

Board of Municipal Utilities  
**Meeting Minutes**  
**May 18, 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, Community Outreach Specialist Arnold, Technical Support Specialist Collins, Mayor Zilka, Law Director Ebert, Attorney Coyne and Attorney Khawam of Mansour-Gavin.

***Approve Minutes***

Chairman Dzwonczyk presented the Minutes of the May 4, 2021 work session. The Chairman requested a few changes, and he ordered that the minutes stand and be distributed as amended.

Chairman Dzwonczyk presented the Minutes of the May 4, 2021 regular meeting. The Chairman requested a few changes, and he ordered that the minutes stand and be distributed as amended.

***Public Speakers***

None.

***Correspondence***

None.

***Executive Session***

Mr. Rush moved, Mr. Abram seconded, to meet in executive session as allowed by ORC §121.22 G (1) & (3) to discuss personnel and legal matters and include the Acting CUE, Community Outreach Specialist, Technical Support Specialist, Law Director, and representatives from the law firm of Mansour Gavin.

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

Nays: None

Motion carried.

The regular meeting resumed at 7:38 PM.

## **Expenditures**

Following review of expenses dated May 18, 2021, for funds and amounts as follows, Mr. Abram moved, Mrs. Schnabel seconded, to approve the expenditures of May 18, 2021:

Water Fund 701	\$	235,794.05
Wastewater Fund 721	\$	160,528.86
MOR Fund 703	\$	197,514.77
MOR Fund 762	\$	317,930.30
Water Construction Fund 704	\$	152,404.13
LORCO Fund 749	\$	9,753.94

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

Nays: None

Motion carried.

## **Transfer from LORCO**

The Acting CUE informed the Board that in October 2020 a budgeted transfer from the Water Construction and Wastewater Construction Funds took place for \$900,000.00. He said that in order to reclaim the advanced funds transferred last year to LORCO, staff recommended to the Board to transfer the \$900,000.00 back to the Water Construction and Wastewater Construction Funds. The Chairman asked if Avon Lake Regional Water needed to notify LORCO of the transfer and if it was within the utility's authority. Mr. Munro said that he did notify the Executive Director, Mr. Toy, of the transfer, and that it was within the authority of Avon Lake Regional Water to make the transfer according to the cooperative agreement between ALRW and LORCO. Mr. Rush asked if the transfer was made in anticipation of expenses in the fund. Mr. Munro said that the previous CUE made the transfer in anticipation of some shortfall in the fund, but this transfer will still leave a large balance of approximately \$400,000 in the LORCO Custodial Fund.

Mr. Phillips moved, and Mr. Rush seconded, to transfer \$450,000.00 from Fund 749 – LORCO to Fund 704 – Water Construction Fund.

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

Nays: None

Motion carried.

Mr. Phillips moved, and Mr. Rush seconded, to transfer \$450,000.00 from Fund 749 – LORCO to Fund 724 – Wastewater Construction Fund.

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

Nays: None

Motion carried.

## **Summer Help**

The Acting CUE informed the Board that in order to help complete a variety of tasks at Avon Lake Regional Water's facilities, staff intends to hire up to 6 people for summer help. He said there is now a standardized approach with the summer help crew and they will work under Mr. Kimevski at the Water Filtration Plant. Mr. Rush asked if there were any applicants. Mr. Munro said that the process of looking for candidates has begun and to date there had only been one

applicant. He said that particular applicant is more interested in an environmental internship instead of cutting grass, working in the shops, and painting fire hydrants. Mrs. Schnabel asked what the age range of the position was. Mr. Munro said that Avon Lake Regional Water accepts college-aged individuals, 18 to 23 years old.

The Chairman asked if there was any hiring from the cadre of summer help. Mr. Munro said there were normally returning applicants, and staff usually only hires 1 or 2 new employees for the summer. He said this is the first year where there will be no returning students for the summer help positions. He also said that he and Mr. Collins would be working and coordinating with the HR Director to see if there is a pool of applicants available from the City. Mrs. Schnabel said that if the utility advertised on Facebook and social media there will be quite a few applicants. The Chairman added that the post should emphasize that it is physical work.

### ***Project Updates***

*Orthophosphate Point of Application:* The Acting CUE said the tubing material for the feed lines was delivered on Thursday, May 13th. He said staff began installing the necessary connections and will complete the work during the week of May 17th. The Chairman asked when staff would begin testing once it is operational. Mr. Munro said that once everything is operational staff will be testing immediately. He said staff would like a few weeks of data to make sure the orthophosphate is operating as designed.

*SCADA Upgrade:* The Acting CUE said the new system continues to run in parallel with the current system. SOS is still in the process of verifying the PLC tags for accuracy. The Chairman asked how Avon Lake Regional Water's SCADA differs from the Colonial Pipeline issue. Mr. Munro said that the SCADA system has many safeguards and it is segregated from any other networks and is not connected to the internet. He also said from a control standpoint the controls must be done inside the plant. There is no way to control from outside the plant. He said the latest upgrade further enhances that security. The Acting CUE added that from initial reports the gas pipeline hack stemmed from Microsoft issues. The servers and PCs are on Microsoft, but to update those would require staff to make those updates within the plant.

*WFP & ETL Design Services:* The Acting CUE said a meeting with consortium members is scheduled for Wednesday May 26th. The intent of the meeting is to provide an update to consortium members on the design services for the ETL's. He added that another topic of discussion will be the Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds that will be available for water, sewer, and broadband infrastructure projects. The Chairman asked if there was anything in mind for future projects. Mr. Munro said the street Avon Point in Avon Lake had been discussed between the Mayor and the Public Works Director. He said the design work was done during the streets North of Lake project.

The Chairman said Avon Point has been a notoriously bad street needing every manner of repair. He asked how Mr. Munro assessed the street. Mr. Munro said that as part of the design work completed at Avon Point, he said there is drainage ditch but there is no storm sewer in place. He said this proposed work would address that. The City would be covering the paving and ALRW would cover the waterline costs. The Chairman said he remembered there being many times in the past where ALRW's trucks would be at Avon Point whenever it rained. Mr. Munro said anything related to sanitary sewer has been addressed during the sewer separation and has relieved the flooding.

The Acting CUE also said that on Tuesday, May 11th, staff visited the Akron Water Filtration Plant to look at two of their chemical feed systems. The two specific systems of interest were

the Hydrofluorosilicic Acid (liquid Fluoride) and Sodium Hypochlorite (liquid). He said this is in conjunction with the chemicals evaluation that is being conducted at the Water Filtration Plant. Mr. Munro also said that one of the chemical suppliers for Avon Lake Regional Water recently exercised the Force Majeure clause in their contract. He said they will be able to supply the chemicals but not at the contract price. He added that while there is an industry-wide issue of supply, Avon Lake Regional Water has not experienced any supply issues and has maintained a large supply. He said the supply does bring up the issue of further discussion regarding chlorine gas or liquid hypochlorite, a liquid solution. Chlorine gas has significant safety aspects to it.

The Chairman asked if there was any opportunity to use solid chlorine, similar to pools, to inject that into the system. Mr. Munro said the liquid solution of liquid hypochlorite can be delivered in a 12% solution in bulk tanks or generate the solution on-site. This would require storage of salt on-site to generate the supply. He added that in speaking with other utilities that do make their own chlorine solution, the feedback has not been very positive. Mr. Munro said that he asked HDR to evaluate the containment system for the chlorine gas to see if it is adequate should there be a release of the gas. He said if there will be a significant investment to bring the containment to appropriate safety levels that will be taken into consideration when choosing which avenue to pursue. The Chairman said there was a chlorine gas leak at the old pool several years ago.

Mr. Rush said when a similar proposal was brought before the Board a few years ago there was a hefty price tag, and he wanted to know if that would still be the case. Mr. Munro said he can't say if that will be the case this time, but he said that in doing the chemical evaluation with HDR on all chemicals they have focused on storage capacity for redundancy and whether the current chemicals are installed in the right application. He said that going forward staff does not want to have to correct things like what was done with the orthophosphate. He said a comprehensive chemical study has not been completed in over 30 years, and it is overdue. He also said there is more to come from the study. The Chairman urged that Avon Lake Regional Water seriously consider generating its own chlorine. He said there could be logistical problems in the future, and while there is a lot of water in Lake Erie if there is no way to treat it for consumption that would be a major issue. He said staff could also pilot generating chlorine while also having chlorine delivered to the plant in parallel.

Mr. Phillips asked who the supplier was. Mr. Munro said it was Jones Chemical, Inc. He said they are not the only supplier of those chemicals, but they do supply to a large part of the industry. They also are the only ones to bid. The Chairman said that should compel staff to look into making their own chlorine. Mr. Phillips said that by Jones Chemical invoking the force majeure clause, that lets Avon Lake Regional Water out of the contract and it can pursue different suppliers. Mr. Rush asked what the exact nature of their invoking the force majeure clause was. Mr. Collins said that Jones Chemical's supplier invoked their force majeure in turn triggering Jones Chemical to invoke their clause in Avon Lake Regional Water's contract. Mr. Phillips said they can't use that clause simply because it became too expensive for them to supply the chemicals.

### ***Acting CUE Reports & Action Items***

Mr. Munro said that he met with the Executive Director of LORCO about the cooperative agreement and the first payment of tap fees is due Avon Lake Regional Water in the amount of \$172,000. He said these fees represent LORCO tapping into ALRW's system. He said this will be the tenth anniversary of LORCO tapping into the system, and he will be sending out the invoice for those fees later this year.

Mr. Collins informed the Board that there were two updates. He said that the vendor, Oracle, has finalized their proposal for a new Enterprise Resource Planning system which will be brought before the Board. He also said that since the weather has improved, he will begin planning a date for the Board and the HR Director to visit the Water Reclamation Facility and the Water Filtration Plant.

### ***Member Reports***

The Chairman said he regrets he will not be able to attend the consortium meeting next week on May 26th at Rural Lorain County Water Authority.

### ***Miscellaneous***

Mr. Munro said that there is an open engineer position with a salary range that was approved in 2017. He said that position has not been filled since 2017. Mr. Munro said he would like to have that position filled by Jarod Larson who has worked for Avon Lake Regional Water for four years as an engineering intern. He added that Mr. Larson is an outstanding employee and a great asset to the staff. Mr. Larson recently graduated from Cleveland State University. He was a finalist for valedictorian and graduated with a 3.98 GPA from the school of engineering with a bachelor's of science in mechanical engineering. Mr. Munro said he will be pursuing a master's in engineering in the fall of 2021.

Mr. Rush moved, and Mr. Phillips seconded, to hire Jarod Larson to the engineer position on May 18, 2021 at an hourly rate of \$29.59. Mr. Rush said this was a budgeted hire for 2021. The Chairman said Mr. Larson was a good draft pick. Mrs. Schnabel said that Avon Lake Regional Water is lucky to have Jarod and he will be a good fit for the organization.

Ayes (per voice vote): Abram, Dzwonczyk, Phillips, Rush, and Schnabel.  
Nays: None  
Motion carried.

Mr. Abram asked for an updated LORCO budget report at the next meeting.

### ***Public Speakers***

None.

### ***Adjourn***

As there was no further business, Mr. Abram moved to adjourn, and Mr. Rush seconded. The meeting adjourned at 8:06 PM.

Ayes (per voice vote): Abram, Dzwonczyk, Phillips, Rush, and Schnabel.  
Nays: None  
Motion carried.

Approved \_\_\_\_\_ 2021.

John Dzwonczyk, Chairman

Robert Munro, Clerk