

LITTLE ROCK WATER RECLAMATION COMMISSION
Minutes of the Meeting Held
April 17, 2024

The Little Rock Water Reclamation Commission (“LRWRC”) met at 4:00 p.m., Wednesday, April 17, 2024, at the Hub Conference Room and via livestream.

Little Rock Water Reclamation Commission

Schawnee Hightower, Chair
Jonathan Semans, Vice Chair
Daryl Brown, Secretary
Ganelle McBryde, Commissioner
Prentice O’Guinn, Commissioner
Chris Marsh, 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
Les Price, P.E., Director of Engineering Services
BJ Harrison, Director of Accounting & Finance
Angela Brooks, Director of Human Resources

Attendees included: Commissioners Hightower, Seamans, and Brown appeared in person. Commissioners Marsh, McBryde, and O’Guinn appeared via livestream. Director Hines was absent. Senior Staff Members: Jean Block, Howell Anderson, Michael Rhoda, Shannon Halijan, Walter Collins, Harold Hounwanou, Rebecca Burkman, BJ Harrison, Angela Brooks, Les Price, and Tonya Wallace.

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

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

Tonya Wallace, Director of Facility Asset Management, recognized Myron Welch, F.A.M. Manager, for his 25 years of service to the utility.

Jean Block, Chief Executive Officer, then recognized Howell Anderson, Chief Operating Officer, for his 26 years of service and his upcoming retirement. She thanked Mr. Anderson for his tireless efforts and commitment to the utility. Mr. Anderson gave remarks about his time spent at LRWRA, and how the utility has grown and has accomplished great things in the past two decades.

Scott Taylor, Survey & Design Administrator, presented the Engineering Services Department Spotlight. He greeted the Commission and gave a brief overview of the department and introduced staff members and their role with the utility along with projects in his department.

Next, Chair Hightower asked the Commissioners if they had reviewed the minutes of the March 20, 2024, meeting. Being that there were no revisions, Chair Hightower asked if there were any objections to approving minutes. Hearing none, the minutes were approved.

Jean Block then presented CAO Update – 20 Years of Improvement. She gave a brief overview of the history of the Consent Administrative Order and the successes and significant investments made in our infrastructure for more than 20 years.

Michael Rhoda, Chief Financial Officer, introduced Kyle Elmore of FORVIS who presented the 2023 Financial Audit Report. Mr. Elmore explained that FORVIS had issued a clean/unmodified opinion on LRWRA's financial statements for 2023. Chair Hightower requested a motion to accept the 2023 Financial Audit Report. A motion was made, seconded, and accepted unanimously.

Les Price then presented the Contract Amendment for the Solids Handling Master Plan (Sludge Transfer Line and Pump Station). Mr. Price gave a brief history of the pump station and gravity thickeners and gave an overview of the project.

Staff requested the Commission authorize CEO Jean Block to execute Amendment No. 2 to the Professional Services Solids Handling Masterplan contract with Crist Engineers for the Design Phase of the AFWRF Sludge Transfer Pump Station Project in the amount of \$185,435.

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

BJ Harrison, Director of Accounting and Finance, then presented the Purchase Authorization – Retirement Plan Advisor. Mr. Harrsion gave a brief overview of the role of the Retirement Plan Advisor and the bidding process.

Staff requested the Commission approve the recommendation of award for a 4-year term contract for a retirement plan advisor in the amount of \$198,900 and to authorize the CEO Jean Block to enter into a contract with First Security Wealth Management and to authorize subsequent contract renewals to be approved and signed at the discretion of

the CEO if the renewals are 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.

Mr. Harrison then gave the 2019 Flood FEMA Reimbursement Update. Mr. Harrison gave a brief background on the 2019 Arkansas River Flood, its damage to the utility, the repairs, and work with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). He noted that the utility had spent \$17.2 million on repairs and has been reimbursed \$12.1 million by FEMA so far.

Mr. Harrison then presented a summary of the March Financial Report. He explained in March that there was total revenue of \$6.3 million more than budget by \$1.1 million. Operating expenses of \$2.5 million less than budget by \$219k with Salaries under budget by \$128k (-11.1%), Supplies are over budget by \$24k (11.2%), and that Contract Services over budget by \$16k (3.6%).

Ms. Halijan then presented the Legal Update. She noted continued work on reviewing contracts; attending the NACWA Fly-in conference in Washington; reviewing and updating policies; addressing personnel matters.

Ms. Block then delivered the monthly highlights which included: Women of Water & Allies, UALR Tour of LMWRF, Parkview Tour of LMWRF, visits with our congressional delegation in Washington for the NACWA Fly-in, Girls of Promise, the Solar Eclipse "Solar-bration".

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 May 15, 2024. He then asked if there were any objections to adjourning the meeting. Hearing none, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted,

Daryl Brown

Daryl Brown, Secretary