

LITTLE ROCK WATER RECLAMATION COMMISSION
Minutes of the Meeting Held
December 18, 2024

The Little Rock Water Reclamation Commission ("LRWRC") met at 4:00 p.m., Wednesday, December 18, 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
Christina Clark, 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
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
Doug Roe, Director of Accounting & Finance
Kenetta Ridgell, Director of Communications and Community Engagement
Angela Brooks, Director of Human Resources

Attendees included: Commissioner Hightower, Clark, Seamans, and Director Hines appeared in person. Commissioners O'Guinn, Brown, and Marsh appeared via livestream. Commissioner McBryde was absent. Senior Staff Members: Jean Block, Michael Rhoda, Ryan Benefield, Walter Collins, Harold Hounwanou, Doug Roe, Angela Brooks, Les Price, Kenetta Ridgell, and Tonya Wallace. Harold Hounwanou appeared via livestream. Rebecca Burkman was absent.

Chair Hightower brought the meeting to order and called for Ms. Wallace to lead the Pledge of Allegiance.

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

Jamey Grice, Collection Systems Supervisor, recognized Michael Grims, Traffic Control Specialist, for his 25 years of service to the utility.

Tommy Kelley, Collection Systems Supervisor, recognized Russell Rosby, Equipment Operator, for his 20 years of service to the utility.

Next, Chair Hightower asked the Commissioners if they had reviewed the minutes of the November 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, Chief Executive Officer, presented the Consideration of 2025 LRWRC Meeting dates. She noted that the proposed dates have been reduced from the traditional 11 meetings to 9. She explained that this decision was discussed by Senior Leadership extensively who agreed the change would have no negative impact on LRWRA's business operations, and the goal is for administrative efficiency.

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

Michael Rhoda, Chief Financial Officer, presented a Recommendation of Award – Raftelis Rate Study. Mr. Rhoda introduced Mr. Thomas Beckley and Mr. William Stannard of Raftelis who appeared via livestream. They both gave a brief overview of the rate study process and the services they provide.

Mr. Rhoda explained the study aims to ensure that customer rates accurately reflect the cost of serving each customer class through a detailed technical analysis. This analysis, conducted by an independent consultant, includes a cost-of-service analysis and recommendations for any necessary rate adjustments. He noted last such analysis was completed in 2015.

For the current study, LRWRA issued an RFQ in June 2024, and Raftelis, the sole respondent, was selected due to their extensive experience, including previous work with LRWRA and Central Arkansas Water.

The study's timeline includes key milestones such as the approval of the Raftelis contract, departmental interviews, determination of revenue requirements, completion of the cost-of-service analysis, and the presentation of recommendations to the Commission. Raftelis is expected to complete their work in late Spring 2025.

Mr. Rhoda requested the Commission authorize CEO Jean Block to execute the professional services contract with Raftelis for the Wastewater Rate Study, not to exceed \$125,680.

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

Les Price, Director of Engineering Services, presented the Industrial Cooling Tower Blowdown Water Treatability Study. He gave a brief overview of the need for the study and an overview on the effects that cooling tower water can have on a water reclamation facility. Mr. Price noted that the study was funded through the Little Rock Regional Chamber of Commerce.

Staff requested that the Commission authorize CEO Jean Block to execute the professional services contract with Black and Veatch for the Study phase of the Industrial Cooling Tower Blowdown Water Treatability Study in the amount of \$411,340.

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

Tonya Wallace, Director of Facility Asset Management, presented the Little Maumelle WRF 2025 Contracted Asset Renewal Project. She gave a brief overview of the project and the need for the asset renewal.

Staff requested the Commission approve the purchase authorization for Little Maumelle WRF 2025 Contracted Asset Renewal Project in the amount of \$1,424,171 and to authorize the CEO Jean Block to enter into a contract with Doxa Construction of Sherwood, Arkansas.

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

Ms. Wallace then presented the Little Maumelle WRF Fire Alarm Replacement Phase II. She gave a brief overview of the fire alarm system and the need for the replacement. She noted with this replacement that there will be only one vendor for all of the utility's fire alarms. Staff requested the Commission approve the purchase authorization for the Little Maumelle WRF Fire Alarm Replacement Phase II in the amount of \$173,542.65 and to authorize the CEO to enter into a contract with Johnson Controls of Little Rock, Arkansas.

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

Chair Hightower asked Ms. Wallace how she became aware of the status of the Little Maumelle fire alarms. She noted through our response to equipment failures in locations that are not maintainable and that parts had become difficult to find to do the necessary maintenance.

Ms. Wallace presented the Fourche Creek WRF Return & Waste Activated Sludge Pump Replacement. She gave a brief overview of the facility and the machinery that need to be replaced.

Staff requested the Commission approve the purchase authorization for Fourche Creek Water Reclamation Facility Return & Waste Activated Sludge Pump Replacement Project in the amount of \$622,383.00 and to authorize the CEO Jean Block to enter into a contract with Haynes Pump & Process of Maumelle, Arkansas.

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

Mr. Roe presented a summary of the November Financial Report. He explained in November that there was total revenue of \$5.5 million more than budget by \$257k. Operating expenses of \$2.6 million under budget by \$20k with Salaries under budget by \$3k (-.03%), Supplies are under budget by \$71k (-9.1%), and that Contract Services over budget by \$3k (0.8%).

Ms. Block then delivered the monthly highlights which included: CIFA Presentation, Safety Bonanza, Toy Drive, and the Univision Holiday Greeting. She also gave an overview of the January 2025 meeting agenda items. Finally, she thanked the Commissioners for another year of service and wished them happy holidays.

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 January 15, 2025. He then asked if there were any objections to adjourning the meeting. Hearing none, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted,



Prentice O'Guinn, Secretary