

THREE RIVERS REGIONAL
WASTEWATER AUTHORITY
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Serving & Operated By:
Beacon Hill Water & Sewer District
City of Kelso
City of Longview
Cowlitz County

**THREE RIVERS REGIONAL WASTEWATER AUTHORITY
OPERATING BOARD
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
September 20, 2023**

1. CALL TO ORDER and INTRODUCTIONS

Chairman Hillger called the regular meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. on Wednesday, September 20, 2023 in the Three Rivers Regional Wastewater Plant Meeting Room. Those in attendance were:

Three Rivers Regional Wastewater Authority Representative:

Dell Hillger, Beacon Hill Water & Sewer District (Representative)

Ken Hash, City of Longview (Representative)

Mike Kardas, City of Kelso (Representative)

Patrick Harbison, Cowlitz County (Representative)

Staff:

Duane Leaf, General Manager

Stephanie Helem, Acting Clerk of the Board

Allen C. Unzelman, Board Attorney

Scott Bowman, Assistant General Manager

Joe Jordan, Lab Manager

Kevin Olds, Maintenance Supervisor

Caleb Hanson, T.E.A. Secretary

Guest:

Travis Tormanen, Windsor Engineers (left 10:04)

2. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Mr. Hillger asked if there was any member of the public present and wants to make a comment to the Board. Hearing no other comment, Mr. Hillger proceeded with the meeting.

3. MEETING MINUTES

A. Regular Meeting – August 16, 2023

Mr. Kardas moved to approve the regular meeting minutes of August 16, 2023. The motion was seconded by Mr. Harbison, and carried unanimously.

4. TRRWP EXPANSION PROJECTS – UPDATES

See Agenda Item F. Backflow Prevention Analysis (this item was discussed at the beginning of the Project-Update section).

A. Solids Handling Improvements – Update and Underwriter Selection

Mr. Leaf reported that the project is currently at 90% of design. He indicated we have been awarded a PWTF loan for \$10,000,000. That decreases the amount we have to borrow on the first loan from \$36,000,000 to \$26,000,000. Because of this, he emailed the Board an amended Rate Stabilization fund projection spreadsheet; this was discussed during *Agenda Item 6. 2024 Budget – Draft #2*.

B. Generators

Mr. Leaf reported that we had expected to bid the generator this week; it is now anticipated to bid next week.

C. South Plant Blower

Mr. Leaf reported that the project is ongoing and on schedule to be completed by September 19.

D. Chlorination System

Mr. Leaf reported that Kennedy Jenks has identified a lab to evaluate potential meter interferences and effluent sampling. Testing is expected to be done in the next few weeks.

E. PFAS Evaluation

Mr. Leaf reported that the last sampling will be done this week. Our consultant will review and report back to us the results.

F. Backflow Prevention Analysis (this item was discussed at the beginning of the Project-Update section)

Included in the packet is Amendment No. 2 to the Agreement for Engineering Services with Windsor Engineers requesting to increase their contract by \$15,000 for the Board's review and consideration. Mr. Leaf introduced Travis Tormanen, Windsor's Project Engineering, who briefly explained the increase in the cost for the sixteen buildings that require improvements to protect the city's water supply. The initial assessment and design fee did not account for the level of effort required. The amendment is \$12,000 for design and \$3,000 for construction support. Mr. Leaf reported that this project has ended up being more complex than expected. The original contract amount is for \$54,700.

Mr. Kardas moved to approve Amendment No. 2 to the Agreement for Engineering Services with Windsor Engineers for additional work associated with the Backflow Prevention Analysis in the increased amount of \$15,000. The motion was seconded by Mr. Hash, and carried unanimously.

G. Stratus Server Replacement

Mr. Leaf reported that the Stratus server is installed; still working on the programming. This has been a very complex project. Mr. Leaf commended Mr. Olds on his efforts of coordinating this work.

H. Headworks Study

Mr. Leaf reported that he met with Rich Gushman with Gibbs & Olson this week and the project is on schedule.

5. PROFESSIONAL SERVICES AGREEMENT – HARLIN ITS LLC

Included in the packet is a Contract for Professional Services with Harlin ITS LLC for the Board's review and consideration. Mr. Leaf reported that this contract provides consulting services for the business network. The terms and pricing of the contract for 2024 are unchanged from the 2023 contract.

Mr. Kardas moved to approve the Contract for Professional Services with Harlin ITS LLC. The motion was seconded by Mr. Hash; and carried unanimously.

6. 2024 BUDGET – DRAFT #2

Included in the packet is the second draft of the 2024 Budget. Mr. Leaf gave a brief overview of the amended Rate Stabilization Fund projection spreadsheet that he emailed the Board prior to the meeting. This projection is for the future rate stabilization fund incoming transfer increases to pay for the Solids

Handling Improvement Project. After the initial rate stabilization transfer increase, which is included in the proposed 5.70% budget increase for 2024, future increases are limited to increasing the overall budget by approximately 1% every two years starting in 2026. Mr. Leaf indicated that to the best of his ability to predict the future, if we follow this general plan, there should always be sufficient funds available to pay for the 2024 and 2025 bonds we anticipate taking out, the Public Works Trust Fund loan we were just awarded, and our existing Public Works Trust Fund loans. This spreadsheet was also shared with our Financial Advisor, who does not have any issues with it. Mr. Leaf does not anticipate 2024 future budget drafts coming in below the 5.70% in this draft.

Mr. Leaf reported that the budget increase is \$442,031 or 5.70%. The driving factor for the increase is to prepare for bond payments in 2025 and 2026. The budget now includes the short-term loan, and projects both bonds being acquired. If we handle the Solids Handling Project financing right, we will get to keep the interest on the monies that we are borrowing. The goal is to have the Solids Handling Project targeted so that we spend the bond proceeds within the two years. The budget indicates that we would be keeping the interest if we follow the projection model. A brief discussion followed. No changes to the budget were requested.

Mr. Leaf asked the Board members to provide their anticipated SDC's for this year and in 2024, by the second week in October. These numbers will need to be added to the budget.

7. SYSTEM DEVELOPMENT CHARGES (SDC)

A. Port of Longview

Mr. Leaf asked that this be followed up on by Cowlitz County.

B. IRM

Mr. Leaf reported that IRM had requested to lower their flow in their NPDES Permit to 20,000 gpd, which we also recommended; however, the Department of Ecology (ECY) wants to change it to 22,000 gpd. Therefore, once this has actually been implemented by the ECY, we will correct the invoice for the City of Longview to send to IRM.

8. STAFF'S REPORT

A. Financial Reports – Through August

The financial report through August was included in the packets for the Board's review. Mr. Leaf reported that we are on track to make budget, although it will be close. Unfortunately, we had significant costs from the 2022 power outage that carried over into 2023.

B. Entity Flow Percentages – Through August

The August Entity Flow Percentages Report was included in the packets for the Board's review.

C. Plant Flow & Rainfall Graph – Through August

The August Plant Flow & Rainfall Graph was included in the packets for the Board's review. Mr. Leaf reported that the low influent flow is causing significant plant performance issues. Solvay is also contributing to plant performance issues at our low flows.

D. SDC Report – Through August

The August SDC Report was included in the packets for the Board's review. We are over budget and anticipate being more over budget at the end of the year.

E. Septage/Hauled Waste Charges – Through August

The August Septage/Hauled Waste Report was included in the packets for the Board's review. Mr. Leaf reported that we set an all-time record for hauled waste revenue. Unfortunately, due to the combination of low flows and industrial discharges, septage deliveries were suspended on 9/2/23. We will resume accepting septage after the plant recovers. A brief discussion followed about low flows in summer vs. high flows in winter, and stormwater runoff.

F. NPDES Permit – Discharge Monitoring Reports (DMR) – August and Annual

Included in the packet was a copy of the electronic version of our August and Annual Monitoring Reports for the Board's review. Mr. Jordan noted in the report that there were two quality control notes reported on the report for effluent daily max temperature was calculated for 8/21/23 due to the line becoming disconnected; and GGA standard results from 8/23/23 COBD analysis exceeded upper limit controls.

Mr. Jordan reported that there were primary sludge settling issues with the leading suspect being industrial discharge user Solvay. Mr. Bowman and Mr. Jordan met with Solvay regarding the settling issues and they have adjusted their flow. Mr. Jordan stated that we have seen improvement with the sludge settling, but RDP is not back on track. Mr. Leaf mentioned that TRRWA bought coagulant for the primaries to help with the settling issue; although we haven't seen results that this has helped yet. Mr. Leaf commended Mr. Bowman and Mr. Jordan on how they have handled the settling issues. Mr. Jordan reported that Department of Ecology's (ECY) Technical Assistant Operator, Shane Cooper, visited the plant site yesterday (9/19), and supports what steps TRRWA has taken to recover from the settling issues. Mr. Cooper will look at other plants nationwide who have Solvay as an industrial user and see if they have had similar issues, and if so, how was it resolved.

Mr. Leaf reported the ECY has public noticed the change in the Foster Farms Permit. It does appear that ECY is on target to meet the winter flow season as TRRWA and Foster Farms asked them to.

G. Lab & Pretreatment

1. August Update

Included in the packets is a summary of the Lab and Pretreatment activities in August for the Board's review. Mr. Jordan briefly went over the report. We are at 77% of Industrial User Surveys being returned. Mr. Andersen continues to encourage participation.

Mr. Harbison noted that Drax in Longview is active and asked if someone can reach out to them on their plans/process. Mr. Jordan responded that Mr. Andersen provided them an Industrial User Survey; they are waiting for it to be returned. Mr. Harbison would like to be contacted with results. Mr. Hash noted that Longview did permit a 6" tap.

2. Divert

Mr. Leaf noted that TRRWA has not heard anything regarding their pretreatment system. This will also need to be addressed and approved with the Department of Ecology.

3. Headquarters' Landfill

Nothing new to report.

H. Operations – August Update

Included in the packets was a summary of Operations' activities in August for the Board's review. Mr. Bowman briefly went over the report. Mr. Bowman mentioned there will need to be discussions

with the city on their concerns on what type of acids Solvay can use. With the settling issues, it was unfortunate that we had to shut down the septage haulers; we needed to protect the plant. Haulers will be notified by email when TRRWA will begin to accept septage.

I. Maintenance – August Update

Included in the packets was a summary of Maintenance's activities in August for the Board's review. Mr. Olds briefly went over the report. Mr. Olds reported that we experienced a power failure to the main power circuit to the Control building. We ran back up to the Control building as a contingency plan for future incidents. Maintenance had to run circuits to the Lab to protect equipment in case of future outages. We are currently replacing firewalls for the plant and SCADA networks.

J. WestRock Box Plant Project

Mr. Leaf reported that the water line crossing of the TRRWA effluent line has largely been completed. TRRWA staff witnessed the work and the backfilling was done in accordance with direction from Gibbs & Olson.

K. Port of Longview Industrial Rail Corridor

Mr. Leaf said there was nothing new to report on the corridor project. He mentioned that he will follow up with the Port of Longview about the triangle of land they were interested in purchasing.

L. Industrial User Survey Deadline – November 15

Mr. Leaf reminded the Board that the Industrial User Survey results deadline to the Dept of Ecology is November 15.

9. APPROVE/RATIFY VOUCHERS – August

Mr. Hash moved to approve/ratify the August claims in the total amount of \$537,991.95 from the Maintenance Fund, \$141,541.80 from the Reserve Fund, and \$38,100.00 from the 2015 Bond Payment Fund. The motion was seconded by Mr. Kardas, and carried unanimously.

10. OTHER

- A. Mr. Leaf reported that next week Mr. Bowman and he will be attending the Northwest Biosolids Conference in Chelan.

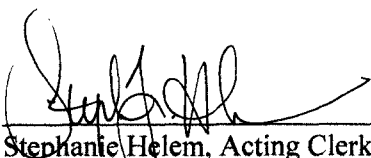
11. ADJOURNMENT

Being no further business to come before the Three Rivers Regional Wastewater Authority, the meeting was adjourned at 10:52 a.m.

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Approved: October 18, 2023


Dell Hillger, Chairman


Stephanie Helem, Acting Clerk of the Board