

Board of Municipal Utilities
Meeting Minutes
March 2, 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, Community Outreach Specialist Arnold, Mayor Zilka, and Councilman Spaetzel.

Approve Minutes

Chairman Dzwonczyk presented the Minutes of the February 16, 2021 work session and regular meeting. With no changes, additions or corrections noted, he ordered that the minutes stand and be distributed as presented.

Public Speakers

None.

Correspondence

Mr. Munro said that Mr. Vass of Avon Lake provided an article from the Wall Street Journal to the Board of Municipal Utilities regarding the hacking of water utilities and water systems. Mr. Munro said that he provided Mr. Vass with an overview of the proactive approach and measures taken by Avon Lake Regional Water over the last several years in protection of the industrial and office networks. He said that Mr. Vass was appreciative of the information. Mr. Munro added that there were some issues in the past at other City buildings and protection of Avon Lake Regional Water’s critical infrastructure was something that the Board and staff took very seriously.

Expenditures

Following review of expenses dated March 2, 2021, for funds and amounts as follows, Mr. Abram moved, Mr. Phillips seconded, to approve the expenditures of March 2, 2021:

Water Fund 701	\$	195,233.55
Wastewater Fund 721	\$	201,245.65
MOR Fund 703	\$	27,059.90
MOR Fund 762	\$	21,104.21
West Ridge Interconnect Fund 702	\$	494.48
LORCO Fund 749	\$	5,223.02

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

Nays: None
Motion carried.

Asset Management

Mr. Munro informed the Board that in 2018 Ohio EPA promulgated a rule requiring water utilities to develop and implement an asset management program. He said that Avon Lake Regional Water developed a written asset management plan and implemented that plan for compliance with this new rule. He said plans included in the asset management program are to evaluate the consequence of failure for water distribution mains and transmission mains, a preventive and corrective maintenance program at the Water Filtration Plant, and a valve exercising program. The valve exercising program requires 20% of the valves in the system be opened and closed annually, with 100% of the valves exercised within 5 years.

The Chairman asked that the term “exercising of valves” be explained. Mr. Munro said that exercising a valve requires opening and closing the valve repeatedly to insure that it is operating normally. If the valve needs any preventative or corrective maintenance at that time, it is addressed immediately. He also said that the number of turns needed to fully exercise a valve are tracked for the future and all of this is done by the valve exercising machine that the Board authorized staff to purchase in 2019. Mr. Munro added that all of this information is tracked and recorded in the GIS system and reported to the Ohio EPA.

Mr. Munro said that in 2021 staff will implement a Computerized Maintenance Management System (CMMS) to track all assets within the organization. He continued by saying that Mr. Kimevski at the Water Filtration Plant is currently working with Data Command on a new application that will integrate all of the assets into the existing Data Command monitoring application. The Chairman asked if those efforts were part of a quality certification program. Mr. Munro said that the efforts with the asset management program are aligned with ISO-55000 certification. He said staff is currently working toward that certification and he looks forward to that continued effort. Mr. Munro said that Mr. Collins is working closely with the leadership team on the asset management certification. The Chairman asked how many different types of certification programs Avon Lake Regional Water will be achieving. Mr. Munro said ISO-55000 for asset management and ISO-9001 for overall quality improvement initiative. He said there is also an environmental certification for the Water Filtration Plant and Water Reclamation Facility that the Utility will be seeking.

The Chairman asked if there is a safety certification. Mr. Munro said that there probably is because he knows ISO has a number of different certifications. He said a number of the vendors that staff work with have an ISO certification for their Information Technology and Cyber Security. The Chairman said he thinks Avon Lake Regional Water should be a quality organization in every aspect and that all certifications should be on the menu. Mr. Phillips asked how Ohio EPA monitors the valve turning program. Mr. Munro said that staff was required to submit a written plan to Ohio EPA, and when the agency came for their annual sanitary survey, they asked to see the written plan and they review the plan as well as all of the valves that were turned. The valves turned in one year cannot be turned the following year.

The Chairman stated that the valve turning is important for asset management because valves need to be turned during a water main break. If the valves cannot be opened or closed, there will be a large loss of water. Mr. Munro added that another aspect of the asset management program is building maintenance. Mr. Munro told the Board that the current Administration Building was built in 2003 and is beginning to show signs of its age. He said in the 2021

operating budgets are replacement of HVAC units for the building, carpet replacement, painting, and renewal of office furniture as needed, and staff is currently working on these items and will continue to do so throughout the year.

Lockbox Program

Mr. Collins informed the Board that staff has been working with the Huntington Lockbox and e-Lockbox program for almost 3 years. He said that initially, the expectation was that the program would cost Avon Lake Regional Water roughly \$13,000/year, but because of the amount of business Avon Lake Regional Water does with Huntington Bank, the fees are waived for the program. He added that staff intends to continue the use of Lockbox and e-Lockbox for the foreseeable future. The Chairman asked for an explanation of the Lockbox program for those who are unfamiliar.

Mr. Munro said that Avon Lake Regional Water uses the Lockbox and the e-Lockbox program. He said that both programs are essentially the same, but the remittance address is a PO Box with Huntington Bank that allows the bank to process the payments as they arrive. He said this is convenient for customer service staff because it allows them to focus less time on processing payments. Customers can still come into the building or through the drive-thru to make their bill payments. He said that customers can also go onto the customer portal or set up automatic payments. Mr. Munro said the e-Lockbox program is an electronic program that allows the customer to make payments through their own personal bank, permitting a transaction between that financial institution and Huntington Bank. He said at the beginning of the program there were issues to work through, as an example not all banks will accept the e-Lockbox program, but most of those kinks have been worked out.

Mr. Phillips asked if a customer sends in correspondence with their payment does the bank send that correspondence to staff. Mr. Munro said that most of the time Huntington Bank does send that note that was on the remittance stub. Mr. Abram said that he asked for the update to the Lockbox Program because in 2018 there were a number of bank fees and he wanted to make sure that those fees were not going to expand and Avon Lake Regional Water would be saving money.

Project Updates

Orthophosphate Point of Application: The Acting CUE stated staff held a preconstruction meeting with UUI on February 25th. UUI will begin work on Monday, March 1st, and the project is expected to take 3 weeks. He said there was an unknown in the project that delayed progress, but staff was able to mitigate the unknown and the project is moving forward smoothly. The Chairman asked what the issue was. Mr. Munro said the issue was the material of the pipe and staff has since acquired the proper saddle for the pipe material.

Division Road Water Tower: The Acting CUE informed the Board that staff received payment from AT&T for the cost of services for the additional structural evaluation. He said Dixon Engineering is scheduled to perform the additional structural evaluation.

SCADA Upgrade: The Acting CUE said the new workstation computer monitors for the system were delivered on February 26th and will be installed in the Operator's Room, WFP Manager's office, and the WFP Lab. Work continues on the configuration of the servers and installation is tentatively scheduled for the week of March 8th.

WFP & ETL Design Services: The design services kickoff meeting with HDR is scheduled for Friday, March 5th. The Chairman asked when staff expects the designs to be completed to go to bid. Mr. Munro said that he expects the highest priority item, the ETL Suction Line, to take 6-8 months. He added that they actually expect 5-6 months. The Chairman said that will be the construction would probably take place in 2022. Mr. Munro said yes it would not be until 2022, and the project is currently being nominated to the Water Supply Revolving Loan Fund for 0% interest financing on behalf of Avon Lake Regional Water and the consortium.

CUE Reports & Action Items

Mr. Munro said that he and the Chairman met with the new Lorain County Administrator, Mr. Tom Williams, and the Lorain County Sanitary Engineer, Mr. Bob Klaiber, and that he appreciated the meeting. They discussed the work being done at Avon Lake Regional Water and the work that the Administrator is looking to do in Lorain County. He said he looks forward to working with the new Lorain County representatives. The Chairman said he thought the meeting was very positive and that he looks forward to a bright future of cooperation on wastewater issues in Lorain County.

Member Reports

The Chairman stated that he, Mr. Phillips, and Mr. Munro met with three attorneys from Mansour Gavin on Saturday, February 27th to discuss a number of things. He said the meeting was also a positive one.

Mr. Abram said that LORCO and the Lorain County Administrator are looking to repeal the Columbia Township Agreement that was passed in 2020. He said Avon Lake Regional Water did not sign the agreement. The Chairman said there was some foresight on behalf of the Board.

Miscellaneous

Mr. Munro said he will be meeting with LORCO's Executive Director, Mr. Gene Toy, to discuss the monthly operating advance. He said with the latest Cooperative Agreement with LORCO the operating advance is \$5,000/month. Mr. Munro said he is looking to lower, and he looks forward to meeting with Mr. Toy to discuss that.

Public Speakers

Mr. Zilka said the City of Avon Lake has a renewal of a levy on the May 4th ballot for the paramedic service. He also said there is a levy for the library on the ballot.

Executive Session

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

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

Nays: None

Motion carried.

The Board resumed the regular meeting at 8:02 PM.

Adjourn

As there was no further business, Mr. Abram moved to adjourn, and Mr. Rush seconded. The meeting adjourned at 8:02 PM.

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

Nays: None

Motion carried.

Approved _____ 2021.

John Dzwonczyk, Chairman

Rob Munro, Clerk