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The Lowcountry Regional Water System Commission held its regular monthly meeting at 4:00 pm on Tuesday, February 28, 2023 in the large conference room at the Hampton County Adminstrative Center in the Town of Hampton, 200 Jackson Avenue East, Hampton South Carolina. All meetings are open to the public (except for information, if any, to be discussed in Executive Sessions) and all interested parties are invited to attend.

**Commission Present:** Mr. Rocky Hudson, Brunson

Mayor Nat Shaffer, Varnville

Mayor Robert Brown, Hampton

Ms. Peggy O’Banner, Yemassee

Mayor Horney Mitchell, Gifford

Darrin Williams, Hampton County

**Officers Present:** Mr. Brian Burgess, General Manager

Ms. Sara Craven, Secretary

Ms. Marlene Marchyshyn, Treasurer

Ms. Kari Foy, Engineer

Mr. Blake Hodge, Field Operations Manager

Mr. Alec Sterling, Treatment Operations Manager

**Visitors Present:** Bill Hancock

**Quorum Met:** Yes

1. **Call to Order**

Chairman Rocky Hudson called the meeting to order at 4:00 pm.

2. **Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance**

Invocation was given by Robert Brown.

Pledge of Allegiance - Conducted by all.

3. **FOIA Compliance Report**

As required by Code of Laws of South Carolina, notice of this LRWS Commission meeting was posted prominently in the offices of the Commission at least twenty-four hours in advance. In addition, the local news media and all persons requesting notifications of meetings of the LRWS Commission were notified of the time, date, and place of such meeting, and were provided with a copy of the agenda at least twenty-four hours prior to this meeting.

4. **Adoption of the Agenda**

Moved by Robert Brown, seconded by Horney Mitchell to adopt the agenda. Motion carried unanimously.

5. **Approval of Minutes**

Moved by Robert Brown, seconded by Peggy O’Banner to approve the minutes for the November 29, 2022 meeting. Motion carried unanimously.

6. **Reports:**

A. Financial Report- The financial reports for November, December and January were presented by Marlene Marchyshyn. She discussed the reasons for high expenses in December.

B. General Managers Report- Brian informed the Board of LRWS’s 10th anniversary coming on June 3rd. He discussed possibly doing a celebration on June 2nd. He suggested putting up a tent and giving out food and souvenirs. Brian also noted that March 2nd is Water Professionals Day and Water Week is the first week in May. He informed the Board that Mr. Jackie Rosier will be retiring on March 31st. LRWS has two new employees. One employee started work today and the other will start next week.

(Staff Reports)

1. Deputy General Managers Report
2. Human Resource Managers Report
   1. Marlene provided the work hours for the months of November, December, and January. She introduced the Commissioners to the new Treatment Manager, Alec Sterling.
3. Billing Managers Report
   1. Sara provided the billing numbers on the operations report for the months of November, December, and January. It was noted that the water and wastewater numbers were higher in December due to customers having busted pipes.
4. Engineers Report
   1. The construction permit was issued by DHEC on 2/10/23 for the Brunson WWTP Project.
   2. We met with Dominion regarding power supply concerns and are working on change orders to address electrical changes for the Brunson PS Upgrade Project.
   3. We will be receiving bids on March 21, 2023, for the Yemassee Water & Sewer Improvements.
   4. We have received a proposal for pretreatment for the Yemassee WWTP Aeration Upgrade & Flow Splitting Project.
   5. Kari also discussed logo options for the Jackson Ave tank. She handed out a few pictures to show the Commissioners what the tank could look like.
5. Field Operations Managers Report
   1. Blake provided a handout of the work that the field crew had done since the last meeting.
6. Treatment Operations Managers Report
   1. Alec provided the treatment numbers for each town on the operations reports.

7. **System Member Commissioners Reports**

A. Town of Brunson- The town’s Christmas event was cancelled due to the weather. The Mayor and Ms. Barbara decided to hold the event in early February. The fire department cooked hot dogs and the town gave out gifts.

The town has money to upgrade Terry Wright Park. The basketball court will be resurfaced, and new playground equipment will be purchased.

B. Town of Gifford- The store on the corner has been leased.

The town hall has new sidewalk around it. Sometime soon the town will have more sidewalks poured.

The town received a $250,000 grant to work on the school.

The town also received a deal with the USDA to upgrade the playground equipment.

C. Town of Hampton- The Christmas events went well, and attendance was high even though the weather was bad.

The town accepted a bid to redo the tennis court and they are looking to upgrade the parks.

D. Town of Varnville- The first annual Christmas event went great. The fireworks display was a big hit.

The town closed on a building on Main St. It will be remodeled.

E. Town of Yemassee- The Christmas event was a success. The cake walk was so successful that it lasted for almost 3 hours.

There was a public meeting with Iron Line. They are proposing to do a business on Hwy 17. There will be 107 affordable houses behind that area.

The demolition project should begin soon.

Baseball sign up has started.

F. Hampton County- Mr. Williams discussed some future goals that he has for the County and for LRWS.

8**. Old Business**

9. **New Business**

1. Mr. Bill Hancock, The Brittingham Group LLC Presentation of Audited Financial Statement Year Ending September 30, 2022.

Mr. Hancock presented the financial audit for the year ending September 30, 2022. He discussed the findings of the financial audit to include the current long-term debt, schedule of revenues and expenses, and internal controls. The system’s financial statements were tested for its compliance with certain laws, regulations, grant agreements, and contracts. Mr. Hancock reported that those tests disclosed no instances of noncompliance or other matters to be reported. Rocky Hudson asked why the Board needed to be concerned about the long-term debt. Mr. Hancock explained it to them and noted that the system was able to save money by refinancing its 2016A Carter Bank loan.

Moved by Peggy O’Banner, seconded by Robert Brown to accept the financial audit for the year ending September 30, 2022. Motion carried unanimously.

1. Resolution 2023-01 Establishing Length of Service for New Hires

Brian discussed the New Hire-Establishment of Length of Service policy with the Board. The purpose of the policy is to provide incentive to recruit skilled employees. New employees may be eligible for service credit based on their length of service with their previous employer provided certain requirements are met. The new hire must have had continuous service with at least one year with a unit of government such as a municipality, county, state, federal, public service authority, public district, or be a full-time uniformed member or employee of a state or federal military. The maximum length of service credit shall not exceed 10 years.

Brian told the Board members that there were 2 employees of LRWS who this policy would effect and that he wanted to retro their length of service accordingly.

Moved by Nat Shaffer, seconded by Robert Brown to approve Resolution 2023- 01 Establishing Length of Service for New Hires and making this Resolution retroactive. Motion carried unanimously.

**10. Public Comments**

**11. Adjournment**

Moved by Nat Shaffer, seconded by Peggy O’Banner to adjourn. Motion carried unanimously. Meeting then adjourned at 5:07 pm.

*Respectfully submitted by Sara Craven.*