

**Onondaga County Water Authority  
Regular Monthly Authority Meeting**  
200 Northern Concourse, Syracuse  
Friday December 15, 2023 @ 10:00 a.m.

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

Others present: J. Brown, C. Marvin, J. Stowell, and M. Thomas.

Public: Glenn Coin, from Syracuse.com

**A. Opening business**

1. The Pledge of Allegiance.
2. K. Gardiner, Chairman called the meeting to order at 10:03 a.m.

K. Gardiner presented C. Marvin with a Proclamation for his 32 years of service to the Authority.

3. On a motion by A. Geiss seconded by J. Bianchini, with all Members in favor, the Authority approved the meeting minutes of November 18, 2023 with the correction of a typographical error on page 2 paragraph 1, last sentence.

**4. Key staff takeaways**

**a) Executive Director**

J. Brown stated that he and M. Thomas are in conversations with Micron regarding the preliminary water services agreement.

**b) Water Production and Quality**

G. Miller was at the annual Health Department meeting. J. Brown presented on his behalf the following information:

As of December 14<sup>th</sup> we have inspected 14,025 hydrants out of 14,066 (or 99.7%) this year. Some of the remaining ones are blow-off or ones we use for tank and pump station operations only – so we are as close to 100% as we can be. Water temperatures in the lakes have dropped significantly and the lakes have been calm and providing high quality raw water and in turn high quality finished water. The colder water also helps with maintaining higher chlorine residuals in the distribution system: 89% of samples above 0.20 and the others are between 0.10 and 0.20 . DBP sample results just came in and we are well within the regulatory limits and below our more stringent internal goals. Metered ratio is just about 87% above our goal of 85%.

**c) Human Resources/Insurance**

J. Stowell reported that the cyber insurance renewal came in at \$8,000 below 2023 premium. With these savings, we are able to increase the coverage limits to \$3m.

**d) Legal/Public Education/Communications**

M. Thomas noted that the MOST exhibit just completed its final week. Last week, Tiffany LG. handed out crayons with OCWA stickers as a thank you to the MOST community for having us.

On Saturday, November 18, 2023, M. Thomas presented to a group of at least 40 community members as part of the Technology Alliance of Central New York's ("TACNY") Junior Café series at the MOST. The group consisted of local students, families, and community members on what OCWA is and how drinking water is delivered to our customers' homes. The group was enthusiastic about learning about OCWA. Two individuals in the audience even followed-up, requesting presentations for other groups.

Authority members will be receiving an email from Bond Schoeneck & King to accomplish online New York State mandated annual harassment training.

**e) Finance**

C. Marvin advised the Board that a general journal entry was made to account for the discount on the treasury bonds. This increases interest income but there is no effect on cash.

**f) Engineering**

J. Brown presented the engineering key takeaways for A. Weiss, who was at the annual Department of Health meeting.

The valve issues at the Ontario Water Treatment Plant appear to have been resolved.

The source of the leaks in the roof was determined and a plan of repair is underway.

**B. Executive Session**

- On a motion made by B. Doran, duly seconded by D. Wickman, with all Members approving, the Authority adjourned the regular meeting at 10:20 a.m. and moved to Executive session to discuss matters leading to the employment of a particular individual and collective bargaining negotiations.
- On a motion made by B. Doran, duly seconded by D. Wickman, with all Members approving, the Authority adjourned Executive session at 10:43 a.m. and returned to the regular meeting.
- On a motion by J. Bianchini, duly seconded by B. Doran, with all Members approving, the Authority agreed to permit an exemption to the Anti-Nepotism policy and approve Rocco Scarcella Jr. to transfer to the Meter Repair Department.

**C. Bids**

**1) Bids #20-25 -**

- On a motion by A. Geiss, duly seconded by D. Wickman, with all Members approving, bids to be awarded as follows:

Bid Number	Bid Type	Bid awarded to		Intended Purchase
		Ti Sales	Core and Main	
20	Touch read water meters 5/8" through 1"	\$637,002.30		\$20,000
21	Omni, compound, fireline, large turbine		\$280,833.54	\$280,000
22	Wired radio read meter		\$411,780.44	\$20,000
23	Radio reads with integrated e-coder	\$694,618.14		\$20,000
24	Neptune mach 1- ultrasonic meter 5/8" to 1"	\$1,717,327.50		\$1,400,000
25	Sensus iPerl smart meter 5/8" to 1"		\$2,806,662.50	\$1,250,000

**D. Unfinished Business**

**1) Accounts receivable collections overview**

C. Marvin presented a summary of delinquent accounts and the collections process. Discussions ensued regarding options to reduce the outstanding receivables. K. Gardiner asked S. Roth to evaluate hiring a contractor that specializes in collections to handle our most challenging accounts and consider taking deposits when opening an account.

**2) 2024 Authority meeting schedule**

The Authority Members reviewed the schedule and accepted as presented.

**E. New Business**

**1) Expenditure authorizations**

Expenditures were authorized.

**2) Budget & fiscal policies**

- On a motion by J. Bianchini, duly seconded by B. Doran, with all Members approving, the Authority approved the policies as presented.

### **3) Procurement policy**

The Authority discussed in detail changes to the procurement policy. M. Thomas noted that the enabling statute for the Authority dictates some of the language.

- On a motion by D. Wickman, duly seconded by J. Bianchini, with all Members approving, the policy was accepted with the following change to IV Other Procurement Requirements, B. Change Orders -

*OCWA may, if it determines it to be in the best interest of the Authority and OCWA customers, issue a change order for a vendor to increase the vendor's scope of work on a particular project. No additional work can commence or funds may be expended until the change order is approved by the vendor and OCWA. Any change order exceeding fifty per centum (50%) of the original project price or \$100,000, whichever is less, must also be approved by the Authority Board*

### **4) Standardization products & sole source providers**

M. Thomas asked the Authority Members to consider approving the policy for a one-month period. She will be presenting an updated policy and vendor list in January.

- On a motion by J. Bianchini, duly seconded by A. Geiss, with all Members approving, the Authority approved the standardization products and sole source providers policy and list until the January 2024 meeting.

A. Geiss asked about the purchase of a “crash truck”. J. Brown explained that this is truck that is required by OSHA and is intended to reduce worksite accidents.

## **F. Reports**

### **1) Executive Director**

J. Brown updated the Authority Members on the repairs at Terminal. The Terminal piping repairs are focused on the 54” inlet line. Greater than expected joint deflection and an unforeseen lack of additional restraint rings in the existing piping required the ordering of additional materials (by OCWA) which are expected in the 3rd week of December. Once on-site, our contractor can complete the work.

Key performance indicators relating to the following four attributes of Effective Utility Management were reviewed:

- Customer Satisfaction
- Community Sustainability
- Operational Optimization
- Stakeholder Understanding and Support

### **2) Chairman**

K. Gardiner briefed Authority Members on the Metropolitan Water Board (MWB) meeting held on December 7, 2023. J. Brown presented to the MWB members concerns regarding billing and credits. The Board unanimously agreed to OCWA's request to amend the rate MWB/OCWA charges the City of Syracuse for water off the Central Branch to be consistent with the rate the City of Syracuse charges OCWA for water off the Southern Branch.

K. Gardiner inquired about the timeline for the RFP for audit services. S. Roth will keep the Authority apprised of the status.

A conversation ensued regarding the presentations at the beginning of the meeting. It was agreed that presentations and KPI's will be begin at noon.

- On a motion by A. Geiss, duly seconded by D. Wickman, with all Members present approving, the Authority adjourned the meeting at 11:58 p.m.

The next regular meeting of the Authority is scheduled for January 17, 2024 at 12:00 p.m., at 200 Northern Concourse, Syracuse.

Respectfully submitted,

Jennie S. Stowell  
Recording Secretary