

The Lowcountry Regional Water System Commission (herein referred to as “LRWS” of the “Commission”) held its regular meeting on at 4:00 pm on Thursday, August 6, 2020 at 513 Elm St West, Hampton South Carolina. The Commission conducted this meeting in electronic form. The meeting was advertised as prescribed by law.

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

Mayor Jimmy Bilka, Hampton

Mayor Nat Shaffer, Varnville

Ms. Peggy O’Banner, Yemassee

Mayor Horney Mitchell, Gifford

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

Ms. Sara Craven, Secretary

Ms. Kari Foy, Engineer

Ms. Marlene Marchyshyn, Treasurer

**Visitors Present:** None

**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 Nat Shaffer.

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. **Emergency Resolution (Electronic Meetings)**

Moved by Peggy O’Banner, seconded by Jimmy Bilka to accept the Emergency Resoultion (Electronic Meetings). Motion carried unanimously.

5.**Adoption of the Agenda**

Moved by Jimmy Bilka, seconded by Peggy O’Banner to adopt the Agenda. Motion carried unanimously.

6. **Approval of Minutes: Regular Meeting June 23, 2020**

Moved by Peggy O’Banner, seconded by Nat Shaffer to approve the minutes of the regular meeting. Motion carried unanimously.

6. **Reports**

1. **Financial Report**

The financial report for the month of June was presented by Marlene Marchyshyn and is summarized below.

Total monthly revenue: $248,820.30

Total monthly expenditures: $276,733.94

Cash Account Balances

General Revenue: $184,150.05

Designated Purpose Funds: $73,449.34

Capital Improvement Funds: $119,302.14

Ancillary Town Charges: $55,099.78

Bond Funds & Reserves: $341,376.49

Deprececiation/Contingency Funds: $1,055,715.25

Unrestricted: $184,150.05

Restricted: $1,589,843.22

1. **Operations Report**

The Operations Report for June was presented by Brian Burgess and is summarized below:

The water system total gallons produced for the month was 22,496,861 with total gallons sold at 18,030,252. Total water unaccounted for was 4,449,638 with percentage inefficiency at 20%.

The wastewater system total gallons received was 47,654,664 with a total gallons treated at 15,974,264. Total percentage inefficiency was 66%.

Total active water services was 3,123 with total active sewer services at 2,808.

Service orders issued was 140 with 127 completed.

Total work hours were 2,426.5 with 0 hours overtime in administration, 34.5 hours overtime in Distribution and Collection and 5.5 hours overtime in Treatment.

There were no Workers Comp incidents and no loss time reported.

1. **Manager’s Report**

Brian discussed the status of field operations and how things were going. He told the Board that the department was understaffed and suggested hiring an electrician full time and contracting out the grass cutting. He informed the Board that an interview had been held for the Field Operations Managers position but that the pay range was not adeqate for the hopeful employee. Brian suggested getting a pay rate study done.

1. **Engineer’s Report-**

* The contractor estimates 7 weeks to finish the Sludge Dewatering Project.
* The bid date is set for 09/01/2020 for the Brunson WWTP Project.
* The close out documents need to be prepared to transfer assets pretaining to the Nix Street Project. We are waiting on an update for reimbursements for emergency reconnects.
* We are waiting on the attorney regarding the Gifford Waterline Extension Project.
* The contractor is scheduled to mobilize in mid- August on the Tank Renovation Project.

7. **System Member Commissioners Report**

(A) **Town of Brunson**- The Preacher House Project is in progress. Blake Hodge has donated labor for this project from the County. The town has been given money to renovate the old Town Hall. There has been an issue with some residents not wanting street lights on their property. The town will be honoring their past Mayor Terry Wright on August 29th by declaring this day Terry Wright Day. The town park will also be named after him to show thanks for his service and dedication to the town.

(B) **Town of Gifford-** The town held a bid opening for the School Project but only received 1 bid. Because of this, the project will be rebid at a later date.

(C) **Town of Hampton-** The town had its election. Beth Chafin was re-elected and Robert Brown was newly elected. Unfortunately Mr. Haygood will no longer be serving. He had 40 years of service with the town. The town had some flooding and fallen trees yesterday during a bad storm. An oak tree fell down in Lightsey Park during that storm. The contractor came out last night to survey everything and had it cleaned up this morning. The town hall opened to the public a couple of weeks ago. Jake Sullivan will be leaving the Police Department.

(D) **Town of Varnville**- The Intersection Project is making progress. The Council now has 6 members but the town is hoping to limit it to 5 in the future.

(E) **Town of Yemassee-** The town has passed a mask ordinance. The mural in Veteran’s Park was dedicated and on Veteran’s Day the whole park will be dedicated.

(F) **County of Hampton-** N/A

8. **Old Business**

None

9. **New Business**

* 1. Decommission of Sycamore St Tank in Varnville

The commission discussed the cost to take the tank down and decided to allow Brian Burgess to seek funds for this item in the new budget.

* 1. Yemassee CDBG Project Cost Sharing

Moved by Horney Mitchell, seconded by Peggy O’Banner to accept the Yemassee CDBG Project Cost Sharing. Motion carried unanimously.

* 1. 2019 Annual Report

Brian briefly discussed the 2019 Annual report and told Board members that a copy of the report would be provided to the member towns.

Moved by Jimmy Bilka, seconded by Horney Mitchell to accept the report as written. Motion carried unanimously.

* 1. First Reading 2020-2021 Annual Operation Budget

Brian discussed the proposed 2020-2021 budget with the Board. The proposed budget includes a CPI (consumer price index-aka COLA) pay raise of .6% and an additional $21,000 for performance evaluation raises. The proposed Operating Budget is $3,234,444.44 which is a 6.39% increase from the 2019-2020 budget. The Capital Improvement Renewal & Replacement budget is $140,000 and the Capital Improvement Extension & Expansion is $43,000.

Moved by Horney Mitchell, seconded by Peggy O’Banner to accept the first reading of the 2020-2021 annual operating budget. Motion carried unanimously.

* 1. Consideration to Refund Carter Bank Bond

Refinancing of the Carter Bank Bond through USDA would be included with the Brunson WWTP project. The current interest rate on the Carter Bank loan is at 2.7%. The interest rate to refinance would be at 1.5%.

Moved by Peggy O’Banner, seconded by Jimmy Bilka to allow Brian Burgess to proceed with the process to refund the Carter Bank Bond. Motion carried unanimously.

* 1. Consideration for GIS Information Sharing With Towns, The County and The Fire Departments

Discussions were held concerning the sharing of LRWS’ GIS information with the towns, County, and Fire Departments. The Board agreed that the information should be shared and that a hold harmless type policy should be drafted pertaining to this.

Moved by Nat Shaffer, seconded by Peggy O’Banner to allow GIS information sharing with the towns, the county and the fire department. Motion carried unanimously.

10. **Questions & Comments**

11. **Executive Session**

* 1. Discussion of Matters related to the General Manager’s compensation as allowed by SC Code of Laws as Amended, **Section 30-4-70 (a) (1)** discussion of employment, appointment, compensation, promotion, demotion, discipline, or release of an employee, a student, or a person regulated by a public body or the appointment of a person to a public body**;**

Moved by Nat Shaffer, seconded by Peggy O’Banner to enter into executive session. Motion carried unanimously.

Move by Peggy O’Banner, seconded by Nat Shaffer to exit executive session. Motion carried unanimously.

The Board discussed the issue and agreed to seek legal counsel before making a decision.

12. **Adjournment**

Moved by Nat Shaffer, seconded by Jimmy Bilka to adjourn. Motion carried unanimously. The meeting then adjourned at 6:50.

Respectfully submitted by Sara Craven.