

Board of Municipal Utilities
Meeting Minutes
June 6, 2023
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 over Facebook.

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

Also present: CUE Munro, CUO Yuronich, Attorney Carr of Seeley, Savidge, Ebert and Gourash, Councilman Spaetzel, LORCO representative Del Roig, and resident Patty Nussle.

Approve Minutes

Mr. Dzwonczyk presented the Minutes of the May 30, 2023 regular meeting. With no additional changes, additions or corrections noted, he ordered that the minutes stand and be distributed as presented.

Public Speakers

None.

Correspondence

None.

Expenditures

Following review of expenses dated June 6, 2023, for funds and amounts as follows, Mr. Abram moved, Mrs. Schnabel seconded, to approve the expenditures of April 28 through May 11, 2023:

Water Fund 701	\$	111,404.16
Wastewater Fund 721	\$	132,061.98
ETL1 Fund 703	\$	175.00
ETL2 Fund 762	\$	2,120.24
LORCO Fund 749	\$	1,940.00
Water Construction Fund 704	\$	10.96
Wastewater Construction Fund 724	\$	10.97

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

Nays: None

Motion carried.

Bid Solicitations

Mr. Munro stated that there are two bid solicitations that have been advertised in the Chronicle Telegram and online with the Bid Express platform. The first bid solicitation is for the Ion Coupled Plasma Mass Spectrometer, or ICP. This will replace the atomic absorption mass spectrophotometer, that needs repairs and well past its life expectancy. It is 13 years old and is need of at least \$10,000 in repairs. This equipment is an important piece of lab equipment in the testing of metals in the potable drinking water and in the analysis of wastewater and industrial samples.

Mr. Dzwonczyk asked if there was any radioactivity related to the atomic absorption unit. Mr. Yuronich stated that there is not radioactive material, it combusts the analytes and measures the wavelengths of light released as it is consumed and quantifies the amount of each analyte present.

Mr. Munro stated that the second bid solicitation is for the liquid chlorine used at the Water Filtration Plant. There were several exceptions to the first liquid chlorine bids and staff did not have a recommendation to award the contract. Bids will be unsealed on Friday, June 9, 2023 at 12:00 noon.

Water & Sewer Rates

Mr. Munro stated that he is currently working with our consultant, Raftellis, on the water and sewer rates. Raftellis has prepared a report that contains their projections for revenues and expenses for the next five years. Mr. Munro stated that while they offer projections, the outlook is not absolute and can change as time progresses. A memo prepared by Mr. Munro offering his recommendation on rates will be distributed to the Board by early next week for their consideration. Pursuant to the agreements with bulk customers, any rate changes need to be presented to them at least six months prior to those new rates taking effect. The Board would need to act at the June 20, 2023 meeting in order for rate adjustments to take effect January 1, 2024.

Even with rate adjustments, Avon Lake Regional Water will still have the lowest water rates of incorporated cities in the State of Ohio. Mr. Munro stated that even with the large increase in chemical costs and other utilities, proposed rate adjustments are still very minor considering how much expenses have increased combined with rates being kept constant over the previous three years. The improvements taking place at the Water Filtration Plant will be adding additional costs over the coming years. Modest increases now are necessary to cover these expenses so that our customers will not face a large increase in the coming years.

Mr. Rickey inquired if the chemical costs, specifically chlorine is a localized issue or if it is affecting the industry as a whole across the nation. Mr. Munro stated that it is a national issue. Mr. Dzwonczyk stated that there is an initiative mentioned at previous meetings that Avon Lake Regional Water is working on production of sodium hypochlorite at our facilities instead of purchasing either liquid chlorine or purchasing bulk sodium hypochlorite. He asked Mr. Yuronich to provide details on the economics of that process. Mr. Yuronich stated that although he could not comment on specific numbers, there are a number of reasons why it would be beneficial to produce it ourselves. Along with being competitive on price, it will also help with any supply chain issues and safety of our employees and the public. Sodium hypochlorite production requires only table salt to be stored on site as a raw material for the process. Mr. Yuronich stated that we are limited to the amount of chlorine gas that we can have on hand and that there are no limitations on the amount of salt.

Mr. Munro stated that having the input from Raftellis allows Avon Lake Regional Water to plan for the future and have the data to make sure we only increase rates at the absolutely necessary rate and that both our customers and bulk customers can enjoy continued low rates.

Mr. Munro also stated that Avon Lake Regional Water is continuing talks with Techwin, a South Korean company that is looking to establish itself in the United States. Techwin manufactures high-strength on-site sodium hypochlorite generating equipment.

Mr. Rush asked if they could expect the rate increase to be in the single digit range and Mr. Munro confirmed that it would definitely be less than ten percent.

Project Updates

Power Plant Update: Mr. Yuronich stated that the environmental remediation continues with a focus on the coal pile portion of the property and the demolition continues on the north side of the road. Staff continues regular contact with Avon Lake Environmental Remediation Group employees.

ETL Design Services: No updates

WFP Improvements: No updates but staff has received word from the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency that they should expect comments soon.

2022 Water Line Bundle Project: Mr. Yuronich stated that during the repair of a water line there was an old sandstone culvert for the storm sewer system. Avon Lake Regional Water had moved our water line out of that area. The City of Avon Lake has elected to do a proper removal and repair of the road base under their portion of the open contract with Underground Utilities Inc. that is tentatively scheduled for the end of July. Mr. Yuronich stated that the City of Avon Lake is handling all of the detour, signage and communication with the public. Mr. Munro added that we are contributing to the road resurfacing since a portion of Lear Rd. was disturbed by our water line repair and relocation.

Additional Storage Building: Mr. Yuronich stated that Northbay is continuing with the internal utility work and staff is also continuing to coordinate any site-work outside the building with Northbay so as not to interfere with them.

CUE Report

Mr. Munro stated that effective June 5, 2023 there were three employees that were laterally moved from older job descriptions to new classifications. Carl Busse and Will Fischer are now Infrastructure Specialists, both at step 7. George Caruso is now an Infrastructure Technician at step 7.

Miscellaneous & Member Reports

Mr. Abram provided a LORCO report and stated that Director Gene Toy is working with the Lorain County Engineer's office to facilitate the tie-in of the IGA property located on Rt. 82. Mr. Abram also stated that the Eaton Township Building Department is forecasting the construction of one hundred new homes in 2023.

Mr. Abram stated that LORCO was the recipient of a 2.7 million dollar grant in 2022. Director Toy plans to use some of the money to facilitate an inflow and infiltration study to reduce the amount of unbilled water entering the sanitary sewer system and also to tag the sewer clean-out lids reminding residents that it is illegal to tamper with the system.

Mr. Munro stated that Director Toy had been in discussions with Engineering Services Manager Gaydar to finalize the cost of the IGA connection to the LORCO system.

Mr. Dzwonczyk reported that Mr. Munro and Mr. Yuronich and himself will be meeting with Mr. Ziemnik of the Lorain County Metroparks and also attending a meeting with the ETL bulk customers later in the week.

Public Speakers

None.

Executive Session

Mr. Rush moved, Mr. Abram seconded, to meet in executive session as allowed by ORC §121.22 (G)(2) and (G)(3) to discuss the purchase and/or sale of property and pending legal matters and to include the CUE, the CUO and Attorney Carr from Seeley, Savidge, Ebert and Gourash.

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

Nays: None

Motion carried.

The Board entered Executive Session at 7:08 PM

The Board reconvened the public meeting at 7:53 PM

Adjourn

As there was no further business, Mr. Abram moved, and Mr. Rush seconded, to adjourn. The meeting adjourned at 7:53 PM.

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

Nays: None

Motion carried.

Approved June 20, 2023.

John Dzwonczyk, Chairman

Robert Munro, Clerk