

CITY OF HARLINGEN WATERWORKS SYSTEM
Regular Board Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, October 30, 2024

The Regular Board Meeting of the Utility Board of Trustees was conducted on the 30th day of October 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

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
Michael Chamberlain, Purchasing Manager
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. Nilda 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.

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***** 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: Brewer Seconded: Garza

Motion to Approve: 4 Yeas 0 Nays

Entered Executive Session at: 5:07 P.M.

Exited Executive Session at: 6:07 P.M.

No Action was taken.

***** OUT OF SEQUENCE**

***** Trustee Murphy joined the meeting during Executive Session.**

AGENDA ITEM NO. 5: APPROVAL OF MINUTES

a) From the Regular Board Meeting of September 30, 2024.

With no corrections requested, a motion to approve the Board Minutes for the Regular Board Meeting of September 30, 2024, was made.

Motion: Steve Brewer
Second: Maru De La Paz

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

AGENDA ITEM NO.6: REPORTS AND PRESENTATIONS

a) Presentation and Discussion pertaining to the New Phone System.

Jose L. Rodriguez provided an overview of the new phone system. He explained that the system experienced a widespread crash when the new billing system, "CUSI," was implemented. It was later discovered that the phone system could only handle 22 calls simultaneously.

Mr. Sanchez informed the Board that an update to the phone system was necessary to accommodate the increased call volume generated by the new billing system. He recommended upgrading the phone lines and adding new features, such as a call queue, voicemail, and a callback option, to better serve customers.

Mr. Sanchez also noted that the new phone contract would need to run alongside the current contract with Foremost Telecommunications until it expires in July. A separate phone number would be required to comply with the existing contract.

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The Board engaged in discussion about the various pricing options. They decided to assess the current high volume of customers and allow time for the new billing system to stabilize before making any decisions.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 7: FINANCIALS

a) Monthly Financial report for month ending September 30, 2024.

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

b) Presentation of Quarterly Investment Report, Quarter ending September 30, 2024.

Ron De La Garza discussed information in the Quarterly Investment Report, Quarter ending September 30, 2024. These reports were preliminary figures for the end of fiscal year 2024. Discussion by the Board ensued.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 8: RESOLUTIONS

a) R2425-01: Awarding a One-Year Consulting Contract with John McKenna for Information Technology (IT) Operations Support.

David Sanchez explained the need to extend the current consulting contract for John McKenna, noting that McKenna's expertise with the older system has been invaluable over the past few years. His contract has contributed to significant cost savings. However, with the implementation of new software, this could be the final contract offered to Mr. McKenna. Discussion by the Board ensued.

A motion was made to approve Resolution No. R2425-01 - awarding a One-Year Consulting Contract with John McKenna for Information Technology (IT) Operations Support.

Motion: Michael Garza
Second: Steve Brewer

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

b) R2425-02: Awarding a contract for Security Services for First Floor Main Office Building.

David Sanchez reported that the contract was for hiring a police officer to be stationed in the customer service lobby during the transition to the new billing system. He noted that this was not expected to be a long-term contract, as the construction of the customer service lobby was nearing completion and a decrease in customer traffic was anticipated. Discussion by the Board ensued.

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A motion was made to approve Resolution No. R2425-02 - awarding a contract for Security Services for First Floor Main Office Building.

Motion: Maru De La Paz
Second: Michael Murphy

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

c) R2425-03: Awarding a Contract for Security Services for First Floor Main Office Building.

This item was Tabled, pending additional information on the construction. Discussion by the Board ensued.

d) R2425-04: Awarding a contract for Supply of Bedding and Backfill Sand

David Sanchez reported that this sand was used for daily operations and for repairs at job sites.

A motion was made to approve Resolution No. R2425-04 - awarding a contract for Supply of Bedding and Backfill Sand

Motion: Michael Garza
Second: Maru De La Paz

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

e) R2425-05: Awarding a contract for the Purchase of Ultrasonic Water Meters.

David Sanchez reported the Waterworks was no longer going to use analog meters and converting to smart meters.

A motion was made to approve Resolution No. R2425-05 – awarding a contract for the purchase of Ultrasonic Water Meters.

Motion: Michael Murphy
Second: Michael Garza

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

f) R2425-06: Approving the Acquisition of Lift Station 33 Material and Supplies.

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David Sanchez reported these were the materials needed to rehabilitate Lift Station 33.

A motion was made to approve Resolution No. R2425-06 - approving the Acquisition of Lift Station 33 Material and Supplies

Motion: Michael Garza
Second: Michael Murphy

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

g) R2425-07: Awarding a contract for Manhole Rehabilitation

David Sanchez reported this was an annual contract with Southern Trenchless. Discussion by the Board ensued.

A motion was made to approve Resolution No. R2425-07 – awarding a contract for Manhole Rehabilitation.

Motion: Michael Garza
Second: Michael Murphy

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

AGENDA ITEM NO. 9: MANAGER'S REPORTS

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

***** OUT OF SEQUENCE**

AGENDA ITEM NO. 11: ADJOURN

There being no further business to discuss, Chairman Bartnesky, called for a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:18 P.M.

Motion: Michael Garza
Second: Maru De La Paz

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

Attest: 
Nilda Sanchez, Board Secretary