

CITY OF HARLINGEN WATERWORKS SYSTEM
Special Board Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, November 6, 2024

The Special Board Meeting of the Utility Board of Trustees was conducted on the 6th day of November 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.

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

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 5:01 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

None.

***** OUT OF SEQUENCE**

AGENDA ITEM NO. 10: EXECUTIVE SESSION

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

A motion to enter Executive Session was made.

Motion: Garza Seconded: Brewer

Motion to Approve: 4 Yeas 0 Nays

Entered Executive Session at: 5:03 P.M.

Exited Executive Session at: 5:33 P.M.

No Action was taken.

***** OUT OF SEQUENCE**

AGENDA ITEM NO.5: REPORTS AND PRESENTATIONS

a) Presentation and Discussion with CUSI Software Representatives followed by Q & A Session with the Board of Trustees.

Michael Guerriero and Jennifer Perryman, representatives from CUSI Software, attended the meeting to address the delayed implementation of the new billing software. Mr. Guerriero explained that transitioning to a new billing system is often challenging, particularly due to complications with integrating the previous third-party payment processor, Invoice Cloud. The new system had been designed to work with Blue Fin, a different third-party payment processor, creating difficulties. Jose L. Rodriguez, IT Director, explained that the problem was due to the new billing system, CUSI, not being initially integrated with Invoice Cloud, which caused the payment system to shut down.

Ron De La Garza noted that Invoice Cloud had failed to meet the necessary compliance requirements, even after being given 30 days to do so. As a result, the contract with Invoice Cloud was terminated, and Blue Fin was implemented as the new third-party processor. Since then, the transition of account information and payments has begun to run smoother.

Flo J. Rodriguez was asked to describe the issues her team had faced during the transition. She explained that her staff had worked long hours, including nights and weekends, to resolve account discrepancies. Despite the overwhelming number of phone calls and emails, her team ensured that each customer received personalized, high-quality service.

Mr. Guerriero acknowledged the significant workload the staff had endured and offered his assistance to ease the transition further. His team planned to produce media flyers, business cards, vehicle stickers, and any other necessary communication materials to inform customers of the changes. Discussion by the Board ensued.

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**b) Presentation by Fuquay and Discussion of Cure-In-Place-Pipe (CIPP).
Proposal for Repairing Wastewater Collection Lines.**

David Sanchez reported a sewer collection line collapse on Ed Carey Dr. that required immediate attention for restoration. Two repair options were discussed: a temporary fix or a more permanent and stable solution. The second option involved new technology that could replace the current pipe bursting projects, offering economic benefits for Waterworks.

Fuquay Incorporated representatives, Daniel Oldani and David Kalfelz, gave a detailed presentation on the new urethane pipe restoration technology. This process involves cleaning out the damaged line, then inserting a plastic liner that is cured with ultraviolet light inside the pipeline, forming a durable plastic layer within the original pipe. Fuquay Inc. also provides a protective structural coating for manhole rehabilitation, which we plan to explore in the near future.

After discussion, the Board agreed to move forward as a pilot customer to evaluate how this new technology could benefit Waterworks.

c) Presentation and Discussion regarding November and December Board Meeting Dates.

David Sanchez informed the Board that the November meeting would be canceled due to a lack of agenda items. He recommended scheduling the December meeting earlier in the month to accommodate the upcoming Christmas holidays, allowing everyone the flexibility to travel or take time off without a meeting pending. The meeting was scheduled for December 3rd, 2024. Discussion by the Board ensued.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 6: RESOLUTIONS

Consent Agenda

a) R2425-08: Awarding a Contract for purchase of Low Boy Trailer

b) R2425-09: Awarding a Contract for purchase of a Cabbed Tractor

A motion was made to approve Resolution No. R2425-08 (a) and R2425-09 (b) – under consent agenda.

Motion: Steve Brewer
Second: Michael Garza

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

Regular Agenda

c) R2425-10: Resolution requesting Funding Assistance from the TWDB EDAP.

David Sanchez reported that this was a twenty-five-million-dollar funding assistance for three large projects, with the remaining of the projects to be financed through bonds.

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A motion was made to approve Resolution No. R2425-10 - awarding a resolution requesting Funding Assistance from TWDB EDAP.

Motion: Maru De La Paz
Second: Michael Garza

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

d) R2425-11: Approving an Emergency Repair of Wastewater Gravity Main on Ed Carey Dr.

David Sanchez reported that the wastewater gravity main would be repaired using the new urethane pipe restoration technology previously presented by Fuquay, Inc. Discussion by the Board ensued.

A motion was made to approve Resolution No. R2425-11 - approving an Emergency Repair of Wastewater Gravity Main on Ed Carey Dr.

Motion: Maru De La Paz
Second: Steve Brewer

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

e) R2425-03: Awarding a contract for Construction Services for Building First Floor Security Rehabilitation at the Main Office Building (Tabled 10-30-24)

David Sanchez reported that this item had been postponed last month, awaiting additional information. The construction of the lobby was now ready for renovation restricting access to the high traffic customer base. Discussion by the Board ensued.

A motion was made to approve Resolution No. R2425-03 - awarding a contract for Construction Services for Building First Floor Security Rehabilitation at the Main Office Building (Tabled 10-30-24).

Motion: Maru De La Paz
Second: Steve Brewer

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

f) R2425-12: Awarding a contract for the Purchase of Submersible Pump for Lift Station 76.

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David Sanchez reported there was a pump issue at Lift Station 76 and was in need of replacement. Discussion by the Board ensued.

A motion was made to approve Resolution No. R2425-12 – awarding a contract for the purchase of Submersible Pump for Lift Station 76.

Motion: Michael Garza
Second: Maru De La Paz

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

AGENDA ITEM NO. 8: MANAGER’S REPORTS

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


***** OUT OF SEQUENCE**

AGENDA ITEM NO. 09: ADJOURN

There being no further business to discuss, Chairman Bartnesky, called for a motion to adjourn the meeting at 6:36 P.M.

Motion: Michael Garza
Second: Steve Brewer

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

Attest: 
Nilda Sanchez, Board Secretary