

Board of Municipal Utilities  
**Meeting Minutes**  
**March 5, 2024**  
201 Miller Road  
Avon Lake, Ohio

***Call to Order – Roll Call***

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 PM. The meeting was held in-person using web-based video conferencing technology and streamed live to Facebook and YouTube.

Present: Mr. Abram, Mr. Dzwonczyk, Mr. Rickey and Mr. Rush

Excused: Mrs. Schnabel.

Also present: CUE Munro, CUO Yuronich, Business and Financial Coordinator Logan, Attorney Bruce Rinker of Mansour Gavin and City of Avon Lake Councilwoman Gentry.

***Approve Minutes***

Mr. Dzwonczyk presented the Minutes of the February 20, 2024 regular meeting. With no additional changes, additions or corrections noted, he ordered that the minutes stand and be distributed as presented.

Mr. Rickey expressed to the public that he feels the Board Secretary, Mr. Munro, does an excellent job documenting the meetings. Mr. Munro stated that he is actually not the one transcribing the meetings and that it is Mr. Yuronich has been the one handling those duties. Mr. Rickey then told Mr. Yuronich that he feels they are a very good representation of what takes place at these meetings.

Mr. Dzwonczyk added that the Board does expect a detailed follow-up to the report from the February 20, 2024 meeting concerning the failure of the fiber optic converters at the Water Filtration Plant.

***Public Speakers***

None.

***Correspondence***

None.

## **Expenditures**

Following review of expenses for funds and amounts as follows, Mr. Abram moved, Mr. Rickey seconded, to approve the expenditures of February 16 through February 29, 2024:

Water Fund 701	\$	307,765.04
Wastewater Fund 721	\$	212,531.49
ETL1 Fund 703	\$	1,309.50
ETL2 Fund 762	\$	7,440.48
LORCO Fund 749	\$	158.80
Water Construction Fund 704	\$	5,453.50
Wastewater Construction Fund 724	\$	5,453.50

Ayes (per voice vote): Abram, Dzwonczyk, Rickey, and Rush

Nays: None

Motion carried.

## **Water Filtration Plant Operator**

Mr. Munro stated that a recent addition to our staff at the Water Filtration Plant, Brandon Benitt had just earned his Ohio EPA Class II Water Supply Operator license and will be promoted from Step I to Step II on the pay scale effective February 28, 2024. Mr. Munro congratulated Brandon on earning this certification and stated that it is challenging to accomplish while working full time. Mr. Munro stated that staff will continue to support Mr. Benitt and encourage him to continue pursuing additional licensure.

Mr. Rickey stated that he is very proud to have employees that are motivated and capable of pursuing and earning licenses above what the minimum requirements are.

Mr. Dzwonczyk added that the rest of the Board shares that pride and expressed encouragement that Mr. Benitt continue his progress.

## **Water System Comprehensive Master Plan**

Mr. Munro stated that ALRW staff had recently issued a request for qualifications (RFQ) from consulting firms interested in updating our water system master plan. Mr. Munro informed the Board that staff had received those on February 13, 2024 and there were two firms, HDR and Stantec, that had submitted proposals. Mr. Munro added that after the evaluation team had reviewed those submittals and scored them individually, Stantec was selected as the consulting firm for this project. Mr. Munro stated that after ALRW staff and Stantec have outlined the scope and budget for this project, a recommended scope and fee structure for this master plan will be presented for the Board's consideration at the April 2, 2024 meeting.

Mr. Munro added that this updated master plan will be more in depth than the previous master plan that was completed in 2012. Mr. Munro stated that this master plan will include not only our water filtration plant and distribution system in Avon Lake but will include looking at an expansion and growth of our service area. Mr. Munro stated that there have been numerous scenarios that have been discussed amongst staff where the organization would need to be able to move quickly to provide the water needs of any potential large customers that would move to this area and be served by either Avon Lake Regional Water's system or served by either of the Eastern Transmission Lines through one of our bulk customers.

Mr. Munro also added that this master plan will look at our five and ten-year capital improvement plan, for ALRW and for the ETLs. Mr. Munro reiterated that this will be a comprehensive look at our entire system. Mr. Munro stated that this master plan will serve as a guide for the next decade of operation.

Mr. Rickey inquired if this master plan was included in the budget and what kind of a time frame it would take to complete. Mr. Munro responded that yes, it was included in the budget and that the master plan should be completed by the end of 2024. Mr. Rickey also inquired who completed the previous plan from 2012. Mr. Munro stated that Stantec was the consulting firm in 2012. Mr. Munro added that choosing Stantec is not at all a reflection on HDR, Stantec just came out ahead in the tallying of scorecards from the evaluation team. Mr. Munro added that we still have an ongoing, positive relationship through the upcoming water filtration plant improvement project and have been very pleased with their performance on that project.

Mr. Abram inquired where Stantec was located. Mr. Munro stated that they have a Cleveland office and are a large firm with many locations throughout the world but was unsure where the parent office was located. Mr. Dzwonczyk stated that he had the same question and thought that Stantec was based out of Canada.

Mr. Dzwonczyk stated that if it hasn't already been approved by the Board, he would like to see a cost included in the Board Packet for the project. Mr. Munro stated that due to the scope not being completely defined a cost could not be included but that a couple hundred thousand dollars was budgeted for the master plan update in the Engineering Services budget.

### ***Project Updates***

*Power Plant Update:* Mr. Yuronich informed the Board that the building that housed the treatment equipment for the coal pile runoff has been completely demolished. Mr. Yuronich added that the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency had deemed that all industrial activity south of Lake Rd. had ceased and granted them permission to remove the treatment equipment. Mr. Yuronich stated that the high-reach excavator had been repaired and demolition has continued on the main power plant property north of Lake Rd. with the walls the enclosed the boilers coming down, two smokestacks and a one hundred and twenty five thousand gallon fuel oil storage tank had been demoed.

Mr. Dzwonczyk inquired about how the walls that housed the boilers, most likely those were double walled, and were in contact with the asbestos were monitored for trace amounts of asbestos. Mr. Yuronich stated that those were in areas that had asbestos remediation performed by the specialty contractor. Mr. Dzwonczyk added that he wanted to know what type of monitoring or additional abatement was performed during the continued demolition of these areas and directed Mr. Yuronich to follow up with Charah/ALERG.

*ETL Design Services:* Mr. Munro provided an update to the Board that negotiations with RailPros had reached a stalemate and staff was going to proceed with getting an easement at the road crossing on Moore Rd. Mr. Munro stated that RailPros would not budge on a twenty-year easement for \$80,000 with the cost for renewal to be determined solely by them when it came time to renew. Mr. Munro informed the Board that staff will be rerouting the water main to cross at Moore Rd. where a one-time fee of just under \$2,000 will be incurred. Mr. Munro stated that although there will be additional cost to install the pipe to reach the public right-of-way, the return on investment will be reached through not having additional renewals at an undetermined cost.

Mr. Abram inquired where the original line supplying water to the Moore Rd. pump station was routed. Mr. Munro stated that it ran underneath the Moore Rd. crossing. Mr. Munro added that the proposed routing was the most direct route but with the railroad's new business model of no longer providing a permanent easement, staff would not delay the project further by continuing to negotiate.

*WFP Improvements:* Mr. Yuronich stated that funding has been awarded for the WFP Improvement Project and a notice to proceed will be issued upon execution of the loan documents. Mr. Munro added that he has been working with Law Director Ebert on getting the necessary signatures on the loan paperwork and that a notice-to-proceed should be issued within a week. Mr. Munro stated that Great Lakes Construction had reached out and informed him that they are going to begin mobilizing to 92 Moore Rd., one of the properties ALRW had purchased last year adjacent to the WFP, and begin preparing their temporary construction office. Mr. Munro added that this will save the organization money by not having to rent a trailer for the duration of the project.

*Additional Storage Building:* Mr. Yuronich stated that the project is getting close to being closed out. Mr. Yuronich stated that staff is waiting on delivery of a few items related to access control for entry into the wash bay. Mr. Yuronich elaborated that there is a two-tiered pedestal that will allow staff to open the wash bay doors and begin the wash cycle from either the smaller trucks or larger equipment from either type of vehicle. Mr. Yuronich stated that the pedestal was supposed to have been delivered to SecuriTec on February 16, 2024 but that staff has not received confirmation of this as of today. Mr. Yuronich stated that the wash system has had its previous issues relating to coordination between the door openers and wash system corrected and that it now operates as designed. Mr. Yuronich informed the Board that once the access work has been completed staff will perform a walk-through with North Bay Construction to develop the punch list and upon addressing those issues, the project will be closed out.

*Inductively Coupled Plasma Mass Spectrometer (ICP):* No updates.

### ***CUE/CUO Report***

Mr. Munro informed the Board that Mr. Yuronich and Mr. Logan had led the first round of interviews for the open Customer Service Representative position and that he joined them for the second round that consisted of four. Mr. Munro stated that there numerous very qualified candidates and that Margaret Howell was chosen to fill the position. Mr. Munro added that upon successful completion of the background check, drug and alcohol screening and physical, Ms. Howell will begin March 11, 2024. Mr. Munro stated that she will be hired at Step 1 of the pay scale for a Customer Service Representative.

Mr. Munro stated that he had attended the Avon Lake City Council Meeting for the second reading of the ordinance to approve the purchase of property from ALERG by ALRW. Mr. Munro added that the third reading and vote will be held at the March 11, 2024 City Council Meeting. Mr. Munro stated that staff was given written permission by ALERG to access the property to begin additional due diligence work and that had begun the week of February 11, 2024 under the direction of ALRW's environmental consultant Steve Gross from Verdantas. Mr. Munro added that he had received positive feedback from the Avon Lake City Council members that he had spoken with regarding the purchase.

### ***Miscellaneous & Member Reports***

None.

### ***Public Speakers***

None.

### ***Executive Session***

Mr. Rush moved, Mr. Abram seconded, to meet in executive session as allowed by ORC §121.22 (G)(1), (G)(2) and (G)(3) to discuss the employment and/or dismissal of a public employee, the purchase and/or sale of property for public purposes, and pending or imminent court actions and to include the CUE, the CUO, the Business and Financial Coordinator and a representative from Mansour Gavin.

Ayes (per roll-call vote): Abram, Dzwonczyk, Rickey, and Rush

Nays: None

Motion carried.

The Board entered Executive Session at 7:01 PM

The Board reconvened at 8:13 PM

### ***LORCO Financial Evaluation***

Mr. Munro provided an update to the Board regarding the recent financial evaluation on the custodial account that LORCO provided. The evaluation was completed by Rea and Associates and generally aligns with the financial figures that are kept by staff. There are two items that were pointed out to a representative from Rea. One item is the final debt service payment in 2023 was not reflected in the report and the other item is the calculation of interest on money owed to Avon Lake Regional Water. Mr. Munro stated that the Cooperative Agreement explicitly addresses the calculation of interest, and this is not something that is negotiable. His recommendation to the Board is to continue discussions with LORCO and other entities to resolve the outstanding debt owed by LORCO.

### ***Adjourn***

As there was no further business, Mr. Abram moved, and Mr. Rickey seconded, to adjourn. The meeting adjourned at 8:21 PM.

Ayes (per voice vote): Abram, Dzwonczyk, Rickey, and Rush

Nays: None

Motion carried.

Approved March 19, 2024.

John Dzwonczyk, Chairman

Robert Munro, Clerk