rhoda, Chief Financial Officer, briefly recapped the rate study report from last month's meeting.

Mr. Rhoda requested the Commission to approve the resolution for sewer rate adjustment.

A motion was made by Commissioner O'Guinn, seconded by Commissioner Marsh, and approved by voice vote with one abstention from Commissioner McNulty. She noted that she appreciated the work done by utility leadership but chose to abstain on this vote since she was just recently appointed to the Commission.

Les Price, Director of Engineering Services, presented a Recommendation of Award for Underground Locating Services. He explained the need for continued underground utility locating services to support LRWRA's construction and maintenance activities.

Staff requested the Commission to authorize CEO Jean Block to execute a contract for Underground Locating Services.

A motion was made, seconded, and approved unanimously.

Mr. Price then presented a Recommendation of Award for Trenchless CIPP Pipe Renewal. He explained that this project involves trenchless rehabilitation of aging sewer infrastructure using cured-in-place pipe technology.

Staff requested the Commission to authorize CEO Jean Block to execute a construction contract for Trenchless CIPP Pipe Renewal.

A motion was made, seconded, and approved unanimously.

Doug Roe, Director of Finance & Accounting, presented a summary of the April Financial Report. He explained in April that there was total revenue of \$5.4 million, which was more than budget by \$34k. Operating expenses of \$2.9 million exceeded budget by \$88k. He noted that salaries were over budget \$39k, supplies are over budget by \$21k, and contract services under budget by \$48k.

Deanna Ray, Chief Legal Officer, gave the legal update. She noted continued work on reviewing contracts; working with procurement; reviewing and updating policies; addressing personnel matters.

Jean Block, Chief Executive Officer, gave the CEO Highlights that included: Bring Your Kid to Work Day, Arkansas Association of Women Lawyers Presentation, WoWa at the Zoo, Carver STEAM Fun Day, AFP Presentation, Soirée Presentation, and Safety Milestone.

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

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

Chair Semans stated the next LRWRC meeting would be July 30th. He then asked if there were any objections to adjourning the meeting. Hearing none, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted,

Prentice O'Guinn, Secretary