

The Onondaga County Water Authority met in regular session on July 13, 2021

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

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

I. Call to Order:

- J. Bianchini, Chair, called the meeting to order at 1:11 p.m.
- J. Bianchini gave a brief summary of the recognition ceremony that was conducted on behalf of Michael Hooker for his 27 plus years of service to the Water Authority and water industry in general. Michael was honored with proclamations from the New York State Assembly through Al Stirpe; from County Executive Ryan McMahon; and the Onondaga County Legislature by David Knapp

On motion by B. Doran, duly seconded by J. Dougherty, with all Members approving, the Board approved the regular Minutes of June 23, 2021, as presented.

II. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

- M. Hooker reviewed the Executive Director's report:
- Advised that Metered Ratio improved over May to 86.96%
- Advised that operations and IT completed 7 tank inspections with the drone, with great savings for OCWA.
- Advised we are still behind on meter change outs due to being short two meter repair workers. The positions are about to be filled and the number of monthly change outs should improve in the coming months.
- Advised the Board that Chair Bianchini, J. Brown and he met with New York State Assemblyman Al Stirpe to discuss possible Civil Service enhancements related to hiring IT personnel, especially personnel with a cyber security background.
- Mentioned that he represented OCWA at a Cyber Security Roundtable hosted by Congressman John Katko at Onondaga Community College on July 7th.
- J. Brown advised the Board he plans to meet with Onondaga County Civil Service to discuss issues related to hiring personnel for the 18 positions currently open at OCWA.

III. WATER PRODUCTION & DELIVERY REPORT

- G. Miller reviewed his monthly Water Production and Delivery Report.
- Reported that the late June / early July rainfall has resulted in daily demand falling below the average for this time of year.
- Report that Otisco Lake level increase from 2-inches below the crest of the dam to 6-inches above the crest in the last two days due to heavy rain.

- Advised that June main breaks were average for the month.
- Reported that Town main extension projects are on target for completion this fall.
- Regarding the Sky Ridge / Salt Springs main extension project involving the Towns of Manlius and Sullivan has hit a roadblock. The towns began the petition process for customers in the proposed district. They need support of 51% of the residents, however current support of the project is 24%.
- Future meetings with LaFayette and Tully regarding the Honeywell water systems are on hold while the two towns evaluate their next steps related to the systems.
- Reported that the North Shore Main extension that completes the loop around Oneida Lake was completed and water was flowing to the east end of the system in time for the July 4th holiday weekend.
- Advised that water quality remains very good throughout the system. Otisco Lake is operating normally, and the effluent water of both water plants is excellent.
- Reported that we did have a blue-green algal bloom on Otisco Lake that dissipated and never impacted the plant.

IV. CAPITAL PROJECTS:

- A. Weiss reported on capital projects
- Reported that he is working with GHD on the LOWTP improvement bid packages. Re-bid of the project will be completed this coming fall and based on his conversations with various contractors and vendors he is expecting favorable bid results.
- The Lake Ontario electrical improvement project, which included the installation of generators for the facilities, is nearly wrapped up. We anticipate signing off for final completion within the week and expect that there will be a change order for the August Board meeting and expects it to be a credit for OCWA.
- The Farrell piping replacement project will be going out for bids very soon.
- O'Connell Electric completed the electric duct bank relocation project uneventfully.
- The concrete floor of the first of two 6 MG concrete tanks being built at the Fairmount reservoir site was placed this past weekend. Work started at sunrise and the work was completed by 1:30 p.m. Only one truck load of concrete was rejected. Everything went smoothly and we did not receive any calls from the Town or the neighbors. Also reported that the west end of the site has been released to the contractor and they are hopeful that the floor for the second tank could be placed this coming fall. The walls for the first tank have been built and the cranes needed for erection are expected the last week of July with the walls being lifted into place shortly thereafter.

- Advised the Board about the rejection of some of the pipe delivered to the Fairmount site. At least 14 sections of 30-inch pipe have been sent back and are being replaced by the manufacturer. Hopefully this issue is now behind us.
- Reported that the Nine Mile Creek pipe bridge replacement project is underway. Also reported that, due to recent rain, the creek level rose six feet in the last two days.

V. LEGAL AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS REPORT:

- J. Brown distributed a news article on Lake Ontario entitled: "After record-high years, Lake Ontario's water levels are way down. May be too low?".
- Chair Bianchini asked about the 7-acre parcel sale on the Otisco Lake and the prospect of the high bidder backing out of the deal. J. Brown advised that we have a 20% deposit that we would keep, less the auctioneer's fee and then we would move to sell the property to the second highest bidder.
- Chair Bianchini inquired about the status of the Farrell pipe issue and the viability of the pipe. A. Weiss advised that we cannot easily inspect but we do monitor and would notice a large leak. Also reminded the Board that the by-pass piping project was completed so a viable back-up plan is in place.

VI. HUMAN RESOURCES/INSURANCE/SAFETY:

- J. Brown distributed a list of current positions open at OCWA. Advised that some are being evaluated with respect to being filled or not. For instance, accounting is reviewing whether not to fill the Buyer II position. C. Marvin advised the department picked up one extra employee due to the MWB consolidation and that individual retired and as such the position may not need to be filled.

VII. FISCAL SERVICES:

- C. Marvin reviewed the June financial results.
- Water revenues for the month were up \$300,000 over budget and we are now \$104,000 over budget for the year.
- Total expenses for June were down \$247,000 after several clean up adjustments were made during the month. For instance, the cost of inspection related costs for the new Granby water service area were expensed. Also, \$80,000 of legal fees related to the Farrell pipe issue were expensed and \$130,000 of labor and fees related to the lead service line project were expensed for the month. Offsetting the increases was a decrease in MWB legacy costs for the year. We accrued \$290,000 based on the County's projection, however when the bill came in it was for \$13,000 as the ad valorem revenues were higher and the debt service and other costs were lower than projected.

VIII. QUARTERLY INVESTMENT REPORT:

- C. Marvin distributed the second quarter investment report for the Board's review.
- C. Marvin advised that available funds were down by \$1.4 million from the beginning of the year, as construction funds decreased by \$6 million, partially offset by increases in the Revenue, Renewal & Replacement fund and the debt service fund.
- Treasurer Gardiner noted that OCWA earned \$1,887 on \$60 million dollars and noted how low (0.04%) interest rates are at this time.

On a motion by B. Doran, duly seconded by M. Luber, with all Board Members approving, the Board accepted Mr. Marvin's quarterly investment report

New Business: None

Old Business: None

On motion by B. Doran, duly seconded by M. Luber, with all Board members approving, the Board adjourned the regular meeting and moved to Executive Session at 2:05 PM to discuss matters leading to the appointment of a particular person in the Administration Department and the employment history of particular individuals in the Distribution Maintenance Department.

The Board returned to Regular Session at 2:47 p.m.

On motion by J. Bianchini, duly seconded by B. Doran, with all Board members approving, the Board accepted the request of Michael E. Hooker to rescind the renaming of the Otisco Lake Water Treatment Plant and instead the Board hereby names the training facility at the Northern Concourse headquarters the "Michael E. Hooker Training Center."

On motion by K. Gardiner, duly seconded by B. Doran, with all Members approving, the Board adjourned the Regular Meeting at 2:49 p.m.

The next Authority meeting is scheduled for Wednesday - August 18, 2021, 12:30 p.m. at the Otisco Lake Water Treatment Plant.

Respectfully Submitted,

Laurie Khazadian, Recording Secretary