

CITY OF HARLINGEN WATERWORKS SYSTEM
Regular Board Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, May 29, 2024

The Regular Board Meeting of the Utility Board of Trustees was conducted on the 29th day of May 2024 at 5:00 P.M. in the Harlingen Waterworks System's Board Room located on the second floor at 121 East Harrison Avenue, in the City of Harlingen, Texas.

City Commissioners Present: Ford Kinsley, District 1
Frank Morales, District 4

Board Members Present: Chris Bartnesky, Chairman
Michael Garza, Vice Chairman
Michael Murphy, Trustee
Steve Brewer, Trustee
Maru De La Paz, Trustee

Staff Present: David Sanchez, Interim General Manager
Gene McCullough, System Attorney
Ron De La Garza, Director of Finances
Florita Rodriguez, Customer Service Director
Michael Chamberlain, Purchasing Manager
Jon Hedegard, Director of Wastewater Services
Jose L. Rodriguez, Director of Information Technology
Gabriel Trevino, Utility Engineer
Frank Diaz, Environmental & Lab Manager

AGENDA ITEM NO. 1: OPEN MEETING AND WELCOME

Chris Bartnesky, Chairman, called the meeting to order at 5:05 P.M. and asked whether the agenda had been posted in accordance with the law; Nilda Sanchez responded yes.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 2: CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Mr. Bartnesky read the conflict-of-interest disclosure and asked the Board if anyone had any known conflicts of interest for this Board Meeting. None of the trustees reported a conflict of interest.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 3: COMMUNICATION / INPUT FROM CUSTOMERS AND RESIDENTS OF HARLINGEN

None.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 4: APPROVAL OF MINUTES –

- a) From the Regular Board Meeting of April 24, 2024
- b) From the Special Board Meeting of May 1, 2024

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- c) From the Special Board Meeting of May 8, 2024

With no corrections requested, a motion to approve the Board Minutes for the following Board Meetings was made:

- a) From the Regular Board Meeting of April 24, 2024.
- b) From the Special Board Meeting of May 1, 2024.
- c) From the Special Board Meeting of May 8, 2024.

Motion: Michael Garza
Second: Maru De La Paz

Motion to approve was carried by a vote of the Board (5-0).

*** David Sanchez, Interim General Manager, informed the Board he would like to introduce the newly selected Human Resources Director, Cassandra Mata.

Ms. Mata introduced herself expressing her gratitude and eagerness to be a part of the Harlingen Waterworks team. She was warmly welcomed by the Board.

AGENDA ITEM NO.5: REPORTS AND PRESENTATIONS

- a) Report on Delinquent Accounts exceeding \$500.**

Florita J. Rodriguez gave an overview of the delinquent accounts that were currently pending.

Michael Garza informed the Board he had been suggesting hiring a third-party service to help track down delinquent account holders for collections of delinquent accounts.

Mr. McCoullough informed the Board he would look into different subscribers to help recover delinquent balances. Discussion by the Board ensued.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 6: FINANCIALS

- a) Monthly Financial report for month ending April 30, 2024.**

Ron De La Garza gave an overview of the financial reports for April 30, 2024. Discussion by the Board ensued.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 7: RESOLUTIONS

Approval of Consent Agenda Items were approved without detailed discussion. Detailed resolutions were presented separately, as needed:

- a) R2324-33: Approving Change Order No. 1 to Contract for Construction of Priority Sewer Renewal Package 2.**
- c) R2324-35: Awarding a contract for purchase of Submersible Wastewater Mixers.**

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d) R2324-36: Awarding a contract for purchase of a Submersible Wastewater Lift Station Pump.

Motion: Michael Garza
Second: Michael Murphy

Motion to approve was carried by a vote of the Board (5-0).

b) R2324-34: Adopting a Drought Contingency, Emergency Water Management and Water Conservation Plan also to Amend Existing City of Harlingen Ordinance pertaining to these Plans.

Mr. Frank Diaz, Environmental & Lab Manager, informed the Board that state law required the Drought Contingency & Emergency Water Management Plan to be updated every five years. The last update was in 2019. This amendment was updated for this year's approval. The change would include a voluntary water conservation stage, upgrading to level four, increasing the current third level. Level four was to implement more awareness about water conservation.

After Board approval, the Drought Contingency & Emergency Water Management Plans, would be presented to the City Commission for an Ordinance Amendment. Discussion by the Board ensued.

A motion was made to approve Resolution No. R2324-34 – adopting a Drought Contingency, Emergency Water Management and Water Conservation Plan also to Amend Existing City of Harlingen Ordinance pertaining to these Plans.

Motion: Michael Garza
Second: Steve Brewer

Motion to approve was carried by a vote of the Board (5-0).

e) R2324-37: Awarding a contract of Services for TCEQ Domestic Wastewater Discharge Permit Renewal Application.

Jon Hedegard informed the Board this permit renewal application needed to be updated every 5 years. The current permit will expire in December 2025, however; TCEQ required an 18-month advance application submittal. Discussion by the Board ensued.

A motion was made to approve Resolution No. R2324:37 – awarding a contract of Services for TCEQ Domestic Wastewater Discharge Permit Renewal Application.

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Motion: Steve Brewer
Second: Michael Garza

Motion to approve was carried by a vote of the Board (5-0).

f) R2324-38: Approving purchases of Large Water Meters under BuyBoard Contract.

Mr. Sanchez reported he wanted to begin replacing the large meters within the system in an effort to begin to recover lost revenue because of current outdated and nonfunctioning meters were not metering properly. The plan was to rapidly install the large meters and then go back and properly install the meter vaults.

Discussion by the Board ensued, reporting a revenue increase with the few new large meters that had already been installed.

A motion was made to approve Resolution No. R2324:38 – approving purchases of Large Water Meters under BuyBoard Contract.

Motion: Michael Murphy
Second: Maru De La Paz

Motion to approve was carried by a vote of the Board (5-0).

g) R2324:39: Authorizing the Interim General Manager to execute Documents related to the Management of Water Rights.

With administrative changes of the General Manager position, authorization to negotiate or execute documents for the Management of Water Rights had to be updated. David Sanchez, Interim General Manager, was assigned for authorization on behalf of the Management of Water Rights.

A motion was made to approve Resolution No. R2324:38 – authorizing the Interim General Manager to execute Documents related to the Management of Water Rights.

Motion: Michael Garza
Second: Michael Murphy

Motion to approve was carried by a vote of the Board (5-0).

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h) R2324-40: Awarding an Engineering Contract for Small Capital Improvement Projects.

Mr. Robert Canterbury, HWWS Engineering Consultant, was present to discuss his contract renewal for HWWS with the Board. He explained the contract was presented to the Board in June of 2023. The contract was approved, contingent of some modifications. A revised contract was submitted to Mr. Canterbury the very next day, but for whatever reason, the contract was never officially signed. Mr. Canterbury discussed the projects he continued to work on for the Waterworks.

Mr. Garza informed the Board about his issue of Mr. Canterbury not living in Harlingen and would prefer to hire local firms to maintain monies in the City of Harlingen. Discussion by the Board ensued about hiring local firms and maybe not receiving the targeting attention to quickly complete projects, as Mr. Canterbury could, and had been attentive to. Mr. Canterbury assured the Board, HWWS was his only client and would continue to invest his full attention in the projects.

He concluded by stating he was able to utilize other engineering services that were not in the contract at no extra expense. Discussion by the Board ensued.

A motion was made to approve Resolution No. R2324:40 – awarding an Engineering Contract for Small Capital Improvement Projects.

Motion: Michael Murphy
Second: Maru De La Paz

Motion to approve was carried by a vote of the Board (4-1). Garza abstained his vote.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 8: MANAGER'S REPORTS

Mr. Sanchez reported several items that he wanted direction from the Board on how to move forward with changes and/or modifications.

***** MARU DE LA PAZ left at 6:25 PM**

AGENDA ITEM NO. 09: EXECUTIVE SESSION

a) To discuss personnel matters; pursuant to Tex. Gov't Code §551.074.

b) To seek legal advice regarding interpretation of contract, and potential negotiation of same, pursuant to Govt. Code, Section §551.071.

A motion to enter Executive Session was made.

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Motion: Garza Second: Brewer

Motion to Approve: 5 Yeas 0 Nays

Entered Executive Session at: 7:12 PM.

Exited Executive Session at: 7:54 PM.

No Action was taken.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 11: ADJOURN

There being no further business to discuss, Chairman Bartnesky, called for a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:54 P.M.

Motion: Steve Brewer

Second: Michael Garza

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

Attest:



Nilda Sanchez, Board Secretary