

**CITY OF HARLINGEN WATERWORKS SYSTEM**  
**Regular Board Meeting Minutes**  
**Wednesday, October 27, 2021**

The Regular Board Meeting of the Utility Board of Trustees was conducted on the 27th day of October 2021 at 3:00 P.M. in the Harlingen Waterworks System's Board Room located on the second floor at 134 East Van Buren Avenue, in the City of Harlingen, Texas.

City Commission Present: Frank Morales, District 4

Board Members Present: Michael Murphy, Chairman  
Chris Bartnesky, Vice Chairman (via videoconference)  
Curtis Bonner, Trustee  
Enrique Del Angel, Trustee  
Juan V. Garcia, Trustee  
Gabriel Gonzalez, City Manager

Staff Present: Tim Skoglund, General Manager  
Gene McCullough, System Attorney  
Darrell Gunn, System Consultant (via videoconference)  
Robert Canterbury, System Engineer (via videoconference)  
Joyce Lamon, Director of Customer Service  
Jon Hedegard, Director of Wastewater Services  
John McKenna, Director of Information Technology  
Jose L. Rodriguez, Cyber Security Admin Analyst  
Elizabeth Soto, Director of Human Resources  
Ron De La Garza, Director of Finance & Revenue

**SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT:**

Gene McCullough informed the Board that Vice Chairman Chris Bartnesky would not be physically present at the Board Meeting but would participate by videoconference. He noted that videoconference arrangements were no longer posted on the agenda; therefore, Mr. Bartnesky would be unable to vote and participate in discussion on action items and his participation would be for informational purposes only.

**AGENDA ITEM NO. 1: OPEN MEETING AND WELCOME**

Michael Murphy, Chairman, called the meeting to order at 3:04 P.M. and asked if the agenda had been posted in accordance with the law; Nilda Sanchez responded affirmatively.

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**AGENDA ITEM NO. 2: COMMUNICATION / INPUT FROM CUSTOMERS AND RESIDENTS OF HARLINGEN**

David Gomez, a Waterworks customer, expressed his opinion on availability of sewer service and drainage problems he has experienced for many years on Gomez and Tucker Roads. He stated the problem has gotten worse as new subdivisions have been developed in the area.

Mr. Gomez informed the Board that he had spoken with the City on several occasions in the past and that the City would advise him about a service plan for future development in the area. He stated that nothing had been done to bring sewer service to his area.

Trustee Juan V. Garcia asked the Board whether there was a way to respond to public comments without engaging with the public. Mr. McCullough reported that a subsequent agenda would have to be provided for such discussion. Mr. Skoglund stated that Mr. Gomez had reached out to several elected officials including Senator Eddie Lucio about his sewer request. Mr. Skoglund and City Commissioner Rene Perez had recently met with residents of a nearby subdivision to discuss a plan and costs for extending sewer service in the area.

Mr. Skoglund reported he had a scheduled appointment on Friday, October 29<sup>th</sup> to further discuss sewer plans with Mr. Gomez.

**AGENDA ITEM NO. 3: Regular Board Meeting of September 29, 2021**

With no corrections requested, a motion to approve the Board Minutes for the Regular Board Meeting of September 29, 2021, was made.

Motion: Curtis Bonner  
Second: Enrique Del Angel

Motion to approve was carried by a vote of the Board (4-0).

**AGENDA ITEM NO. 4: REPORTS AND PRESENTATIONS**

**a) Presentation and discussion on the Water and Wastewater Conveyance Master Plan and an evaluation of alternatives for Wastewater Capital Improvements.**

Tim Skoglund reported that Freese and Nichols had been hard at work since the master plan workshop in June. Jessica Brown gave an overview of two infrastructure concepts for the wastewater master plan over a 20-year planning horizon. A 50-year analysis had also been conducted to understand longer-term cost implications of both concepts.

Ms. Brown presented proposed for water system improvements. Mr. Skoglund reported the complete master plan capital improvements for water and wastewater would be too costly to be self-funded alone and would require grant funding to complete the plan withing the 20-year planning horizon. If federal grants would not be available to augment Waterworks' funds, the projects would have to be spread out over a longer period. A rate

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study planned for the current year would establish the speed with which the master plan capital improvements could be constructed.

Juan V. Garcia asked about the proposed Dixieland wastewater treatment plant and whether any of the future force main lines had already been identified. Mr. Skoglund presented a map of proposed improvements and explained each section of the plan. The explanation he gave included both the one and two wastewater treatment scenarios.

Juan V. Garcia discussed considerations for a two-wastewater treatment plant system that would require less pumping and electrical power. Mr. Skoglund reported this plan would avoid lift stations in favor of gravity flow sewers as much as possible.

Darrell Gunn informed the Board there had been a severe drought about ten years ago that generated a substantial demand for additional water sources. He stated that treated effluent from a second wastewater treatment plant could, in time, prove a valuable source for additional water. He reported that some cities in Texas had been using their wastewater effluent to supplement their water supply. Michael Murphy commented that this approach would alleviate strain on the current system, and he voiced his favor for a two-wastewater treatment plant concept.

After much discussion, Curtis Bonner suggested proceeding with the two-wastewater treatment plant to ensure sewer system capacity as the City grows. Mr. Skoglund noted that the Board had expressed its preference for the master plan concept involving a second wastewater treatment plant and that the master plan would proceed to finalization based on that preference.

**b) Report on Delinquent accounts in excess of \$500 per account**

Joyce Lamon gave an overview of the delinquent accounts that were still currently pending. Discussion by the Board ensued.

**c) Presentation and discussion on proposed customer service policy modifications: New Development.**

Tim Skoglund presented proposed Customer Service Policy modifications regarding New Development. He explained clarifications and additional provisions to more precisely define eligibility for a one-lot septic system exception within the mandatory sewer connection area. Subdivisions created through the exception would not be eligible for further subdivision under the septic system exception rule. Discussion by the Board ensued.

**d) Discussion on scheduling change for Regular Board Meetings.**

Tim Skoglund reported that the City Commission had passed an Ordinance requiring all City boards to schedule their regular meetings to start no earlier than 5:00 P.M., effective December 1, 2021. The City Commission's reasoning was prompted by a desire to increase public participation and attendance. Discussion by the Board ensued and tentative agreement was reached to keep the meeting date on the last Wednesday of the

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month, changing the meeting time to 5:00 P.M. Chairman Murphy commented that this new meeting date and time could be adjusted as necessary.

**AGENDA ITEM NO. 5: FINANCIALS**

**a) Monthly Financial report for month ending September 30, 2021**

Ron De La Garza gave an overview of the financial reports for September 2021. Discussion by the Board ensued.

**b) Presentation of Quarterly Investment, ending September 30, 2021**

Ron De La Garza discussed information in the quarterly investment report, ending September 30, 2021.

**AGENDA ITEM NO. 6: RESOLUTIONS**

**a) R2122-01: Approving revision of Resolution R2021-45 regarding updated service credit and matching ratio changes to the Waterworks' TMRS retirement plan.**

Mr. Skoglund reported an oversight in the omission of an essential paragraph in Resolution R2021-45 approving a change to 2:1 matching and a one-time 50% updated service credit adjustment to the Waterworks' TMRS retirement plan. The Board had been advised at last month's Board Meeting about the omission, and Trustee Bonner requested the correction be brought back for Board approval. Discussion by the Board ensued.

A motion was made to approve Resolution No. R2122-01 – approving revision of Resolution R2021-45 regarding updated service credit and matching ratio changes to the Waterworks' TMRS retirement plan.

Motion: Curtis Bonner  
Second: Juan V. Garcia

Motion to approve was carried by a vote of the Board (4-0).

**b) R2122-02: Awarding contract for Sludge Transport and Disposal Services.**

Tim Skoglund reported two bidders responded to a recent bid for sludge transport and disposal services. Staff recommended awarding contracts to both bidders subject to the requirement that Republic Services, Inc. be considered the first option for landfilling of dewatered sludge unless it would be unable to perform. As the sole bidder for transport and land application disposal, Denali Water Solutions, LLC would be contracted for those services, but also be contracted for landfill disposal in the event Republic Services would be unable to perform landfilling services. Discussion by the Board ensued.

A motion was made to approve Resolution No. R2122-02 – awarding contract for Sludge Transport and Disposal Services.

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Motion: Curtis Bonner  
Second: Enrique Del Angel

Motion to approve was carried by a vote of the Board (4-0).

**c) R2122-03: Awarding a contract for purchase of Computers.**

Tim Skoglund reported that 31 computers deployed within Waterworks offices were outdated or underperforming and needed to be replaced to meet increased technological demands. Discussion by the Board ensued.

A motion was made to approve Resolution No. R2122-03 – awarding a contract for purchase of Computers.

Motion: Curtis Bonner  
Second: Enrique Del Angel

Motion to approve was carried by a vote of the Board (4-0).

**d) R2122-04: Awarding a contract for Manhole Rehabilitation.**

Tim Skoglund reported the manhole rehabilitation program was working well with the current contractor, Southern Trenchless Solutions, LLC, who was the only contractor in the Valley performing that type of work. Waterworks staff had been pleased with Southern Trenchless' work and recommended continuing to contract with the company for manhole rehabilitation services. Southern Trenches pricing was based on Buy Board pricing. Discussion by the Board ensued.

A motion was made to approve Resolution No. R2122-04 – awarding a contract for Manhole Rehabilitation.

Motion: Curtis Bonner  
Second: Juan V. Garcia

Motion to approve was carried by a vote of the Board (4-0).

**AGENDA ITEM NO. 7: MANAGER'S REPORTS**

Mr. Skoglund then highlighted portions of the Manager's Report's. The Board asked questions and discussed the information that was presented.

**AGENDA ITEM NO. 8: ADJOURN**

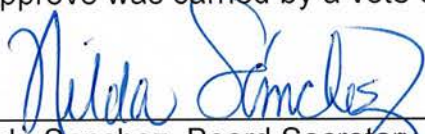
There being no further business to discuss, Chairman, Murphy, called for a motion to adjourn the meeting at 5:17 P.M.

Motion: Curtis Bonner  
Second: Enrique Del Angel

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Motion to approve was carried by a vote of the Board (4-0).

Attest:

  
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Nilda Sanchez, Board Secretary