

CITY OF HARLINGEN WATERWORKS SYSTEM
Regular Board Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, April 30, 2025

The Regular Board Meeting of the Utility Board of Trustees was conducted on the 30th day of April 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 Commission Present: Ford Kinsley, District 1
Frank Morales, District 4

Board Members Present: Michael Garza, Chairman
Michael Murphy, Vice Chairman
Wayne Lowry, Trustee
Scott Allex, Trustee
Jessica Gonzalez, Trustee
Steven Ritter, Trustee
Norma Sepulveda, Mayor, Ex-Officio
Gabriel Gonzalez, City Manager, Ex-Officio

Staff Present: Roy Rodriguez, Interim General Manager
David Sanchez, Assistant 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

AGENDA ITEM NO. 1: OPEN MEETING AND WELCOME

Chairman Michael Garza called the meeting to order at 5:06 P.M. and inquired if the agenda had been posted in compliance with the law, which Nilda Sanchez confirmed it had.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 2: OATH OF OFFICE

Michael Garza administered the oath of office to our newly appointed Board Member, Steven L Ritter. Following the administration of the oath, Mr. Ritter affirmed his commitment to fulfilling the duties of this office. Mr. Garza then congratulated Mr. Ritter officially welcoming him to the Harlingen Waterworks Board of Trustees.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 3: PLEDGE OF ALLEGINANCE FOLLOWED BY INVOCATION

Michael Garza 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. 4: CONFLICT OF INTEREST

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Michael Garza 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. 5: COMMUNICATION / INPUT FROM CUSTOMERS AND RESIDENTS OF HARLINGEN

None.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 6: APPROVAL OF MINUTES

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

Special Board meeting of February 10, 2025. (Tabled 03-26-25)

Regular Board Meeting of March 26, 2025.

Special Board Meeting of April 16, 2025.

Motion: Scott Allex

Second: Jessica Gonzalez

Motion to approve was carried by a vote of the Board (6-0).

AGENDA ITEM NO. 7: REPORTS AND PRESENTATIONS

a) Presentation of Delinquent Accounts in excess of \$500

Florita J. Rodriguez presented the delinquent accounts that were still pending. Discussion by the Board ensued.

b) Presentation of Leadership Award to Yadita Ortega

Yadira Ortega, a student at UTRGV, attended the February 26 Board Meeting as part of an observation for her Politics 23-05 class. Chairman Mr. Garza invited Ms. Ortega to gain hands-on experience by chairing the meeting. She accepted the opportunity and performed exceptionally well.

In recognition of Ms. Ortega's leadership, Mayor Norma Sepulveda presented her with a Certificate of Leadership and expressed her gratitude for her willingness to lead the entire meeting.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 7: FINANCIALS

a) Monthly Financial Report for month ending March 31, 2025.

Mr. De La Garza gave an overview of the financial reports ending March 31, 2025.

b) Presentation of Quarterly Investment Report, Quarter ending March 31, 2025

Mr. De La Garza discussed information in the Quarterly Investment Report, ending March 31, 2025.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 8: RESOLUTIONS

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a) R2425-41: Approving a Change to Limit Public Comments to 3 Minutes

Michael Garza stated that Waterworks had previously observed a two-minute time limit for public comments. However, as the City of Harlingen permits a three-minute limit, a request was submitted to the Board to adopt the three-minute time frame in order to remain consistent with City guidelines. Discussion by the Board ensued.

A motion was made to approve Resolution No. R2425-41 - approving a Change to Limit Public Comments to 3 Minutes.

Motion: Michael Murphy
Second: Wayne Lowry

Motion to approve was carried by a vote of the Board (6-0).

b) R2425-42: Awarding a construction Contract for District 4 Fire Hydrant Improvements Phase 1

Gabriel Treviño informed the Board that this item is included in the current 5-year Capital Improvement Plan and received a grant last year designated for disadvantaged areas. Five bids were submitted, and the contract was awarded to the lowest bidder, Centerline Construction. Their bid came in under budget, and they are a known and local vendor. Discussion by the Board ensued.

A motion was made to approve Resolution No. R2425-42 - awarding a construction Contract for District 4 Fire Hydrant Improvements Phase 1

Motion: Scott Allex
Second: Michael Murphy

Motion to approve was carried by a vote of the Board (6-0).

c) R2425-43: Designating Authorized Signatories for all Bank and Investment Accounts.

Roy Rodriguez briefed the Board signatory changes were necessary due to the newest change in staff. Discussion by the Board ensued.

A motion was made to approve Resolution No. R2425-43 - designating Authorized Signatories for all Bank and Investment Accounts.

Motion: Wayne Lowry
Second: Jessica Gonzalez

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Motion to approve the resolution was carried by a vote of the Board (6-0).

d) R2425-44: Awarding Contract for Lead Service Line Identification.

Gabriel Trevino reported that a new Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) mandate has been issued to eliminate lead from the water supply. A recent study identified 12,000 areas of concern, and efforts were now underway to investigate these accounts.

Phase 1 involves identifying and surveying these areas, while Phase 2 will focus on replacing any components found to contain lead. Six bids were submitted for the inspection of 12,000 connections, at a rate of \$45 per connection. The contract was awarded to the lowest bidder, LSPS of Victoria, Texas. Additionally, the Texas Water Development Board (TWDB) allocated \$1.7 million in funding to support the project.

Mr. Murphy inquired whether lead notification letters had been sent to all customers. Frank Diaz explained that letters had been sent to 12,000 customers in areas with incomplete or unknown data, based on HWWS (Harlingen Waterworks System) records. Mr. Lowry asked about potential liabilities if the work was not performed correctly. David Sanchez clarified that this phase was limited to visual inspections only.

A motion was made to approve Resolution No. R2425-44 – awarding contract for Lead Service Line Identification.

Motion: Michael Murphy
Second: Wayne Lowry

Motion to approve was carried by a vote of the Board (6-0).

e) R2425-45: Approving Purchase of Fleet Vehicles.

Ron De La Garza noted that these items are typically acquired through purchasing contracts. A total of four vehicles were requested. The Board discussed the need to purchase three 4x4 vehicles to ensure better preparedness for potential future flooding. The fourth vehicle is a replacement covered by insurance, as it was damaged during the recent storm that caused widespread flooding throughout the City of Harlingen.

A motion was made to approve Resolution No. R2425-45 – approving purchase of Fleet Vehicles.

Motion: Scott Alex
Second: Steven Ritter

Motion to approve was carried by a vote of the Board (6-0).

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AGENDA ITEM NO. 9: MANAGER'S REPORTS

Roy Rodriguez reported that he had no updates to report.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 10: ADJOURN

There being no further business to discuss, Michael Garza called for a motion to adjourn the meeting at 5:41 P.M.

Motion: Steven Ritter

Second: Jessica Gonzalez

Motion to approve was carried by a vote of the Board (6-0).

Attest: 
Nilda Sanchez, Board Secretary