

Board of Municipal Utilities
Meeting Minutes
January 19, 2021
201 Miller Road
Avon Lake, Ohio

Call to Order – Roll Call

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 PM. As allowed by the Ohio Legislature during the Governor's declared emergency, the meeting was held using web-based video conferencing technology and streamed live over Facebook.

Present: Mr. Abram, Mr. Dzwonczyk, Mr. Phillips, Mr. Rush, and Mrs. Schnabel.

Also present: Acting CUE Munro, Technical Support Specialist Collins, Mayor Zilka, and Councilman Mark Spaetzel.

Approve Minutes

Chairman Dzwonczyk presented the Minutes of the January 5, 2021 regular meeting. With no changes, additions or corrections noted, he ordered that the minutes stand and be distributed as presented.

Public Speakers

Councilman Spaetzel thanked Acting CUE Munro for taking the opportunity to speak to him and educate him on what Avon Lake Regional Water does as an organization. He appreciated Mr. Munro and all that the Board does.

Mayor Zilka informed the Board that the numbers of COVID cases have been decreasing in Lorain County, but he added that in the City of Avon Lake Public Works Department there were 6 new COVID cases in the past week.

Correspondence

The Technical Support Specialist Collins informed the Board that Mr. Rider, a resident of Avon Lake, reached out to Avon Lake Regional Water regarding watering plants with the Summer Sewage Adjustment. He said that his bill was higher this year because he watered into September. He said he had asked the Board about the Summer Sewage Adjustment in the past and was told that they would be working on it. Mr. Collins said he informed Mr. Rider that the Board and staff have been working on the regulations and are looking to incorporate a new deduct meter program for residents in the coming months. The Chairman added that the Board has spoken about this in the past and that they cannot tell residents when the driest and wettest months of the year will be but can only give their best estimate.

Expenditures

Following review of expenses dated January 19, 2021, for funds and amounts as follows, Mr. Abram moved, Mr. Rush seconded, to approve the expenditures of January 19, 2021:

Water Fund 701 12/25-12/31	\$	77,894.24
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Water Fund 701	\$	210,234.56
Wastewater Fund 721 12/25-12/31	\$	70,642.20
Wastewater Fund 721	\$	166,385.76
MOR Fund 703	\$	241,307.69
MOR Fund 762	\$	313,676.72
West Ridge Interconnect Fund 702	\$	54,469.62
LORCO Fund 749	\$	18,450.50

Ayes (per roll-call vote): Abram, Dzwonczyk, Phillips, Rush and Schnabel.

Nays: None

Motion carried.

Non-Bargaining Wage Adjustments

The Acting CUE told the Board that to maintain parity with recent union wage adjustments, he recommends a 1.25% increase is added to certain non-bargaining staff wages effective January 1, 2021. Mr. Rush asked if the increases fall within the wage ranges and have been budgeted for in 2021. Mr. Munro confirmed that the proposed increases fall within the approved wage ranges and are included in the 2021 budgets. The Chairman asked when the last increase for non-bargaining employees was. Mr. Munro said it was at this time last year and the increase was for a nominal cost-of-living adjustment. Mrs. Schnabel added that she appreciated all of the work that these individuals have done and that they are very deserving of the wage adjustment.

	<u>Current Hourly Rate</u>	<u>Proposed Hourly Rate</u>
Cheryl Arnold – Community Outreach Specialist	\$28.41	\$28.77
Dennis Collins – Technical Support Specialist	\$24.02	\$24.32
Jack Gaydar – Engineering Services Manager	\$56.52	\$57.23
Greg Yuronich – Water Filtration Plant Manager	\$45.19	\$45.75

Mr. Rush moved, and Mrs. Schnabel seconded, to increase hourly wages 1.25%, effective January 1, 2021, for the Community Outreach Specialist, Technical Support Specialist, Engineering Services Manager, and Water Filtration Plant Manager.

Ayes (per roll-call vote): Abram, Dzwonczyk, Phillips, Rush and Schnabel.

Nays: None

Motion carried.

Quarterly Budget Performance Report

Technical Support Specialist Collins presented the Quarterly Budget Performance Report for December 31, 2020. He informed the Board that throughout 2020 and during the pandemic, staff has focused on providing customers with affordable, reliable, clean water and wastewater services. He said that with guidance from the Board and continued emphasis on being stewards of the ratepayer, Avon Lake Regional Water has become more financially viable and better prepared for the future. Revenue for Water and Wastewater services increased by 17% and 12.5% respectively. Mr. Collins added that expenditures from the Water and Wastewater Funds

was reduced by over \$700,000. He concluded by saying that staff was very pleased with the results from 2020 and he looks forward to 2021 and the continued leadership from the Board.

Transfers from Finance

The Acting CUE informed the Board that following a meeting with the Finance Director, an appropriation of funds needed to be made to the Wastewater Debt Service Fund 727. He said there was a negative balance going into 2020 that staff was only just made aware of and they were seeking to bring the balance into positive territory. He informed the Board that staff was asking for the following appropriations:

Wastewater Fund 721 to Wastewater Debt Service Fund 727 - \$500,000

Mr. Rush said that he hoped going forward that the Utility would be able to view all of the fund balances to know where they stand and make the appropriations when necessary. He said he wanted to avoid making the appropriations for the previous budget year after that year has concluded. Mr. Munro said that he and Mr. Collins are working closely with the Finance Director to have access to those fund balances at any time.

The Chairman moved, and Mr. Phillips seconded, to appropriate \$500,000 from Wastewater Fund 721 to Wastewater Debt Service Fund 727 for budget year 2020.

Ayes (per roll-call vote): Abram, Dzwonczyk, Phillips, Rush and Schnabel.

Nays: None

Motion carried.

Cleveland Construction Cost Index

Mr. Munro presented the updated Cleveland Construction Cost Index (CCCI) to the Board. He said the index increased 1.46% for 2021. He added that per policy and regulation, various fees will automatically be updated by the change in the CCCI.

	<u>2020</u>	<u>2021</u>	
Trunk Sanitary Sewer Fee	\$2,080.00	\$2,111.00	(\$2,110.73)
Trunk Sanitary Square Foot Charge	13.88¢	14.08¢	
8" Sanitary Sewer Front Foot Charge	\$73.17	\$74.24	
CALDP Tap In Fee	\$10,969.92	\$11,130.52	
Commercial Square Foot Charge	70.41¢	71.44¢	
Water Impact Fee	\$2,509.00	\$2,546.00	(\$2,546.38)

Mr. Abram asked Mr. Munro to remind the Board about the Water Impact Fee. Mr. Munro said that is a fee on new developments. He said there are tap-in fees for water service, but then there is the water impact fee and that is to account for the impact that the development will have on the system in regards to water usage. He added that the fee is applied to residential, commercial, and industrial customers. The Chairman noted that the staff wage adjustments that were approved earlier in the meeting were below the increase to the CCCI.

Water Reclamation Facility Operator

The Acting CUE informed the Board that staff would like to recognize Mr. Michael Clough as the new Water Reclamation Facility Operator. He said Mr. Clough will be filling the vacant operator position from April 2020 and will begin on February 8th at Step 3. The Chairman asked what the license level was for Mr. Clough. Mr. Munro said that Mr. Clough has a Class II Wastewater Operator license, and he is currently pursuing his Class III license.

Step Increases

Mr. Munro said that effective January 20th, Vince Petruccelli will be moving to Step 2 from Step 1 as the Maintenance Man II at the Water Filtration Plant.

He also added that effective February 27th, Gregory Kushner will be moving to Step 3 from Step 2 as an Operator at the Water Filtration Plant.

Project Updates

Redundancy & Future Capacity Project: The Acting CUE said that staff met with HDR on January 6th and discussed the prioritization of project recommendations and design services. He included that HDR will provide an addendum for staff review related to the scope and fee schedule for design services for the ETL and Water Filtration Plant. He said there were three major items of priority that came out of the report, with two of them having to do with the ETLs and one with the Water Filtration Plant.

With the WFP, the original twelve filters have reached the end of their useful life and need to be decommissioned. With regard to the ETLs, Mr. Munro said that highest priority item is the suction line that feeds the ETL pumping station at Moore Rd. He said with the increased frequency of breaks due to corrosion, staff and HDR are looking at designing and constructing a second, redundant feed line to the ETL pumping station. The second priority item for the ETLs is corrosion issues on the pipe from Moore Road to the Krebs Road. He said this is on ETL1 and the approach would be similar with installing a second, redundant line. He went on to say that the cost for the design services for the ETLs and the WFP were budgeted for in the 2021 budgets.

Mr. Rush asked if the Utility has enough room in the current right-of-way for additional ETL lines. Mr. Munro said that there is some room, but staff is anticipating that they will have to expand the easements. The majority of the easement for the suction line runs from Electric to Walker through the power company's property. He added that there is a good working relationship with the power company and he believes there won't be any issue in widening the easements. Mrs. Schnabel asked if there is an estimate for the construction on the suction lines and if that work would begin in 2021. Mr. Munro said there is no estimate for construction at this point. He said it is possible that once design services concludes in three to four months staff will put the construction out for bid. He said the notable item with the suction line is that it is covered by the consortium. The cost of the project would be evenly split between ETL1 and ETL2.

The Chairman asked if the filter replacement at the WFP was budgeted and what the cost of the filter replacement would be. Mr. Munro said the design services were budgeted for in 2021 for \$400,000, but he did not know what the cost of replacement would be. He added that for the ETL suction line, the current high-level estimate is \$7 million. Mr. Munro said that he is currently seeking 0% financing for the project.

Orthophosphate Point of Application: The Acting CUE said that staff has completed the contracting process with Underground Utilities, Inc. and is awaiting the signed contracts from City Hall. He added that UUI is scheduled to begin work the week of February 1st.

CUE Reports & Action Items

The Acting CUE said he had a very nice meeting with Mr. Spaetzel regarding the Sewer Committee and he looks forward to working with him on any sewer related issues. He also thanked Ford Motor Company and the Mayor for the generous 2,000 mask donation made to Avon Lake Regional Water from Ford Motor Company.

Technical Support Specialist Collins updated the Board that staff has reached out to the Lorain County Administrators office to schedule a meeting in the near future.

Member Reports

None.

Miscellaneous

None.

Public Speakers

None.

Executive Session

Mr. Rush moved, and Mr. Abram seconded, to meet in executive session as allowed by ORC §121.22 G (3) & (4) to discuss legal matters and personnel compensation and include the Acting CUE and Technical Support Specialist.

Ayes (per roll-call vote): Abram, Dzwonczyk, Phillips, Rush and Schnabel.

Nays: None

Motion carried.

The Board resumed the regular meeting at 7:47 PM.

Adjourn

As there was no further business, Mr. Abram moved to adjourn, and Mr. Rush seconded. The meeting adjourned at 7:47 PM.

Ayes (per voice vote): Abram, Dzwonczyk, Phillips, Rush, and Schnabel.

Nays: None

Motion carried.

Approved _____ 2021.

John Dzwonczyk, Chairman

Rob Munro, Clerk