

CITY OF HARLINGEN WATERWORKS SYSTEM
Regular Board Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, September 25, 2024

The Regular Board Meeting of the Utility Board of Trustees was conducted on the 25th day of September 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
Norma Sepulveda, Mayor, Ex-Officio
Gabriel Gonzalez, City Manager, Ex-Officio

Staff Present: David Sanchez, Interim General Manager
Gene McCullough, System Attorney
Ron De La Garza, Director of Finances
Florita Rodriguez, Customer Service Director
Jon Hedegard, Director of Wastewater Services
Jose L. Rodriguez, Director of Information Technology
Cassandra Mata, HR Manager
Gabriel Trevino, Utility Engineer

AGENDA ITEM NO. 1: OPEN MEETING AND WELCOME

Chairman Chris Bartnesky, called the meeting to order at 5:08 P.M. and asked whether the agenda had been posted in accordance with the law; Nilda Sanchez confirmed it had.

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

Chris Bartnesky commenced the meeting by welcoming everyone in attendance and honoring our country with the Pledge of Allegiance. David Sanchez 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

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Deborah Alexander, a customer of the HWWS system, raised concerns about a recent spike in her water consumption as reflected in her bill. She explained that her water usage had remained steady until the recent increase. The rising water usage and the corresponding higher bill prompted her visit to the Board of Trustees.

Ms. Alexander informed the Board that she had contacted customer service multiple times for assistance but was repeatedly told the billing was accurate, which she believed was incorrect. Frustrated after several unsuccessful attempts to resolve the issue, she attended the Board Meeting to bring the matter to the Board's attention. She specifically mentioned Flo Rodriguez, the Customer Service Manager, and commended her for taking charge of the situation and working on a resolution.

The HWWS Board of Trustees apologized to Ms. Alexander and assured her that Flo Rodriguez would address the issue and ensure it was resolved promptly.

***** OUT OF SEQUENCE**

AGENDA ITEM NO. 10: EXECUTIVE SESSION

a) To discuss legal matters; pursuant to Tex. Gov't Code §551.071.

A motion to enter Executive Session was made.

Motion: Murphy Seconded: Brewer

Motion to Approve: 4 Yeas 0 Nays

Entered Executive Session at: 5:15 P.M.

Exited Executive Session at: 7:00 P.M.

No Action was taken.

***** OUT OF SEQUENCE**

AGENDA ITEM NO. 5: APPROVAL OF MINUTES

a) From the Regular Board Meeting of August 28, 2024.

With no corrections requested, a motion to approve the Board Minutes for the Regular Board Meeting of August 28, 2024, was made.

Motion: Steve Brewer
Second: Michael Garza

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

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AGENDA ITEM NO.6: REPORTS AND PRESENTATIONS

a) Report on Delinquent Accounts Exceeding \$500

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

AGENDA ITEM NO. 7: FINANCIALS

a) Monthly Financial report for month ending August 31, 2024.

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

AGENDA ITEM NO. 8: RESOLUTIONS

a) R2324-78: Resolution Requesting Financial Assistance for TWDB CWSRF

Gabriel Trevino presented a resolution to the board regarding an application affidavit for a TWDB loan of \$11 million to fund the construction of improvements for WWTP #2. He explained that the loan was initially awarded for a different project, but through discussions with TWDB, the funds were successfully reallocated. Mr. Trevino also noted a typo in the memo, highlighting the incorrect project name. Additionally, he reminded the board that a similar resolution had been presented the previous year for a \$10 million loan. Discussion by the Board ensued.

A motion was made to approve Resolution No. R2324-78 - requesting Financial Assistance for TWDB CWSRF.

Motion: Michael Garza
Second: Michael Murphy

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

b) R2324-79: Awarding contract for Removal and Disposal of Water Treatment Plant Sludge

David Sanchez reported this was a contract for sludge removal. Discussion by the Board ensued.

A motion was made to approve Resolution No. R2324-79 - awarding contract for Removal and Disposal of Water Treatment Plant Sludge.

Motion: Michael Murphy
Second: Michael Garza

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

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c) R2324-80: Resolution approving purchase of Badger Brand Equipment and Services through BuyBoard contract 717-13.

Ron De La Garza reported that offering the option to purchase Badger equipment would enable the Waterworks to acquire equipment for both mechanical and supersonic meters. He noted that the Waterworks' long-term plan included transitioning to AMI/AMR meters in the future. Discussion by the Board ensued.

A motion was made to approve Resolution No. R2324-80 - approving purchase of Badger Brand Equipment and Services through BuyBoard.

Motion: Michael Garza
Second: Steve Brewer

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

d) R2324-81: Approving the Acquisition of Flygt Pumps for Lift Station 33 Upgrade Project

Gabriel Trevino reported that Lift Station 33 was being built in-house. The pumps required for this project were from sole source vendors, and were being brought to the board separate from the bids of the rest of the material. As a result, the individual resolution was for a direct purchase of the pumps. Mr. Trevino also pointed out a typo on the resolution document title. Stating that the pumps are for Lift Station 33, not 59.

A motion was made to approve Resolution No. R2324-81 - approving the Acquisition of Flygt Pumps for Lift Station 33 Upgrade Project

Motion: Michael Murphy
Second: Michael Garza

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

e) R2324-82: Awarding a contract for Engineering Services for Lift Station 9 Upgrade and Force Main Reroute Project.

Gabriel Trevino reported on the design package for Lift Station No. 9, a project funded by the Texas Water Development Board. Although the original plan was to contract an engineering firm at a later date, the project encountered an unexpected need for expedited action due to upcoming development in the area.

The current contract proposal was for design services only with the engineering firm, Hanson Professional Services, Inc. Hanson was contacted and submitted a proposal that

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met the project's requirements, offering a reasonable price within their scope of work. Discussion by the Board ensued.

A motion was made to approve Resolution No. R2324-82 – awarding a contract for Engineering Services for Lift Station 9 Upgrade and Force Main Reroute Project.

Motion: Michael Garza
Second: Michael Murphy

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

f) R2324-83: Authorizing the designation of an authorized representative and acceptance of Financial Assistance through the City of Harlingen Community Development Block Grant Program.

Gabriel Trevino reported on the Harlingen Downtown Fire Flow Improvement Projects in District No. 4, noting that to qualify for grant funding, the Waterworks needed to appoint an authorized representative to accept the already approved funds.

David Sanchez, interim General Manager, was appointed, with the language of the appointment broad enough to cover the position of a General Manager. This step ensured the project wouldn't be delayed by future administrative decisions.

A motion was made to approve Resolution No. R2324-83 - authorizing the designation of an authorized representative and acceptance of Financial Assistance through the City of Harlingen Community Development Block Grant Program.

Motion: Michael Murphy
Second: Steve Brewer

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.

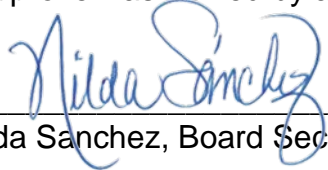
AGENDA ITEM NO. 11: ADJOURN

There being no further business to discuss, Chairman Bartnesky, called for a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:33 P.M.

Motion: Michael Garza
Second: Steve Brewer

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

Attest: 
Nilda Sanchez, Board Secretary