

**Onondaga County Water Authority  
Regular Monthly Authority Meeting**  
200 Northern Concourse, Syracuse NY  
Wednesday January 18, 2023 @12:30 p.m.

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

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

Guest: T. Latino-Gerlock

1. A. Geiss led the Pledge of Allegiance.
2. J. Bianchini, Chairman called the meeting to order at 12:30 p.m.
3. On a motion by A. Geiss duly seconded by K. Gardiner, with all Members present approving, the Authority approved the regular meeting minutes of December 16, 2022 as presented.

## **B. Reports**

### **1. Executive Director's Report**

- J. Brown introduced Tiffany Latino-Gerlock. She will be joining OCWA on January 24<sup>th</sup> as the Director of Communications and Government Affairs.
- Conversations have continued with Micron. Preliminary information has been provided by Micron but we are waiting for responses to our questions submitted in December.
- J. Brown reviewed 2023 organizational goals.
- Reviewed KPI's relating to the following three attributes of Effective Utility Management:
  - Product Quality
  - Enterprise Resiliency
  - Employee & Leadership Development
- COVID cases on are on the increase.
- Cory McCarthy, Water Systems Construction Engineer, was selected as Safety Award winner for the Quarter. Deb Owens, Civil Engineer, was selected as the for Employee of the Quarter.
- John Chamberlin, GIS Specialist, was awarded the Employee of the Year for 2022 and Cory McCarthy, Water Systems Construction Engineer, the Safety Employee of the Year. Congratulations to those nominated.
- A Town Hall meeting is scheduled for January 26<sup>th</sup> at 2 p.m. in the Michael E. Hooker Training Room.
- J. Brown, M. Thomas and T. Latino-Gerlock will be attending The "one water" Lobby Day in Albany on January 25<sup>th</sup>.

- Earlier this month, J. Brown met with the President of Crucible Industries to discuss the status of current water needs.

## **2. Water Production and Delivery**

- Water Production: November Daily Water Production (MGD) 33.96  
Avg Nov 2021 33.80
- Lake Levels: Otisco Lake level is -4.5” as of January 9th which is about 13” above average for this time of year. The warm weather melted the snow in the watershed and along with the rain we have received has brought the lake level up over the past couple of weeks. Lake Ontario is right at the long -term monthly average. Neither lake level is causing any operational issues.
- Water Main Breaks: The number of watermain breaks was above average for December. The changing weather conditions from below normal to above normal temperatures has caused issues with our cast iron mains. The repair crews were overly busy over the holidays including repairing a break to our Liverpool transmission main that broke just a few minutes into the New Year. A quick response by the team resulted in no disruption of service to our customers.
- Metered Ratio: Our metered ratio continues to be above our goal of 85%. We finished the year at 85.45%.
- Water Quality: Finished water quality from both treatment plants continues to be excellent.
- Lead and Copper Rule: We submitted additional data on our corrosion control practices to the NYSDOH as they requested. Data requested and submitted included water quality parameter sampling results from 2016, 2019, and 2020. We emphasized in our letter that the success of our corrosion control practices is evident by our lead and copper sampling results which are below the NYSDOH/USEPA action limits.
- Health Department Review Meeting: We held our annual review meeting with our five county health departments and NYS Health Department on December 16, 2022. The main topics of review were: sample results, corrosion control, emergency planning, operational activities, and capital improvements. No issues were identified, and the meeting was a success.

## **3. Engineering**

- A. Weiss reported that construction at the LOWTP is going well. Lead times for materials continue to be the biggest hurdle. The system will be shut down on January 19<sup>th</sup> for a scheduled valve replacement.
- Fairmount Reservoir Project – The process of filling the west tank will begin this week.

A request was submitted to the contractor for revised site work and stormwater improvements. The price came in at \$1.3m, which was significantly higher than anticipated. The proposed improvements will be on pause until the current project is complete.

- Salt Springs Tank – The tank was filled and meets the leak standards. Water sampling did detect VOCs over the acceptable limit. The contractor is preparing a proposal to resolve the issue.
- A. Geiss asked about ongoing conversations with Village of Parish officials. A. Weiss indicated that they continue to express interest in water service, but conversations are very preliminary.
- Hastings Service – The water tank has some visible exterior coating issues that must be resolved before OCWA can accept the infrastructure.

#### **4. Legal, Public Education and Government Affairs**

- M. Thomas briefed Authority members on the Code of Ethics and Conflict of Interest policies.  
On motion by K. Gardiner, duly seconded by A. Geiss, with all Members present approving, D. Wickham was appointed the Ethics Committee member.
- M. Thomas reviewed goals for legal and public education for 2023.
- HomeServe has expressed an interest in providing materials for the OCWA website. Conversations are ongoing and we anticipate HomeServe having a pull down menu option on the OCWA site.
- The cyber insurance renewal is complete and resulted in more comprehensive coverage.
- The State appraisal of our 95 acre Otisco Lake parcel is in process.
- M. Thomas stated that a review of Public Authority law requirements is in progress. The PARIS report should be available next month.
- Outreach to local schools continues to generate interest.

B. Doran asked about the educational outreach that Micron is facilitating and if there is an opportunity for a partnership with OCWA. M. Thomas noted that she is considering the best avenues to partner with Micron as it relates to public education.

#### **5. Human Resources**

- J. Stowell reviewed the 2023 goals for Human Resources and Liability Insurance.
- The HR department hosted their first Open Hours. Open hours are intended to be a dedicated time for OCWA staff to meet with HR representatives. The first scheduled Open Hours resulted in eight employee meetings.
- As a result of the part time aide retiring, two part time positions are being combined into one full time Personnel Aide. The position will be dedicated to certificate of insurance records management, supporting the Director of Safety and Training, and supporting the Director of Human Resources.

- J. Stowell and K. Caramanna met with Haylor, Freyer & Coon and NYSIF to discuss the transition to the workers compensation carrier.

A conversation ensued about insurance renewals. The Executive team will continue to negotiate for the best pricing structure and policies that reflect the risk tolerances of OCWA.

- The Perfect Attendance Luncheon is scheduled for March 30<sup>th</sup> at the Basil Leaf restaurant.

B. Doran departed at 2:30 p.m.

**6. Fiscal Services**

- Pre-audit statements will be sent the Authority Members with the report on the variances.
- Water Revenues are \$92,000 or .2% more than budgeted for the year.
- The annual GASB entries for retirement and OPEB have been made and both show credits to expense of over \$1 million. Neither of the entries affects cash, but they will both positively affect net revenue.
- Conversations ensued about reserve balances and non-revenue income. K. Gardiner asked about providing additional detail in the upcoming Management Discussion and Analysis (MDA) report.

**C. New Business**

**1. Quarterly Investment Statement**

- On a motion made by K. Gardiner, duly seconded by A. Geiss, with all Members present approving, the Quarterly Investment Statement was accepted as presented.

**2. Lease Capitalization Policy**

- On a motion made by K. Gardiner, duly seconded by A. Geiss, with all Members present approving, the policy for the Capitalization of Lease was approved.

**3. Rights of Way, Main Extension Contracts, & Job Orders**

- One (1) contractor main extension and one (1) job order contract. On motion by A. Geiss, duly seconded by K. Gardiner, with all Members present approving, the Authority authorized J. Brown to execute the following:

Project No.	Developer/Contractor	Job Title	Location	Project Cost
4220095	Mary Sue Hanus	12" Ext. to 5117 Duguid Rd.	Duguid Rd T. of Man	\$26,200.00

9004125	Syr. Chinese Christian Church	Install Hydrant (1)	8020 E. Genesee St. T. of Manlius	\$9,950.00
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**2. Expenditure Authorizations**

- Were signed without issue.

**D. Unfinished Business**

**1. Review of Authority Policy for Reserve Balances**

- A conversation ensued regarding the reserve balances. On a motion by K. Gardiner, duly seconded by A. Geiss, with all Authority Members present approving, the revised policy for reserve balances was approved as presented.

**2. Standardized Products & Sole Source Providers – 2023**

- The 2023 list of standardized products and sole source providers was submitted and on a motion by K. Gardiner, duly seconded by A. Geiss, with all Authority Members present approving, was approved as presented.
- On a motion by K. Gardiner, duly seconded by A. Geiss, with all Members present approving, the Authority moved the February meeting from February 15<sup>th</sup> to February 13<sup>th</sup>.

**E. Bids**

**1. Bid #B-2022**

- A. Weiss advised that the bids exceeded budget. He proposed that that the tank repair and repaint for the Volney Airport be rebid with the other Volney tank next year. On a motion by K. Gardiner, duly seconded by A. Geiss, with all Members present approving, all bids were rejected.

**Executive Session**

- On a motion by K. Gardiner, duly seconded by A. Geiss, with all Members present approving, the Authority adjourned the regular meeting at 3 p.m. and moved to Executive session to discuss the employment history of particular individuals.
- On a motion by K. Gardiner, duly seconded by A. Geiss, with all Members present approving, the Authority, adjourned Executive session at 3:10 p.m., and returned to the regular meeting.
- On a motion by K. Gardiner, duly seconded by A. Geiss, with all Members present approving, the Authority agreed to extend the term of employment agreement of Geoffrey Miller until December 31, 2027.
- On a motion by K. Gardiner, duly seconded by A. Geiss, with all Members present approving, the Authority adjourned the meeting at 3:12 p.m.

The next regular meeting of the Authority is scheduled for February 13, 2023 at 12:30 p.m., 200 Northern Concourse, Syracuse.

Respectfully submitted,

Jennie S. Stowell

Recording Secretary