

CITY OF HARLINGEN WATERWORKS SYSTEM
Regular Board Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, August 28, 2024

The Regular Board Meeting of the Utility Board of Trustees was conducted on the 28th day of August 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
Daniel Lopez, District 2

Board Members Present: Chris Bartnesky, 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
Cassandra Mata, HR Manager
Joseph Lunn, Assistant Utility Engineer

AGENDA ITEM NO. 1: OPEN MEETING AND WELCOME

Chairman Chris Bartnesky, 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 confirmed it had.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 2: INVOCATION FOLLOWED BY PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chris Bartnesky commenced the meeting by welcoming everyone in attendance and honoring our country with the Pledge of Allegiance. Florita J. Rodriguez followed with a prayer.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 3: 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. 4: COMMUNICATION / INPUT FROM CUSTOMERS AND RESIDENTS OF HARLINGEN

None.

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AGENDA ITEM NO. 5: APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- a) From the Regular Board Meeting of July 31, 2024.

With no corrections requested, a motion to approve the Board Minutes for the Regular Board Meeting of July 31, 2024, was made.

Motion: Steve Brewer
Second: Michael Murphy

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

AGENDA ITEM NO.6: REPORTS AND PRESENTATIONS

- a) **Monthly Financial report for month ending July 31, 2024.**

Florita J. Rodriguez gave an overview of the financial reports ending July 31, 2024. Discussion by the Board ensued.

- b) **Discussion on closing the Main Office on September 6, 2024, for New Billing System Transition**

Ron De La Garza updated the Board on the new Customer Service Software, CUSI, which is set to go live on September 9, 2024. To prepare for full implementation, CUSI requested a temporary pause on all transactions for at least three days. After discussion, the Board unanimously agreed to close the lobby and suspend Customer Services on Friday, September 6, 2024, to halt all transactions. All services will resume full operation on Monday, September 9, 2024.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 7: FINANCIALS

Ron De La Garza gave an overview of the financial reports ending July 31, 2024. Discussion by the Board ensued.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 8: RESOLUTIONS

- a) **R2324-65: Awarding contract for Grant Writing Services.**

Michael Chamberlain reported that an RFQ was posted, and three submissions were received. A three-person in-house committee reviewed the qualifications, selecting two vendors based on their accreditation. Staff determined it would be in Waterworks' best interest to divide the workload between the two vendors. The Board then discussed vendor payments, with Mr. Chamberlain clarifying that grant writers are compensated only after the grant is approved.

A motion was made to approve Resolution No. R2324-65 - awarding contract for Grant Writing Services.

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Motion: Michael Murphy
Second: Steve Brewer

Motion to approve was carried by a vote of the Board (3-0).

***** Trustee De La Paz stepped out at this time and was unavailable to vote.**

b) R2324-66: Awarding contract for Audit Services.

Michael Chamberlain reported that Audit Services contracts renewed every five years, and were due for vendor consideration. In response to an RFQ, four vendors submitted proposals. The required contract included a three-year term with the option for two one-year extensions.

Staff recommended Burton, McCumber & Longoria, LLP (BML) as the most qualified firm, citing their strong resume and services best aligned with Waterworks' financial audit needs. Ron De La Garza, added that BML offered superior online capabilities, streamlined data exchange, and eliminated the need for in-house paper handling. The Board discussed the recommendation.

A motion was made to approve Resolution No. R2324-66 - awarding contract for Audit Services.

Motion: Steve Brewer
Second: Michael Murphy

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

c) R2324-67: Approval of 2024 Engineering Services RFQ Respondents for Omnibus Engineering Services.

Michael Chamberlain reported receiving eighteen responses to an RFQ for Engineering Services required by the Texas Water Development Board (TWDB).

An in-house three-person committee reviewed the applications, with sixteen vendors meeting the necessary qualifications for consideration. Each respondent demonstrated relevant expertise across various aspects of their engineering services.

Staff recommended awarding all sixteen qualified vendors a spot on a call list to be contacted as needed. David Sanchez explained that this approach would provide Waterworks with multiple Engineering Firm options, preventing potential overload on a single firm. Discussion by the Board ensued.

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A motion was made to approve Resolution No. R2324-67 - approval of 2024 Engineering Services RFQ Respondents for Omnibus Engineering Services.

Motion: Steve Brewer
Second: Michael Murphy

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

d) R2324-68: Awarding request for New Computer System (Cluster) and renewal for a Single Node.

Jose L. Rodriguez reported that the computer components had reached their 7-year lifespan and were due for an upgrade. These upgrades are essential for supporting the system's utility billing, financial operations, and improving hardware and scale computing. Discussion by the Board ensued.

A motion was made to approve Resolution No. R2324-68 - awarding request for New Computer System (Cluster) and renewal for a Single Node.

Motion: Michael Murphy
Second: Maru De La Paz

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

Consent

- e) R2324-69: Approving Annual Contract Renewal of Palo Alto Firewall Subscriptions.**
- f) R2324-70: Approving Annual Contract Renewal of Palo Alto Extended Managed Detection and Response (XDR) Services.**
- g) R2324-71: Approving Annual contract Renewal of Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) Software Support (OpenGov).**

A motion was made to approve Resolution No.'s R2324-69 (e) through R2324-71 (g) by consent agenda.

Motion: Michael Garza
Second: Steve Brewer

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

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h) R2324-72: Awarding contract for Pipes, Valves and Fittings

Michael Chamberlain reported that four vendors submitted bids for the contract, and all were selected based on their lowest pricing for the specified items in their proposals. The contract has a duration of one year.

A motion was made to approve Resolution No. R2324-72 - awarding contract for Pipes, Valves and Fittings

Motion: Michael Murphy
Second: Maru De La Paz

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

i) R2324-73: Approving contract for Fire Hydrants and Parts

Michael Chamberlain reported that four vendors submitted bids for the contract, and all were selected based on their lowest pricing for the specified items in their proposals. The contract has a duration of one year.

A motion was made to approve Resolution No. R2324-73 - approving contract for Fire Hydrants and Parts

Motion: Michael Murphy
Second: Maru De La Paz

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

j) R2324-74: Approving contract for Reagents and Water Analysis Supplies.

Michael Chamberlain reported three vendors submitted bids for this contract and two vendors were selected based on their lowest pricing for the specified items in their proposals. The contract has a duration of one year with two (2) optional one-year extension contracts.

A motion was made to approve Resolution No. R2324-74 - approving contract for Reagents and Water Analysis Supplies.

Motion: Michael Murphy
Second: Maru De La Paz

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

k) R2324-75: Approving contract for Sludge Transport and Disposal Services.

Michael Chamberlain reported two vendors submitted bids for this contract and the bid was awarded to Denali Water Solutions, LLC., based on their lowest bidding price. The contract has a duration of one year with an optional two (2) one-year extension contracts.

A motion was made to approve Resolution No. R2324-75 – awarding contract for Sludge Transport and Disposal Services.

Motion: Michael Murphy
Second: Maru De La Paz

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

l) R2324-76: Approving contract for Uniform Leasing Services.

Michael Chamberlain distributed a pricing evaluation sheet for two vendors who submitted bids for the contract. He provided a detailed explanation covering material quality, high-visibility and vented shirts, as well as stain management, all aimed at offering a higher-quality uniform. Cintas Corporation was awarded the contract for a five-year term. Discussion of the Board ensued.

A motion was made to approve Resolution No. R2324-76 – awarding contract for Uniform Leasing Services.

Motion: Michael Murphy
Second: Maru De La Paz

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

m) R2324-77: Awarding Planning, Design and Construction Phase Services for WWTP #2 Improvements Project.

David Sanchez reported the Headworks Project of planning and design at WWTP #2 had reached 30% completion. The ongoing planning and design phases were now being submitted for approval to cover the remaining engineering from funds from the Texas Water Development Board (TWDB). The design project is expected to take approximately one year to complete. The completion of this engineering project is about a year long project. Discussion by the Board ensued.

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A motion was made to approve Resolution No. R2324-77 – awarding Planning Design and Construction Phase Services for WWTP #2 Improvements Project.

Motion: Steve Brewer
Second: Michael Murphy

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

AGENDA ITEM NO. 9: MANAGER’S REPORTS

David Sanchez reported on several items concerning Manager’s Reports.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 10: EXECUTIVE SESSION

a) To discuss legal matters; pursuant to Tex. Gov’t Code §551.074.

A motion to enter Executive Session was made.

Motion: Brewer Second: Murphy

Motion to Approve: 4 Yeas 0 Nays

Entered Executive Session at: 6:11 PM.

Exited Executive Session at: 6:55 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 6:56 P.M.

Motion: Steve Brewer
Second: Michael Murphy

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

Attest: 
Nilda Sanchez, Board Secretary