



MINUTES

Business Meeting of the Niagara Falls Water Board December 15, 2025 at 5:00 p.m.

**Water Treatment Plant Conference Room
5815 Buffalo Avenue, Niagara Falls New York 14304**

Meeting could be attended in person or via videoconference. Minutes do not represent a complete summary of all matters discussed. Complete video recordings of meetings are posted online at: <https://tinyurl.com/nfwbMedia>.

1. Preliminary Matters

a. Call To Order

Chairman Sirianni called the meeting to order at 5:04 p.m.

b. Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America

c. Attendance:

Cole Present, Dean Present, Kimble Present via Zoom, Sirianni Present.

d. Public Comments (all other topics): Speakers must register with the Secretary by 5:00 p.m. and are limited to three minutes per person – total time for all speakers may not exceed one hour.

Earl Wells III, president of e3communications, introduced himself and his public relations and government relations firm. He thanked the Board for the potential opportunity to work on water and wastewater infrastructure needs.

e. Prior Meeting Minutes

i. Draft November 17, 2025 Business Meeting Minutes

Motion by Board Member Dean and seconded by Board Member Kimble to accept the November 17, 2025 business meeting minutes.

Cole Y Dean Y Kimble Y Sirianni Y

Motion carried, 4-0.

2. Executive Director & General Counsel – Sean Costello

Mr. Costello displayed a copy of the service line material notifications that will be mailed to customers the week of December 22. These EPA-required notices will be accompanied by a diagram showing the potential sources of lead in the home.

Mr. Costello also presented slides with photographs of the moving bed biological reactor (MBBR), disc filters, and biological aerated filters that the team working on the WWTP Preliminary Engineering Report viewed during site visits in November.

3. Engineering – Doug Williamson

Mr. Williamson discussed changes in chemical bid prices as reflected by the charts included in the agenda packet. The bid for the West Rivershore watermain replacement project was opened on December 6, the two bids received are being reviewed with possible award in January.

4. Finance – Deborah Ziolkowski

- a. Bank Account Balance Report**
- b. Invested Funds Balance Report**
- c. Wilmington Trust Account Report**
- d. 2025 Tax Transfer**

Ms. Ziolkowski noted that there was a large decrease in the amount of unpaid bills transferred to City taxes, attributed to the resumption of service terminations for unpaid bills. She is learning Finance Department systems, and has transitioned to electronic approvals for journal entries. Board Member Dean requested additional information regarding how much the Water Board receives from the City after it transfers balances to taxes.

5. Administrative Services – Caleb Holman

a. December 15, 2025 Personnel Actions

Mr. Holman noted that there will be an additional session of mandatory ethics training as well as repetitive motion injury prevention training this month. He noted the three items for Board approval on the Personnel Actions sheet. Line 1 is a compliance officer/industrial waste inspector for succession planning, in advance of Steve Stewart's May 2026 retirement. Line 2 is promotion of a WWTP Buildings and Grounds worker from MW2 to MW3. Line 3 is permanent appointment of a Sr. Administrative Assistant, which was listed in the personnel budget information accompanying the 2026 budget.

Motion by Board Member Dean and seconded by Chairman Sirianni to approve Line Item 1 on the December 15, 2025 Personnel Actions, authorization to hire a Compliance Officer/Industrial Waste Inspector.

Cole N Dean Y Kimble N Sirianni Y

Motion failed, 2-2.

Chairman Sirianni asked Mr. Costello the purpose of the position, which was explained as including collecting samples at industry that the Water Board uses for billing. They also check industry compliance with their permits.

Motion by Board Member Dean and seconded by Chairman Sirianni to approve Line Item 2 on the December 15, 2025 Personnel Actions, authorization to promote a WWTP Buildings & Grounds MW2 to MW3.

Cole N Dean Y Kimble Y Sirianni Y

Motion carried, 3-1.

Motion by Board Member Dean and seconded by Chairman Sirianni to approve Line Item 3 on the December 15, 2025 Personnel Actions, authorization for permanent appointment of Erin Macri as Sr. Administrative Assistant.

Cole N Dean Y Kimble N Sirianni Y

Motion failed, 2-2.

Chairman Sirianni questioned the reason for the “no” votes, saying the person in question is doing an excellent job and suggesting politics are involved. Board Member Kimble took exception, stating that she feels individuals are not being treated fairly and votes in what she feels is in the best interest of the Water Board and human decency. Board Member Cole stated he echoes Board Member Kimble's comments and that he feels the one playing politics is Chairman Sirianni, questioning why otherwise would he serve on the Board as a

non-resident. Chairman Sirianni stated that he is allowed to be on the Board and that he believes Board Member Cole's decision on the vote is being made by Mayor Restaino. He questioned whether Board Member Cole wanted to violate the Board's residence preference resolution and the Civil Service law, which Board Member Cole denied and said that Chairman Sirianni is just upset with him for not voting the way the Chairman wants. Though he voted no, Board Member Cole supports Erin Macri getting the promotion.

Further discussion on the proposed promotion ensued. Erin Macri currently is a provisional Administrative Assistant. There is a budgeted Sr. Administrative Assistant for 2026, but not an Administrative Assistant. If not appointed to Sr. Administrative Assistant, she will need to be terminated. Board Member Cole felt elimination of one of the two administrative positions was done in a way that was not transparent and questioned why one of those positions would be eliminated when the Finance Department now is short a position. Mr. Holman advised that the positions in question are in Administrative Services, not finance. Board Member Cole questioned why an administrative position was eliminated in the budget passed in November when in October he believed a majority of the Board voted against that. Mr. Holman noted that the vote in October was not to eliminate a position, it was to appoint a Sr. Administrative Assistant, and there was a notation that the administrative assistant position was anticipated to be eliminated in the 2026 budget. Board Member Dean clarified that the notation was additional information, not the action that was voted upon.

6. Outside Infrastructure Updates – Michael Eagler, Sr.

Mr. Eagler discussed recent bids for repairs to sewers too deep for NFWB equipment, with work starting on 78th Street later in the week and a date still to be determined for 88th Street. On the date of the Board meeting an emergency bid is being opened for a 15-inch sewer main on 24th Street between Seneca and Fairfield, which drains the CSX railyard. The main is collapsed and must be repaired to restore service to impacted properties. The excavation for this repair will need to go to 17' in depth. Mr. Costello noted that this is an emergency situation and he will authorize the work, with a Board resolution in January to approve payment.

Mr. Eagler also discussed an issue in the "Alphabet" streets, where National Fuel has made many exploratory excavations to try to find the source of water in its gas main. That water tested positive for fluoride at a percentage much higher than what the WTP provides in finished water. The source of the water was not a water main break, and the elevated fluoride was due to road salt. The Water Board had no role in National Fuel's problem.

Mr. Eagler will begin working with Mr. Reid in the Meter Shop to develop a plan for large meter testing.

7. Information Technology (IT) –Jonathan Joyce or Elton Mensah-Selby

Mr. Joyce reported that security scans have disclosed no high-level vulnerabilities. The print server at City Hall has been upgraded to allow continued access to New World for the staff collecting Water Board payments. A resolution before the Board is to purchase new switches for the WTP, which will address some failing switches while enhancing IT's ability to segment the internal network and diagnose network issues. Mr. Mensah-Selby has obtained UPS quotes, but they are working to find a way to purchase by piggybacking on another government contract. IT also is working to test new SCADA software for the WTP, which would mean moving away from the current dated GE software.

8. Questions Regarding November 2025 Operations and Maintenance Report

9. Resolutions

2025-12-001 - PROCUREMENT OF NETWORK SWITCHES FOR WTP

a. 2025-11-17 - International Data Link Quote for WTP Switches

Motion by Board Member Dean and seconded by Chairman Sirianni to approve.

Cole Y Dean Y Kimble Y Sirianni Y

Motion carried, 4-0.

**RESOLUTION 2025-12-002 - RENEWING MEMORANDUM OF
UNDERSTANDING WITH JAMESTOWN COMMUNITY COLLEGE**

a. MOU NFWB-JCC 2026

Motion by Board Member Kimble and seconded by Board Member Dean to approve.

Cole Y Dean Y Kimble Y Sirianni Y

Motion carried, 4-0.

2025-12-003 - COMBINED BID FOR 2026 WATER AND WASTEWATER TREATMENT CHEMICALS

- a. 2025-11-28 - NFWB Bid #W2025-02, Chemicals, Award Recommendation
- b. Historical Chemical Bid Price Information

Motion by Board Member Dean and seconded by Board Member Kimble to approve.

Cole Y Dean Y Kimble Y Sirianni Y

Motion carried, 4-0.

2025-12-004 - ACCEPTING PROPOSAL FOR GOVERNMENT RELATIONS AND LOBBYING SERVICES

- a. e3communications proposal dated November 12, 2025

Motion by Board Member Kimble and seconded by Board Member Dean to approve.

Cole N Dean Y Kimble Y Sirianni Y

Motion carried, 3-1.

2025-12-005 - ANNUAL REVIEW OF PROCUREMENT AND INVESTMENT POLICIES

- a. NFWB Procurement Policy v1.7.1
- b. NFWB Investment Policy v1.3.1

Motion by Board Member Dean and seconded by Board Member Kimble to approve.

Cole N Dean Y Kimble Y Sirianni Y

Motion carried, 3-1.

2025-12-006 - MISSION STATEMENT, PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENTS, ANNUAL REPORT

- a. 2025 Annual Review of Mission Statement, Performance Measurements, Report on Ops and Accomplishments

Motion by Board Member Kimble and seconded by Board Member Dean to approve.

Cole Y Dean Y Kimble Y Sirianni Y

Motion carried, 4-0.

**2025-12-007 - AWARD BID FOR 15 INCH SANITARY SEWER MAIN REPAIR,
600 BLOCK OF 88TH STREET**

- a. 2025-12-11 - Bid Tabulation and Award Recommendation for 15-Inch
Sanitary Sewer Repair, 600 Blk of 88th St**

Motion by Board Member Dean and seconded by Board Member Kimble to approve.

Cole Y Dean Y Kimble Y Sirianni Y

Motion carried, 4-0.

**2025-12-008 - AWARD OF BID FOR WATER AND SEWER CONSTRUCTION
AND REPAIR MATERIALS**

- a. 2025-12-11 – Bid Tabulation and Award Recommendation - Bid 2025-01,
Water and Sewer Construction and Repair Materials**

Motion by Board Member Kimble and seconded by Board Member Dean to approve.

Cole Y Dean Y Kimble Y Sirianni Y

Motion carried, 4-0.

10. Unfinished/Old Business

11. New Business & Additional Items for Discussion

- 12. Executive Session (anticipated, pursuant to Public Officers Law § 105(1)(f),
regarding matters related to the appointment, employment, promotion, demotion,
discipline, suspension, dismissal or removal of particular persons)**

*Motion by Board Member Kimble and seconded by Board Member Dean to enter into
executive session at 6:10 p.m. and pursuant to Public Officers Law § 105(1)(f), to discuss
matters related to the appointment, employment, promotion, demotion, discipline, suspension,
dismissal or removal of particular persons.*

Cole Y Dean Y Kimble Y Sirianni Y

Motion carried, 4-0.

MINUTES OF THE EXECUTIVE SESSION

The following motion was approved by the Board while in Executive Session:

Motion by Board Member Kimble and seconded by Chairman Sirianni to terminate Michael Smith's at-will appointment as Director of Financial Services based on unprofessional conduct and unsatisfactory performance, as more fully described in a memorandum from the Executive Director dated December 11, 2025, and because the Board no longer has confidence in his ability to perform the duties of that position.

Cole Y Dean Y Kimble Y Sirianni Y

Motion carried, 4-0.

Whereupon the Board returned to the public session, and entertained a motion by Board Member Kimble and seconded by Board Member Dean to exit Executive Session at 6:43 p.m.

Cole Y Dean Y Kimble Y Sirianni Y

Motion carried, 4-0.

Motion by Board Member Kimble and seconded by Board Member Dean to return to the open meeting.

Cole Y Dean Y Kimble Y Sirianni Y

Motion carried, 4-0.

Motion by Board Member Kimble and seconded by Board Member Dean to appoint Deborah Ziolkowski Director of Financial Services at a salary of \$92,500.

Cole Y Dean Y Kimble Y Sirianni Y

Motion carried, 4-0.

13. Adjournment of Meeting

Motion by Board Member Kimble and seconded by Board Member Dean to adjourn the meeting at 6:45 p.m.

Cole Y Dean Y Kimble Y Sirianni Y

Motion carried, 4-0.

DRAFT