

Onondaga County Water Authority
Regular Monthly Authority Meeting
200 Northern Concourse, Syracuse
Wednesday January 17, 2024 @ 12:00 p.m.

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

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 12:05 p.m.
3. On a motion by J. Bianchini seconded by A. Geiss, with all Members present in favor, the Authority approved the meeting minutes of December 15, 2023 as presented.

4. Key staff takeaways

a) Executive Director

J. Brown stated that conversations are ongoing with Micron regarding the preliminary water services agreement. He noted that Micron is seeking CHIPs funding through the U.S. Department of Commerce.

b) Water Production and Quality

G. Miller discussed the windstorm of January 9-10, 2024 that resulted in some minor damage to one of our Volney pump stations and electrical power being disrupted at four pump stations, three water tanks, the Otisco Lake Dam site and the Otisco Lake Water Treatment Plant. Our generators functioned well and storage in the tanks allowed us to continue operations with no disruptions in water service.

Engineering

A. Weiss provided an update on the terminal piping repairs. The work at the 54-Inch Inlet T is complete and the site is being closed up and stabilized for winter. This concludes the repairs of the piping and we will cleanup and restore the site in the spring. Normal operation has been restored.

c) Human Resources/Insurance

J. Stowell reported that HF&C discovered a calculation error in the modification rate provided by Fleury Safety Group. This rate is used to determine the worker's compensation plan premium. The error is in favor of OCWA and a credit is anticipated.

d) Legal/Public Education/Communications

M. Thomas noted that the procurement policy was updated and approved by the Board last month. The team is working towards compliance with the new policy. S. Roth and M. Thomas are collaborating on employee training. She asked for clarification from the Board on amendments. A conversation ensued. It was agreed that amendments can continued to be approved by management, and M. Thomas would include all approved amendments in her legal report.

e) Finance

S. Roth noted the department is preparing the year end and the audit. The auditors will be on site beginning January 22nd.

B. Executive Session

- On a motion made by J. Bianchini, duly seconded by B. Doran, with all Members present approving, the Authority adjourned the regular meeting at 12:53 p.m. and moved to Executive session to discuss collective bargaining negotiations and specific personnel evaluations.
- On a motion made by B. Doran, duly seconded by J. Bianchini, with all Members present approving, the Authority adjourned Executive session at 2:27 p.m. and returned to the regular meeting.

C. Governance Committee

- At 2:28 p.m., on a motion made by A. Geiss, duly seconded by J. Bianchini, with all Members present approving, the Authority went into Governance Committee.

a) State mandated harassment training

J. Brown reminded the Board that emails were sent with links to the online training.

b) ABO updates/focus areas

M. Thomas lead a discussion regarding update to focus areas of the ABO regulations and polices.

- On a motion made by J. Bianchini, duly seconded by B. Doran, with all Members present approving, the Authority agreed to retain the current the mission statement.

c) Strategic planning update

J. Brown noted the strategic planning session is scheduled for March 1st.

d) Conflict of interest and ethics acknowledgement

All members present signed the acknowledgement.

- At 2:37 p.m., on a motion made by B. Doran, duly seconded by J. Bianchini, with all Members present approving, the Authority concluded the Governance Committee meeting and returned to the regular meeting.

D. Bids

1) Bid #B-2023 -

- On a motion by J. Bianchini, 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 #A-2024

- On a motion by B. Bianchini, duly seconded by A. Geiss, with all Members present approving, the Authority awarded the bid to Amstar of Western New York, Inc., with the option add to the logos to both tanks. A conversation ensued regarding the cost of painting tanks verses replacement. A. Weiss will monitor costs.

E. Unfinished Business

1) Sole source vendors

- On a motion by B. Doran, duly seconded by A. Geiss, with all Members present approving, the Authority approved ATI Chlorine Analyzers and Watson Marlow Pumps as sole source vendors.

2) Accounts receivable collection process

S. Roth reviewed the status of accounts receivable and the current collection process in place. She noted an additional step that was recently added and explained that there are significant regulatory requirements that must be met to implement a deposit system. Due to this, other options will be pursued to reduce receivables before a final decision is made.

F. New Business

1) Expenditure authorizations

Expenditures were authorized.

2) Resolution granting the State of New York authority to perform the adjustment for the owner and agreeing to maintain the facilities adjusted via State-let contract

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

3) Quarterly investment report – 4th quarter

- On a motion by B. Doran, duly seconded by A. Geiss, with all Members present approving, the quarterly investment report was accepted as presented.

F. Reports

1) Water production and delivery

G. Miller briefed the Board on several topics involving the Town of Manlius. OCWA representatives met with the Town Supervisor, Deputy Town Supervisor, Town Manager and President of the Sky Ridge homeowners association:

a) Skyridge Water System Improvements

The Town was were unsuccessful in obtaining additional grants for the larger project so now they intend to pursue improvements directly in the water district and on the existing system. They are planning a phased approach. Planning and design to begin this winter, then phasing in improvements over the next 1 to 20 years. They will continue to use their two wells, but evaluate the installation of a third well. They will construct improvements to the two pump houses, chlorine contact tank, replace the water tank and install a generator. Longer term would be some watermain work. The project will be designed and administered by the Town Engineer, LaBella Engineers from Rochester. The Town will hire the contractors to do the work. Funding for the work is being developed but they are hoping to still use the grant from Assemblyman Stirpe, money from the County and they will pursue more money from the County, other grants and bond for the remainder.

b) Skyridge operation agreement with OCWA

We have a 40 year agreement with the Town to operate the water system. The agreement expires June 13, 2024. The Town has asked for the agreement be extended for a long-term commitment. They prefer at least the length of their proposed bond which they anticipate being 20 or 25 years. They pay us for all work and all materials that we use. We believe a 10 year agreement with provision for an extension for a second 10 years is appropriate.

c) Water Districts

The Town desires to consolidate all other water districts into one Townwide district. We advised them to work with their Town Attorney and Megan. The Town has a new attorney, Will Wolfe.

d) Seneca Turnpike

We have been working with the Town on trying to get water service to a house on Seneca Turnpike near the high school that has well issues. Megan has been working with the Town to develop an outside user agreement and we are close. The Town has agreed to extend the district within six months.

e) APWA Awards

The award ceremony will be February 15, 2024. OCWA will be recognized for two projects: Fairmount Reservoir Replacement and Howlett Hill Storage Tank Rehabilitation and Kevin Crouse, Underground Facilities Locator, will be honored for his 47 years of service.

Executive Director

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

- Product Quality
- Enterprise Resiliency
- Employee and Leadership Development
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- On a motion by A. Geiss, duly seconded by J. Bianchini, with all Members present approving, the Authority adjourned the meeting at 3:31 p.m.

The next regular meeting of the Authority is scheduled for February 14, 2024 at 12:00 p.m., at 200 Northern Concourse, Syracuse.

Respectfully submitted,

Jennie S. Stowell
Recording Secretary