

Onondaga County Water Authority
Regular Monthly Authority Meeting
200 Northern Concourse, Syracuse
Wednesday February 14, 2024 @ 12:00 p.m.

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

Others present: J. Brown, G. Miller, S. Roth, J. Stowell, M. Thomas and A. Weiss.

A. Opening business

1. The Pledge of Allegiance.
2. K. Gardiner, Chairman called the meeting to order at 12:07 p.m.
3. On a motion by D. Wickman seconded by A. Geiss, with all Members present in favor, the Authority approved the meeting minutes of January 17, 2024, with a typographical error correction on page 4.

B. Executive Session

- On a motion made by J. Bianchini, duly seconded by A. Geiss, with all Members present approving, the Authority adjourned the regular meeting at 12:08 p.m. and moved to Executive session to discuss collective bargaining negotiations and the financial history of particular individuals.
- On a motion made by J. Bianchini, duly seconded by D. Wickman, with all Members present approving, the Authority adjourned Executive session at 1:08 p.m. and returned to the regular meeting.

D. Bids

- 1) Bid #B-2024 -
 - On a motion by D. Wickman, duly seconded by A. Geiss, with all Members present approving, the bid was awarded to the lowest responsible bidder John R. Dudley Construction.
- 2) Bid #C-2024
 - On a motion by D. Wickman, duly seconded by A. Geiss, with K. Gardiner abstaining and all other Members present approving, the Authority awarded the bid to the lowest responsible bidder, J.K. Tobin Construction Co. Inc.

E. Unfinished Business

1) Sole source vendors

- On a motion by A. Geiss, duly seconded by D. Wickman, with all Members present approving, the Authority approved the list of sole source vendors as presented.

2) Strategic planning update

J. Brown reminded the Authority members that the strategic planning workshop is scheduled for March 1st.

F. New Business

1) Expenditure authorizations

- Expenditures were authorized.

2) Main extension & job order

- One (1) Main Extension.* On a motion by A. Geiss, duly seconded by D. Wickman, with all Members present approving, the Authority authorized J. Brown to execute the following:

Job No.	With	Job Title	Proj. Cost
4240032	JDK Development	8" Extension	\$126,183.75

3) Annual review of reserve policy

S. Roth presented the reserve policy with a minor update. A conversation ensued regarding targeted balances.

- On a motion by J. Bianchini, duly seconded by A. Geiss, with all Members present approving, the Authority approved the reserve policy as presented.

G. Staff key takeaways

1) Executive Director

J. Brown shared with the Authority members a core value example regarding a new hire. The new hire advised that his initial experiences with OCWA have been very positive and exceeded his experience with his previous employer.

J. Brown and K. Gardiner meet with new Onondaga County Legislature Chairman Tim Burtis to discuss various current issues including the proposed MWB (Metropolitan Water Board) rate increase. The legislature anticipates a vote in the next few months.

2) Water Production and Quality

G. Miller discussed the recent increase in water main breaks. The up and down temperature swings and lack of snow cover on the ground has caused the number of watermain breaks to be about 10% above average for

January. The number of breaks has kept the leak detection and distribution maintenance crews very busy, but they have kept up with the work.

3) Engineering

A. Weiss reported that OCWA received grant awards for Wolf Street and Park Street Pump Stations to install permanent backup power generators. The combined awards total \$1,349,100, which represents a 90% federal cost share. We are awaiting a response on the submitted Lakeland Pump Station generator.

4) Human Resources/Insurance

J. Stowell shared the 2023 HelpPeople, employee assistance program, statistics. The program has proven to be a positive benefit to staff and families. The annual contract will be renewed for 2024.

5) Legal/Public Education/Communications

M. Thomas noted that conversations continue with the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation regarding the purchase of 90-acre parcel in Otisco.

HomeServe has submitted a request to OCWA for a \$0.50 increase to the monthly premium charged to rate payers who have elected to the policy.

- On a motion by J. Bianchini, duly seconded by D. Wickman, with all Members present approving, the Authority approved the monthly rate increase of \$0.50, presented by HomeServe effective July 1, 2024.

J. Bianchini inquired about the status of a pending class action settlement.

M. Thomas provided a brief update.

6) Finance

S. Roth reported that Dermody, Burke and Brown finished its field work for the annual audit in early February and will attend the March Board meeting to review the results. The accounting department will be working on the management discussion & analysis in the coming weeks.

S. Roth noted that there will be a variance for the health insurance budget amount throughout 2024.

7) Executive Director

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

- Financial Viability
- Water Resource Sustainability
- Infrastructure Strategy and Performance

Conservation ensured regarding financing of future infrastructure improvements.

- On a motion by A. Geiss, duly seconded by J. Bianchini, with all Members present approving, the Authority adjourned the meeting at 2:44 p.m.

The next regular meeting of the Authority is scheduled for March 13, 2024 at 12:00 p.m., at 200 Northern Concourse, Syracuse.

Respectfully submitted,

Jennie S. Stowell
Recording Secretary