



MINUTES

Business Meeting of the Niagara Falls Water Board October 24, 2022 at 5:00 p.m.

NOTE: Meeting was held at the Wastewater Treatment Plant Conference Room, 1201 Buffalo Avenue, Niagara Falls, NY 14304. Videoconference attendance also was facilitated as set forth in the meeting notice, and Board Members were permitted to participate and vote via videoconference pursuant to Resolution 2022-10-001, Resolution to Permit Videoconference Meetings in Accordance with Part WW of Chapter 56 of the Laws of 2022.

1. Preliminary Matters

Chairman Forster called the meeting to order at 5:02 p.m.

a. Attendance:

Asklar (Board Member/Chairman of Finance/Member Exec. Staff Review Cmte.) *Present*

Forster (Chairman) *Present*

Kimble (Board Member) *Present via Videoconference*

Larkin (Board Member/Vice Chairwoman/Governance Chairwoman/
Chairwoman Exec. Staff Review Cmte.) *Present at 5:05 p.m.*

Leffler (Board Member/Member Exec. Staff Review Cmte.) *Present*

- b. Public Comments (All speakers must register with the meeting clerk prior to roll call and are limited to three minutes per person – total time for all speakers may not exceed one hour).**

None.

c. Comments from Chairman Forster

None.

d. Presentations (none scheduled)

None.

e. Letters and Communications

i. 2022-10-19– COVID Wastewater Surveillance Update Memorandum

f. Prior Meeting Minutes

i. Draft October 3, 2022 Meeting Minutes

Motion by Board Member Leffler and seconded by Board Member Asklar to approve the October 3, 2022 Meeting Minutes.

Asklar Y Forster Y Kimble Y Larkin Y Leffler Y

Motion carried, 5-0.

2. Executive Director – Dr. Abderrahman Zehraoui

- a. WWTP Project Budget Tracker (CPL)**
- b. WWTP Construction Schedule Tracker (CPL)**
- c. Financial Award Summary (CPL)**
- d. WTP Check Valve Repair**
- e. 2023 Chemical Bid Results**
 - i. 2023 Chemical Bid Agenda Item and Bid Tally**
 - ii. 2023 Chemical Bid Comparison to Prior Years**

Mr. Donner discussed the WWTP project budget tracker and construction schedule tracker updates. Mr. Donner states Project 1 – Basin 4 is on schedule and will be completed by the end of the year. Project 2 – Gorge Pump Station – Clayton Hotchkiss and Kaman did great work regarding this project. Project 3 – urging for Hohl Industrial and Arcadis to progress with the polymer system. Phase II proposed project memorandum to request approval of these projects by DEC and EFC will be completed soon.

Chairman Forster requests that Dr. Zehraoui and Mr. Costello have a conversation with Arcadis regarding Project 3 and the slow progression. Mr. Costello noted that a status meeting is being held with CPL, Arcadis, and necessary NFWB staff on Tuesday October 25, 2022, at 9:30 a.m.

Discussion was had regarding the chemical bids.

WWTP disinfecting chemical sodium hypochlorite prices have increased from \$1.18 per gallon to \$2.389 per gallon. This and other huge increases noted in the bid tally document will have a major impact on next year's budget and the rate increase required to continue operating.

Mr. Costello noted that the NFWB received zero bids for one-ton chlorine cylinders that are used to treat the drinking water and is requesting that City Engineering re-bid this item.

44 bid packets were distributed. 12 responses were received, where only 1-2- items were bid on per response. In the past the rate of response was much higher, supply chain conditions and Oxy closing its plant are thought to be factors in the low response rate.

3. Outside Infrastructure Updates – Michael Eagler

Mr. Eagler states the root foaming project (approximately 2,000 feet) has been completed for 2022.

A leak on the water tank of the VacCon truck has been repaired under warranty.

4. Engineering – Douglas Williamson

a. 2023 Town of Niagara Flow Monitoring / Service Charge Calculation

Mr. Williamson provided the Board Members with a detailed graph regarding the Town of Niagara flow monitoring/service charge calculation.

Chairman Forster questions what the contributory factors are for the increase in the amount to be billed to the Town in 2023. Mr. Williamson states it is due to the increased wet weather during the flow monitoring period in the Spring, the charge to the Town changes from year-to-year based on the prior year's flow monitoring results.

5. Personnel Items – David San Lorenzo

a. Paychex Update

b. October 24, 2022 Personnel Actions Report

Mr. Accardo presented on behalf of Mr. San Lorenzo.

Motion by Board Member Larkin and seconded by Board Member Asklar to approve the October 24, 2022 Personnel Actions.

Asklar __Y__ Forster __Y__ Kimble __Y__ Larkin __Y__ Leffler __Y__

Motion carried, 5-0.

6. Information Technology (IT) – Dr. Abderrahman Zehraoui

7. Finance – Brian Majchrowicz

- a. Revenue Budget Performance Report through September 30
- b. Sewer Fund Expense Budget Performance Report through September 30
- c. Water Fund Expense Budget Performance Report through September 30
- d. Board Fund Expense Budget Performance Report through September 30
- e. Key Bank and Bank on Buffalo Balance Report
- f. Wilmington Trust Balance Report
- g. Treasury Account Balance Report
- h. Budget Amendments Report
- i. July and August 2022 Capital Payments
- j. 2023 Preliminary Budget

Mr. Majchrowicz explains the 8.9% rate increase that is being proposed, due to the soaring chemical costs, increase in personnel costs including from contractual raises and filling vacant positions, and 10% increase in medical costs. The proposed 8.9% rate increase would increase the minimum bill by \$11.38/quarterly. The original increase was proposed to be 9.9% but certain budget lines were trimmed.

Mr. Majchrowicz suggested that a public hearing be scheduled for November 14, 2022.

Chairman Forster states the Executive Staff at the NFWB has been working together to draft a letter of support regarding Proposition 1, the Environmental Bond Act. Staff also has been working on correspondence to relevant officials addressing the above-average chemical costs and how these are impacting the Water Board and ratepayers. Chairman Forster also states he will be meeting with the Mayor of Niagara Falls along with the City Administrator to further discuss this matter.

8. Questions Regarding September 2022 Operations and Maintenance Report

9. Safety – David San Lorenzo

Mr. Accardo states that work is progressing on a safety alert system at the WWTP and 20 locations have been identified at the WWTP for strobe lights/alarms. Mr. Accardo has also been gathering information regarding the NFWB fleet – employee license numbers, vehicle inventory, inspection/oil change information, etc.

Buffalo Auction to visit the 56th St. water tower to evaluate old equipment on 10/25/2022 and whether they will be able to assist with an auction to dispose of surplus property.

10. General Counsel and Secretary – Sean Costello

11. From the Chairman

Chairman Forster states he completed a tour of the WTP with Dr. Zehraoui, Mr. Accardo, Mr. San Lorenzo, and Mr. Rowe. Chairman Forster states that repairs to the WTP roofs were completed some time ago and the roofs are currently in bad shape. Currently the roofs are leaking in approximately 6-7 different locations and Mr. Rowe expressed great concerns regarding this issue. Chairman Forster states the repairs to all roofs at the WTP will cost approximately \$3-5 million to repair.

12. Resolutions

2022-10-019 – GAS DETECTION SYSTEM FOR LIFT STATIONS

a. Lift Station Gas Detection Hardware Quote from DiVal, October 6, 2022

Motion by Board Member Larkin and seconded by Board Member Leffler to approve.

Asklar __Y__ Forster __Y__ Kimble __Y__ Larkin __Y__ Leffler __Y__

Motion carried, 5-0.

2022-10-020 – AUTHORIZING SETTLEMENT OF BRADBERRY CLAIM

a. Claim Documents

Motion by Board Member Larkin and seconded by Board Member Asklar to approve.

Asklar __Y__ Forster __Y__ Kimble __Y__ Larkin __Y__ Leffler __Y__

Motion carried, 5-0.

13. Unfinished/Old Business

1) Board Room WTP:

- 9/22/22: The acoustical ceiling grid has been laid out and drawing on CAD. The existing ceiling lights have been removed and new ones have been ordered. We received shop drawings on 8/19/22 and are waiting on the fabrication of the conference room desk.
- 10/20/22: The communications pipe, the last obstruction that requires relocation, will be removed on October 31.

2) WWTP Sodium Hypochlorite Tank Replacement

- 7/14/22: The 2021 WIIA Sewer (WWTP) Grant of \$1,125,000 was awarded on April 19, 2022 that included the some of the funds necessary to complete the WWTP tank removal and replacement work. We may be able to utilize some of the remaining balance of the WWTP Phase II grant to assist with this work, as well. We need approval from the NYSDEC to include some of the WWTP tank replacement work under this WWTP Phase II grant. The draft WWTP Tank Replacement RFP that was created needs to be finalized to show the grant funding sources that have been approved for the project, before we can proceed.
- 9/22/22: Next step is requesting approval to use Phase II grant funds (will be packaged with other projects).

3) Whitney Ave. Water Main Replacement

- 9/22/22: Design documents to be submitted to DOH for approval by 10/1.

4) 18th Street Water Main Replacement

- 7/14/22: 4th Generation was awarded bid at June 2022 Board meeting. 30-week lead time for material delivery.
- 9/22/22: Construction planned to commence in Spring 2023.

5) WTP Perimeter Fence Replacement Update

- 7/14/22: The 2021 WIIA Water Grant application of \$3 million was awarded on April 19, 2022 that included some funds that can be used for the WTP perimeter fence replacement work. On 7/13/22, the capital purchase order for the \$8,000 brush hog was completed to assist with the work in-house. WTP maintenance to schedule and coordinate the fencing work.
- 9/22/2022: Brush hog delivered, Outside Maintenance has used it to clear along the fence line.

6) Paychex Payroll System Update

- 10/20/22: System is live for payroll, work continues on integrating accruals and time-off requests.

14. New Business & Additional Items for Discussion

- a. Review of internal controls on gate access cards and master keys.**

15. Executive Session (if needed)

Motion by Board Member Leffler and seconded by Board Member Larkin to enter into Executive Session for the purpose of considering matters leading to the appointment, employment, promotion, demotion, or removal of a particular person (Public Officers Law § 105(f)) at 5:48 p.m.

Asklar Y Forster Y Kimble Y Larkin Y Leffler Y

Motion carried, 5-0.

Motion by Board Member Leffler and seconded by Board Member Kimble to exit Executive Session at 6:04 p.m.

Asklar Y Forster Y Kimble Y Larkin Y Leffler Y

Motion carried, 5-0.

16. Adjournment of Meeting

Motion by Board Member Larkin and seconded by Board Member Asklar to adjourn the meeting at 6:05 p.m.

Asklar Y Forster Y Kimble Y Larkin Y Leffler Y

Motion carried, 5-0.