

APPROVED

The Onondaga County Water Authority met in regular session on August 17, 2022, at the Otisco Water Treatment Plant in Marcellus, NY.

Members of the Authority present were J. Bianchini, K. Gardiner, B. Doran, A. Geiss, and D. Wickman.

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

I. Call to Order:

- J. Bianchini, Chairman called the meeting to order at 12:30 p.m.

J. Brown introduced and welcomed Jennie Stowell, recently hired Director of Human Resources and Megan Thomas, recently hired General Counsel & Director of Public Education. Both are scheduled to begin working full-time at OCWA on September 12, 2022. Both women bring significant work experience to OCWA.

On Motion by K. Gardiner, duly seconded by T. Geiss, with all Members approving, the Board approved the regular minutes of July 12, 2022, as presented.

J. Bianchini thanked the Otisco WTP staff, P. Murphy and C. McQueeney as well as seasonal aides for the review of watershed work this summer. The Board thanked all involved for their tremendous efforts.

J. Bianchini thanked Laurie Khanzadian, for her 16 years of service to the Onondaga County Water Authority as Manager, Human Resources and Insurance and extended, from the OCWA Board, a proclamation honoring her for her years of distinguished service, including service as Secretary to the Board.

J. Bianchini highlighted proclamations recently prepared for two former Board Members, John Dougherty and Michael Luber, thanking and honoring them for their significant service and guidance provided to OCWA.

II. Executive Director

- Updated the Board on a recent meeting with Onondaga County to discuss CDL training services for OCWA employees.
- Reported two COVID cases since the July Board meeting. Thankfully, OCWA is not seeing a surge of cases.
- Discussed the option of offering video conferencing to Board members for Board meeting attendance. If this is adopted, we are required to live stream and post. Will provide a draft policy for further discussion at the next Board meeting.
- Mentioned the Department of Homeland Security's upcoming cybersecurity risk and vulnerability assessment starting later this

month. This is a free assessment arranged by our IT staff with an outbrief tentatively scheduled for September 9.

- Reviewed KPI's relating to the following three attributes of effectively managed water sector utilities:
 - Financial Viability
 - Water Resource Sustainability and
 - Infrastructure Strategy & Performance
- Discussed lead service remediation and the rules and challenges. J. Brown will provide additional information at the September Board meeting.
- Discussed water main breaks and the relationship of the weather and quality and condition of aging pipe material.
- Distributed and reviewed the proposed final settlement of proceeds related to the closeout of the Northern Concourse fire claim. Discussed the remaining funds and the pending Farrell Pump Station pipe project. to accept final payment of \$1,028,878.25 which is expected to close out all insurance claims involving the fire at Northern Concourse on October 8, 2021.

On motion by K. Gardiner, duly seconded by D. Wickman, with all Members approving, to accept final payment of \$1,028,878.25 which is expected to close out all insurance claims involving the fire at Northern Concourse on October 8, 2021.

- Discussion of nine element watershed protection plan proposed for Otisco Lake. Onondaga County is submitting a grant application and is looking for in-kind services and funding to meet the funding match requirement of the grant. Central New York Regional Planning will oversee implementation of the plan. Julie Abbott and Michael Plochocki have contacted us to discuss.

III. WATER PRODUCTION & DELIVERY

1. Water Production-July Daily Water Production (MGD)

	<u>Otisco WTP</u>	<u>Ontario WTP</u>	<u>Syr</u>	<u>Total</u>
Max. Day	18.88	27.02	1.17	46.50
Avg Day	17.85	21.13	1.17	40.26
Avg July 2021	17.47	18.71	0.93	39.34
Avg July 2020				41.35
Avg July 2019				41.24

There was a steady summertime demand throughout the month with no significant peak days. June demand was down and the warm weather in July helped to return to more normal summertime usage.

2. **Lake Levels:** Otisco Lake level is -16" as of August 12th which is about 3" below average. We have one gate open 1". The NYSDEC has issued a drought

watch for portions of Central New York and the Finger Lakes. While the Otisco Lake level is slightly below average we don't see any issues at this time.

3. Water Main Breaks: The number of watermain breaks was slightly above average for this time of year.

4. Metered Ratio: Metered ratio update: 85.73%. We are pleased with where we are and expect the ratio to increase slightly as quarterly meter sales catch up with delivered water.

5. Water Quality: Finished water quality from both treatment plants continues to be excellent. We had customer complaints of musty, earthy odors and taste of the water we purchase from the City of Syracuse. The City had the same complaint from several of its customers. The water tested fine and neither the City nor the Onondaga County Health Department could determine the reason for the issues.

IV. ENGINEERING

- The Fairmount tank concrete slabs have been inspected and tested and a repair procedure agreed upon.
- Lake Ontario Water Treatment Plant – Successfully tapped the 54-inch raw water line for the installation of an inspection port. The pipe was found to be in generally good condition.
- During the inspection of filter number six we identified a few deficiencies in a couple areas of the grout between underdrain tiles.
- Farrell pump station improvements, which includes the replacement of two pumps, is 60% complete. We are reviewing documents provided by GHD Engineers.
- Work on the Salt Springs tank is progressing extremely well with high quality work from the contractor, Preload.

V. LEGAL

- Managing several routine legal matters.

VI. HUMAN RESOURCES & INSURANCE

- Mentioned key HR positions that have been filled, to include HR's part-time assistant and The Human Resources Director. Overall, the recruitment chart reflects considerable movement in filling positions.
- Mentioned the newest recruitment initiative of participating through MACNY in a booth at the NYS Fair. This will incorporate OCWA managers in staffing our time commitments.
- Mentioned the upcoming meeting with Haylor Freyer & Coon as we transition our Workers Compensation coverage.

VII. FISCAL

1. Water Revenues are \$241,000 less than budgeted for the month and about \$76,000 or 0.2% less than budgeted for the year to date. Residential Revenue is \$202,000 (6.9%) less than budgeted for the month. The meter readings for those revenues likely took place from mid-June to mid-July and didn't take into account the hot dry weather in mid to late July. Municipal accounts for July were read August 1st and are \$37,000 more than budgeted for the month. We look at Municipal Revenues as a possible indicator of future Residential Revenue, but on the other hand OCWA's water production for July was not extraordinarily high.
2. Investment Income shows a \$28,000 loss for the month. PFM Asset Management sold some low yield T-Bills at a loss in order to invest the proceeds at significantly higher rates.
3. Net Operating Expenses are \$151,000 less than budgeted for the month. There are a number of positive variances – Labor, Purchased Water, Outside Contractors, but as has been the case all year Electric and Transportation Costs are significantly over budget. It seems that Chemical costs are going to join those two as being over budget on a regular basis.
4. 120 days+ past due accounts receivable decreased by \$37,795 or 5.2% for the month and have now decreased by \$337,119 or 32.8% since the beginning of the year. In August, the 120+ days past due amount has decreased by \$19,000 or 2.8%.
5. We have received \$7,350 from the LIWAP (Low Income Household Water Assistance Program) programs so far in August and have now received a total of \$94,000 from the program.
6. OCWA likely saved an estimated \$498,000 per year or \$14.9 million over the term of the 2022 bonds by issuing them in January as opposed to waiting until the rates increased to 4.3%.
7. Briefly discussed the solar panels at the Ontario WTP.

VIII. NEW BUSINESS

- Two (2) Job Order Contracts presented for consideration. On motion by K. Gardiner, duly seconded by B. Doran, with all Members approving, the Board authorized J. Brown to exec:

Project #	Developer/Contractor	Job Title (new accounts)	Location	Project Cost
9004097	Mill Street Ventures LLC	Relocate Hydrant #1915	Mill ST. & Clinton St V.of Fayetteville	\$5750.00
9004100	Old Towne Estates LLC	8" Ext. (Lots 8, 9, 64)	Town of Onondaga	\$17,500.00

- One Rights-Of-Way(s) presented for consideration. On motion by K. Gardiner, duly seconded by B. Doran, with all Members approving, the Board authorized G. Miller to execute the following:

Project #	With	For
9004094	Stewart Hancock Partners, LLC	Dunn Tire, Stewart Drive, T. Cicero

- A. Weiss provided a review of Solvay Pump Station Project Resolution – SEQR. Requested a motion to approve the outlined Solvay pumping station replacement resolution

On motion by A. Geiss, duly seconded by D. Wickman, with all Members approving, the Board authorized a Type II SEQR action, as outlined in the resolution for the Solvay pumping station project.

On motion by A. Geiss, duly seconded by B. Doran, with all Members approving, the Board approved the resolution authorizing Management to pursue grant funding from the NYS Water Infrastructure Improvement Act (WIIA) and NYS Intermunicipal Water Infrastructure Grants Program (IMG) Drinking Water and expend up to \$2 M for payment of the remainder as outlined for the Solvay pumping station replacement project.

IX. Unfinished Business

- Long Range Budget Planning – Continued discussion and review of the 20-year O & M and capital plans.

On motion by D. Wickman, duly seconded by K. Gardiner, with all Members approving, the Board approved the 20-year O & M budget and capital plans as presented by management with the understanding that the plans are based upon the best available current information which will change over time and is subject to update. outlined and reviewed and are subject to update.

On motion by B. Doran, duly seconded by A. Geiss, with all Members approving, the Board adjourned the regular Board meeting at 2:28 p.m. and moved to Executive session to discuss the financial history of particular individuals.

On motion by K. Gardiner, duly seconded by A. Geiss, with all Members approving the Board adjourned Executive Session at 3:08 p.m. and returned to the regular Board meeting.

On motion by A. Geiss, duly seconded by K. Gardiner, with all Members approving, the Board authorized the hiring of Jennifer Stowell as Director of Human Resources effective September 12, 2022, at the salary outlined in executive session and the execution of a five-year contract.

On motion by A. Geiss, duly seconded by K. Gardiner, with all Members approving, the Board authorized the hiring of Megan Thomas, Esq. as General Counsel and Director of Public Education effective September 12, 2022, at the salary discussed in executive session and the execution of a five-year contract.

On motion by B. Doran, duly seconded by D. Wickman, with all Members approving, the Board authorized the salary adjustments discussed in executive session, effective September 1, 2022.

On motion by D. Wickman, duly seconded by K. Gardner, with all Members approving, the Board authorized the salary increase discussed in executive session, effective January 1, 2023.

On motion by B. Doran, duly seconded by A. Geiss, with all Members approving, the Board adjourned the meeting at 3:10 p.m.

The next Authority meeting is scheduled for September 21, 2022, at the Ontario Water Treatment Plant to begin at 12:30 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Laurie Khanzadian,
Recording Secretary