

The Onondaga County Water Authority met in regular session on January 20, 2021.

Members of the Authority present were: J. Bianchini, K. Gardiner, J. Dougherty, M. Luber, and B. Doran.

Others present: M. Hooker, G. Miller, C. Marvin, J. Brown, L. Khanzadian, and A. Weiss.

I. Call to Order:

- J. Dougherty, Vice Chair, called the meeting to order at 12:30 PM

On motion by B. Doran, duly seconded by M. Luber, with all Members approving, the Board approved the regular Minutes of December 11, 2020 as presented.

II. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT:

- M. Hooker reviewed the Executive Director's report.
- 2020 daily water demand dropped 690,000 gallons per day, compared to 2019.
- 2020-year end metered ratio improved to over 84.64%
- Year-end daily water loss is down to 1.77 gallons per mile, per minute which is representative of the leak detection crew's dedicated efforts. It is becoming increasingly difficult to find leaks as they are smaller in nature.
- Homeland Security completed its cyber security probe (penetration testing and phishing probe) of OCWA, and the written report was delivered this week. Once the IT staff has a chance to review, the findings will be shared with the Board in February. It is worth noting, during the out briefing call the analyst advised that OCWA's cyber programs are "better than average".
- Electronic payments for 2020 represented 49.92% of all customer payments.
- OCWA customers increased by 617 in 2020, with Madison County and the Town of Clay adding the most customers.
- The Salt Springs Road project continues with a focus now on the Skyridge water system as the driver behind the project. The towns and their engineer are working on funding prospects needed to make the project affordable.
- OCWA's annual audit, by Dermody, Burke & Brown is underway. Currently working on the Management Discussion & Analysis portion with C. Marvin.
- The 2020 confidential Board Evaluation forms have been distributed.
- The first 18 days of January projected demand is 32.95 mgd or 3.04 mgd lower than the January 2020 daily demand.
- M. Hooker announced that Geoff Miller was named the Professional Manager of the Year by the Central New York Branch of the American Public Works Association. The Board members extended their congratulations and look forward to attending the virtual award ceremony on February 12, 2021.
- Advised the Board that the proposed joint evaluation of the OCWA and City of Syracuse Water Systems is on hold for now. Discussed a question from the Board on the City of Syracuse water study which the city has currently

tabled following a recent conference call with City of Syracuse Common Council members.

#### IV. WATER PRODUCTION & DELIVERY REPORT

- G. Miller reviewed the Water Production and Delivery report.
- Town projects including Granby and Hastings are ready to start up in the Spring. Potential Granby customers are 240 and Hastings potential customers are 640.
- Experienced a holiday surge of COVID related absences, like most of CNY, with 25 employees out in late December, early January. We were able to shift work around with absences having very little impact on our operations. Currently four employees are out of work.
- Capital work and major maintenance like vault painting was cut back, but instead focused on general maintenance – including hydrant maintenance, completing 98% of the maintenance and inspections.
- A. Weiss reported on capital projects.
- Lake Ontario Water Treatment Plant design is wrapping up.
- Lake Ontario WTP switch gear has arrived following a COVID delay. Delivered in good condition.
- Northern Concourse project is complete with a punch list walk through scheduled. Wash bay is a great addition and aid to maintain vehicles.

#### IV. LEGAL & PUBLIC AFFAIRS REPORT:

- Jeff Brown reviewed the Legal & Public Affairs report.
- Reviewed the annual requirements of the Public Authorities Accountability Act.
- Requested the OCWA Board establish and appoint, for a one-year term, a member to the Ethics Committee. The Ethics Committee is made of three individuals, OCWA Executive Director, OCWA Legal Counsel, and a Board member. Two members offered to represent the Board on the Ethics Committee, current member, B. Doran and M. Luber. B. Doran withdrew offering M. Luber the opportunity to serve.

On motion by K. Gardiner, duly seconded by J. Dougherty, with all Members approving, the Board approved the appointment of M. Luber on the OCWA Ethics Committee.

- Distributed the sign-off page, to Board Members and OCWA management, acknowledging annual review of OCWA's Code of Ethics and Conflict of Interest policies.
- OCWA Purchasing Policy reviewed with no updates for 2021.

On motion by K. Gardiner, duly seconded by J. Dougherty, with all Members approving, the Board approved OCWA's Purchasing Policy.

- Reviewed the distributed list of OCWA's blue-line parcels sold during the period 2015-2021. Confirmed that the monies received from the sale of property goes into the general revenue fund.
- Continue to work on the sale of three Otisco Lake parcels. The NSYDEC has a continuing interest in the large 91-acre parcel and is working to secure funding. executing a contract. Otisco Lake Preservation Association inquired about the remaining two parcels. After being advised the 15.7-acre parcel is appraised at \$370,000 and the 7-acre parcel at \$200,000, they advised they were not interested in purchasing them.

## V. HUMAN RESOURCES/INSURANCE/SAFETY:

- L. Khanzadian reviewed Human Resources/Insurance/Safety report. Reviewed the finalized CSEA collective bargaining agreement that was voted by the CSEA members on January 15, 2021. 100% of the members voted with an outcome of 20 to 6 in favor of the agreement.

On motion by M. Luber, duly seconded by B. Doran, with all Members approving, the Board accepted the CSEA collective bargaining agreement as presented.

- Sexual Harassment online training has been completed by all OCWA employees.
- Temporary flex spending plan amendments, as outlined by Lifetime Benefit Solutions, are under review and a request has been made to temporarily update the Flexible Spending plan amendment.

On motion by B. Doran, duly seconded by K. Gardiner, with all Members approving, the Board approved proceeding with the temporary Plan amendment.

## VI. FISCAL SERVICES

- C. Marvin reviewed the Fiscal Services report and mentioned that the financial reports are preliminary.
- Water revenues were over budget by \$1.2 million (2.6% in 2020 because of residential revenues which were \$1.9 million (7.0%) over budget. The residential variance is due to OCWA customers staying at home due to COVID-19 along with the hot, dry summer. December residential consumption was up by 13% and 9% as compared to 2019 for the two billings during the month. For all of 2020, the average consumption for each residential cycle billed was 1,130 gallons (10%) more than in 2019. The completed January 2021 billing shows consumption up by 5% over 2020.
- Operating Expenses were \$350,000 more than budgeted for the year due to pension, OPEB and legacy cost expenses combined to be \$3.7 million over budget. If not for the items totaling \$3.7 million, operating expenses would have been \$3.4 million under budget.
- Cash receipts for the COVID period of April-December were \$110,000 more than for the same period in 2019. However, because of OCWA's 2021 rate increase, it was expected that cash receipts would total about \$2 million more than what was received. Cash receipts from January 1 through January 19, 2021 totaled \$766,000 (34%) more than the same period in 2020.
- Past due Accounts Receivable are continuing to increase. They are now 125% more than they were at the beginning of April. One industrial customer's balance account for 17% of the amount that is 120+ days past due.
- Days of Cash on hand and Unreserved funds decreased as expected in December. In addition to the pension and worker's compensation payments totaling \$2.4 million, there was \$200,000 in retro pay and associated social security for the Teamsters.
- Informed the Board that one customer accounts for 17% of the amount that is 120 days past due and has not made a payment since

February 2020 and is using a minimal amount of water. Will provide the steps taken to collect past due amount, at the February Board meeting.

- The door hangers placed on accounts more than \$125 past due appear to have had a beneficial impact on both collections and setting up payment arrangements. The Past Due Reminder report indicates the percent collected on significantly past due accounts nearly doubled in the five days that followed the door hanger message as compared to sending an additional mail reminder. On average, the number of new payment arrangements more than doubled since the tagging started.
- Other Water Authorities are also dealing with very large past due amounts using a variety of methods which include calling, initiating contact and offering payment plans and some making no change to their process.

VII. NEW BUSINESS

- 4<sup>th</sup> Quarter Investment Report. Discussed other options for investing.

On motion by K. Gardiner, duly seconded by J. Dougherty, with all Members approving, the Board approved the 4<sup>th</sup> Quarter Investment report.

- OCWA Bond Series Resolution 2021 Revised. Reviewed to include the 2009 Bonds for an additional \$95,000 in savings.

On motion by K. Gardiner, duly seconded by M. Luber, with all Members approving, the Board approved the revised Bond Resolution.

- Authorizing Funding and authorized representatives for Onondaga County Water Authority Oneida Lake North Shore Transmission Water Main Project Resolution as outlined and signed on January 20, 2021.

On motion by Gardiner, duly seconded by M. Luber, with all Members approving, the Board approved the Oneida Lake North Shore Transmission Main Project Resolution as outlined and signed on January 20, 2021.

- Northern Concourse Site and Garage Facility Improvements. Reviewed the close out paving and the necessary add ins with an overall net increase of \$61,515.98.

On motion by M. Luber, duly seconded by J. Dougherty with all Members approving, the Board authorized Change Order #1 in the amount of \$ 61,515.98

- Contractor Main Extension Contract/Job Order – Two Job Order(s) presented for consideration.

On motion by K. Gardiner, duly seconded by J. Dougherty, with all Members approving, the Board authorized M. Hooker to execute the following:

JOB ORDER	Developer/Contractor	Title	Location	Cost
9003951	Camillus Heights, L.P.	Install Fire Service	Camillus Family HSG. State Rte. 174, TCAM	\$6,500.00

9004035	Life Storage, L.P.	8" Ext.	111 Fairgrounds Dr. V/MAN	\$11,000.00
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•Rights of Way – Two Right(s) of Way presented for consideration.  
On motion by J. Dougherty, duly seconded by K. Gardiner, with all Members approving, the Board authorized G. Miller to execute the following:

Project #	With	For
Rights-of-Way		
4200076	The Timbers, LLC	*" Ext. Timberbanks, TLYS
90003936	Lakewood Crest, LLC	Install Fire Service 611 Old Liverpool Rod, TSAL

#### VIII. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

- Continued discussion of Honeywell Water Systems. Town of LaFayette has received over 50% of signatures from Town residents authorizing a town hearing which is scheduled for January 26, 2021. Tully meeting is delayed due to obtaining signatures. Negotiation will begin on establishing an agreement. Attorney Robert Germain will represent the Town of LaFayette. Barton & Loguidice has been hired to assist with obtaining grants and ideas for improvement in the delivery of water to residents in the Cardiff area
- Executive Director recruitment is proceeding with the preparation of an advertisement for AMWA and the AWWA journal for submission by the end of January 2021. Board discussed adding an additional hour to the February Board meeting to review the status of recruitment.

On motion by B. Doran, duly seconded by M. Luber, with all Members approving, the Board adjourned the regular Board meeting at 1:55 pm and moved to Executive Session to discuss the employment history of particular individuals.

On motion by K. Gardiner, duly seconded by J. Dougherty, with all Members approving, the Board adjourned Executive Session at 2:16 pm and returned to the regular Board meeting.

On motion by M. Luber, duly seconded by J. Dougherty, with all Members approving the Board adjourned the regular meeting at 2:18 p.m.

The next Authority meeting is scheduled for February 10, 2021 at Northern Concourse.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Laurie Khanzadian, Recording Secretary

