

The Commissioners of Ward Two Water District of Livingston Parish met in a regular meeting on Tuesday, November 19, 2024, at 7:00 p.m. at their Administration office on Carter Drive in Denham Springs, La.

The regular meeting was called to order by Chairman, John Easterly

Present – J. Easterly, J. Martone, S. McDaniel, C. Taylor, W. Avara, M. Bennett,
S. Ball

Absent - none

Guests - Barry LeJeune, General Manager
Agnes Killcrease, Administrative Director
Kate Gueavara, of Owen & White
Legal Counsel, Hannah Calandro
Customer Kelly Calmes
James and Rebecca Clark, CC&C Construction LLC

Prayer was offered by Administrative Secretary and a pledge of allegiance was led by Jeffrey Martone.

Chairman noted that any public may comment on any agenda item during this meeting.

Motion to accept the minutes from regular meeting held on October 15, 2024, as mailed with no public comment by C. Taylor seconded by J. Martone Vote passed
Yeas-7 Nays-none Absent-none

Under public comments, customer, Kelly Calmes addressed the board regarding his mother's account (two meters) and the excessive water billing. He explained the history of the account and related that the last billing totaled \$1009. He mentioned past communications with staff and their promise to investigate the meter. He voiced his displeasure with the billing and stated that he knows there must be some error. Administrative Director explained the investigations by staff regarding both meters at this site and that both meters have the same address which adds confusion for the meter readers. She stated that there is no evidence of the meters malfunctioning. Board expressed concerns and discussed various potential ideas that would result in a billing error. Board directed Manager to research as a priority this billing on this account.

James Ray Clark addressed the board relating the history of his company which provides utility construction and commented on the past history of working with the staff of the District. He covered specifics of the tie in process and noted a specific case regarding a development on Arnold Road. He related comments from a contractor's view of the procedures being followed in the past and how recently things have changed. He explained how his crew was installing taps and encountered an issue with new requirements as well as compared to past procedures involving inspection/approval of tie ins. He summarized the communication attempts with the Manager and remains concerned with the lack of communication up to this date as well as the confusion that has transpired with required procedures. He asked the board to consider improvement in this area (contractor relations).

Manager responded on all procedures mentioned and noted past discrepancies commented on by Mr. Clark. Board discussed with Manager all the points being addressed. Shevis Ball recommended for the Manger to meet with contractor and the District engineer on the specifics to resolve this issue

Chairman opened nominations for officers of the District.

Motion to nominate and elect Jeffrey Martone as Secretary/Treasurer of Ward Two Water District for 2024-2025 with no public comment by S. Ball seconded by C. Taylor Vote passed Yeas-6 Nays-none Abstaining-J. Martone Absent-none

Motion to nominate and elect Shevis Ball as Vice Chairman of Ward Two Water District for 2024-2025 with no public comment by J. Martone seconded by W. Avara Vote passed Yeas-6 Nays-none Abstaining-S. Ball Absent-none

Motion to nominate and elect John Easterly as Chairman of Ward Two Water District for 2024-2025 with no public comment by S. Ball seconded by C. Taylor Vote passed Yeas-6 Nays-none Abstaining-J. Martone Absent-none

Chirs Taylor of the Insurance Committee presented the proposal for renewal of the employee health insurance coverage for 2025. Board discussed the details.

Motion to adopt the 2025 employee health insurance coverage plan as proposed by the Insurance Committee with no public comment by S. Ball seconded by C. Taylor vote passed Yeas-7 Nays-none Absent-none

Motion to adopt the 2025 health reimbursement arrangement (debit card) for covered employees as proposed by the Insurance Committee with no public comment by J. Martone seconded by C. Taylor vote passed Yeas-7 Nays-none Absent-none

Legal Counsel gave an update on an old vehicle case which has been settled by the insurance carrier.

Kate Gueavara of Owen & White noted that the AMI project 23-1475-01 is about 50% complete and that she recommends to pay application #11 totaling \$371,187.29 to Baton Rouge Winwater. She also stated that she recommends to pay final application on the Eden Church Road project contract 23-1475-09 to Allen Leblanc for \$9,642.40.

Motion to approve application #11 on the AMI project 23-1475-01 to Baton Rouge Win-Water in the amount of \$371,187.29 as recommended by Engineer with no public comment by J. Martone seconded by M. Bennett Vote passed Yeas-7 Nays-none Absent-none

Motion to approve final application on the Eden Church Road project contract 23-1475-09 to Allen & Leblanc in the amount of \$9,642.40 as recommended by Engineer with no public comment by M. Bennett seconded by S. McDaniel Vote passed Yeas-7 Nays-none Absent-none

Engineer gave an update regarding the water sector program phase 2 which needs an active engineering contract.

Motion to engage the District engineer to provide engineering design services and application procedures contingent upon the Water Sector Program Phase 2 funding with no public comment by C. Taylor seconded by S. Ball Vote passed Yeas-7 Nays-none Absent-none

Motion to execute the application as previously adopted for funding from the Water Sector Program Phase 2 with no public comment by C. Taylor seconded by M. Bennett Vote passed Yeas-7 Nays-none Absent-none

Engineer stated that the application portion involving the containment plan was already approved.

Administrative Director presented pay request #12 on the 2023 Water System Expansion DWRL series loan in the amount of \$372,960.95.

Motion to approve the submission of application #12 of the 2023 DWRL series loan in the amount of \$372,960.95 with no public comment by S. McDaniel seconded by W. Avara Vote passed Yeas-7 Nays-none Absent-none.

Administrative Director presented a listing of old office equipment and computers that were obsolete and recommended to declare as surplus property.

Motion to declare as surplus the presented listing of obsolete office equipment and computers with no public comment by M. Bennett seconded by S. McDaniel Vote passed Yeas-7 Nays-none Absent-none.

Administrative Director gave an update on excessive water billings which continue to be worked on, she reported on delinquent accounts totaling \$14,511, and a recommendation to write off old unpaid accounts in the amount of \$34,328.68 for the District and other amounts to other entities which are billed by the District.

Motion to write off as uncollectible the amount of \$34,328.68 as a bad debt as of 11-19-24 on old past due accounts with no public comments by J. Martone seconded by C. Taylor Vote passed Yeas-7 Nays-none Absent-none

Administrative Director led discussion on action regarding meter reading procedures. She noted that the contractor has pulled off of providing services recently and she recommended for the District to bill an estimated bill based upon a prior 12 month average of bills method for customers who are waiting for the installation of new AMI meters. Board discussed the method and made a wording change and agreed to proceed.

Motion to cancel the current meter reading contract effective immediately with Utility Outsourcing Specialists Inc. with no public comment by J.Martone seconded by W.Avara
Vote passed Yeas-7 Nays-none Absent-none

Chairman requested information from Administrative Director on the need to add staff to accomplish the procedures just approved.

General Manager, Barry LeJeune, reported that 40 customers were added as of October with a year to date gain accumulation of 581 and that 25,256 customers were billed in October.

He noted the need to advertise for bids the six month supply of plumbing supplies.

Motion to advertise for six month supply bid specifications through June 30, 2025, with no public comment by S Ball seconded by S. McDaniel vote passed Yeas-7 Nays-none Absent-none

A financial report for the October 2024 period of operations was presented by the Administrative Secretary to the Board of Commissioners for their review noting budget line item comparisons to actual spending and revenues. He provided preliminary budget numbers for the amended 2024 and 2025 budgets which will be finalized and approved at the December meeting.

Under board comments, Mr. Stephen McDaniel requested if a decision on handling the disposal of old meters from the new meter project had been determined. Manager noted that no decision has been made as of yet.

Motion to pay the operational bills as presented for November, 2024, period with no public comment by M. Bennett seconded by J. Martone Vote passed Yeas-7 Nays-none Absent-none

Motion to pay the 2023 Water System Expansion Project bills with no public comment by S. McDaniel seconded by J. Martone Vote passed Yeas-7 Nays-none Absent-none

Motion to adjourn the meeting with no public comment by S. Ball seconded by J. Martone Vote passed Yeas-7 Nays-none Absent–none.



Randall Smith Administrative Secretary

Next meeting will be held on Tuesday, December 17, 2024 at 7 PM

Reminder of Public Hearing which will begin the meeting at 7 PM for discussion of the 2024 Amended Budget and the 2025 Budget