

MINUTES

Regular Meeting
Cleveland County Water Board Room

July 8, 2025
Tuesday, 6:00 P.M.

Present: Chairman Donald Melton; presiding, Vice Chairman Bill Cameron, Secretary Amy Elliott Bridges Commissioners Tony Brooks, Bruce Martin, Pamela P. Maddox and Pete Pedersen. Attorney Delton W. Barnes and General Manager Brad Cornwell were present.

Chairman Donald Melton called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM, welcomed all who were in attendance and recognized Commissioner Pamela Maddox who gave the invocation and Commissioner Pete Pedersen led the *Pledge of Allegiance*.

A. Approval of Agenda:

Chairman Melton asked Commissioners if anyone had any questions related to the adoption of the agenda. Mr. Cornwell noted that an updated agenda could be found at the members' seats. The updated agenda includes the addition of number C-8 in the consent agenda. This item is for the Hurricane Helene regionalization grant with the Town of Fallston. Chairman Melton requested a motion to adopt the agenda as amended.

ACTION TAKEN: Upon a motion by Mr. Cameron and second by Mr. Pederson, the Board of Commissioners voted unanimously to accept the agenda as amended.

B. Public Comment

No public comments were presented.

C. Consent Agenda:

ACTION TAKEN: Chairman Melton presented the Consent Agenda Items. Upon a motion by Mr. Brooks, second by Mrs. Maddox, the Board of Commissioners voted unanimously to approve the Consent Agenda. The Consent Agenda consisted of the following items:

- 1) Approval of the Minutes of the Regular Meeting of June 10, 2025
- 2) Consideration of Resolution Number 22-2025 A Resolution Approving Section 125 Plan Documents and Authorizing Administration of the Plan

- 3) Consideration of Resolution Number 23-2025 A Resolution Authorizing Execution of a Master Services Agreement Between Cleveland County Water and McGill Associates, PA For As-Needed Professional Consulting Services
- 4) Consideration of Ordinance Number 11-2025 An Ordinance Establishing a Capital Project Ordinance and Budgets for Cleveland County Water's FEMA Hurricane Helene Creek Crossing Replacement Project
- 5) Consideration of Resolution Number 25-2025 A Resolution Adopting Certain Updated Personnel Policies
- 6) Consideration of Ordinance Number 12-2025 An Ordinance Establishing a Capital Project Ordinance and Budgets for Cleveland County Water's USDA – Broad River Water Treatment Plant Project
- 7) Considerations of Resolution Number 26-2025 A Resolution Authorizing Execution of an Agreement with Withers Ravenel for an Updated Rate Study and System Development Fee Analysis
- 8) Consideration of Resolution Number 28-2025 A Resolution by Cleveland County Water For The Hurricane Helene Grant for Regionalization With the Town of Fallston Water System Project Number HEL-RTA-15

D. Unfinished Business:

- 1) Consideration of Resolution Number 27-2025 A Resolution of Tentative Award for the Hendrick Lake Tank Waterline Improvements (formerly Belwood) ARP Project SRP-D-ARP-0035

The items for unfinished business are related to one project, the resolution awards the bid and the ordinance establishes the capital project. The ARP funds were awarded \$19,000,000.00 in the original appropriation. This portion of the funding was intended for the Belwood Tank and Pump Station improvements. As other ARP projects were completed, the determination was made that the remaining funding would be more beneficial for improvements related to the Hendrick Lake Tank area. The remaining balance of the ARP funding is \$3,600,000.00. The cost savings from the other completed ARP projects can be transferred to this project. The lowest bidder for the Hendrick Lake Tank Waterline Improvements was Two Brothers Utilities, with a bid of \$5,300,000.00. CCW and Two Brothers Utilities have partnered on several previous projects. Mr. Cornwell explained to the members that this bid would be accepted, and the scope of the project would be reduced to the balance of the ARP funding that is remaining. There are three alternatives available, with three varying cost amounts. Mr. Cornwell

is recommending Alternative 2 for \$3,880,000, which is the closest accommodation to the remaining funding. The State Treasurer's office requires a balanced budget in reference to the project. Unfinished Business included Item 2, this is the ordinance for the balanced budget pertaining to this project.

ACTION TAKEN: Upon a motion by Mr. Cameron, second by Mr. Pedersen, the Board of Commissioners voted unanimously to adopt Resolution Number 27-2025 *A Resolution of Tentative Award for the Hendrick Lake Tank Waterline Improvements (formerly Belwood) ARP Project SRP-D-ARP-0035*

2) Consideration of Ordinance Number 13-2025 An Ordinance Amendment for a Capital Project Ordinance and Budgets for Cleveland County Water's ARP Funded Hendrick Lake Tank Waterline Improvements (formerly Belwood) ARP Project SRP-D-ARP-0035

ACTION TAKEN: Upon a motion by Mr. Pedersen, second by Mrs. Bridges, the Board of Commissioners voted unanimously to adopt Ordinance Number 13-2025 *An Ordinance Amendment for a Capital Project Ordinance and Budgets for Cleveland County Water's ARP Funded Hendrick Lake Waterline Improvements Project (formerly Belwood) ARP Project SRP-D-ARP-0035*

E. New Business:

1) Consideration of Resolution Number 24-2025 A Resolution to Cease the Addition of Fluoride into the Cleveland County Water System PWS ID: 01-23-055

Mr. Cornwell introduced Water Plant Superintendent, Garrett Gilbert, to assist with this presentation. The members were presented with the approval to cease the addition of the fluoride chemical to the water treatment process. If a water treatment plant decides to cease feeding fluoride in the water treatment process, two parties require notification. The first is the State of North Carolina and the second is the corresponding Health Director at the Health Department. The State of North Carolina is notified because they issue the permit for the water plant operations. Mr. Cornwell and Mr. Gilbert met Tiffany Hansen, from the Cleveland County Health Department, to have a discussion concerning fluoride. This discussion included the safety risks of water plant operators and the future capital improvement projects. These projects include the upgrade of the bulk chemical storage at the

existing water treatment plant in Lawndale. If the fluoride feed is continued, the new Broad River Treatment Plant will also require the fluoride feed and storage. This capability will raise the costs of the project \$350,000.00. This estimate will probably increase because the new Broad River Treatment Plant will be constructed in the future, and the costs of materials will increase. Ms. Hansen also scheduled a visit to the Water Treatment Plant in Lawndale. Mr. Cornwell noted that fluoride is more obtainable than when fluoride was first introduced in water treatment. Fluoride is now available in drinking water, toothpaste, and mouth wash. Ms. Hansen shared that Cleveland County will be introducing the dental bus this fall to the citizens of the county. Mr. Gilbert continued with the safety issues of the fluoride feed. Several counties in our area have ceased fluoride feeds at their water treatment plants due to the cost of the chemical and the upgrades required to their existing fluoride systems. Mr. Gilbert shared that Willis Engineers is designing the upgrades to the bulk chemical storage and estimated the fluoride portion of the upgrade to be approximately \$350,000.00. This amount would be required twice to enable the feed at the new Broad River Water Treatment Plant. The stainless steel at the water plant is available for view to see the effects of fluoride. Mr. Gilbert reminded the members that feeding fluoride is optional and serves no benefit to treating the river water. Mr. Pedersen asked if fluoride is combustible. Mr. Gilbert answered that the type of fluoride that is used during water treatment is not combustible. The acid in the pure form will melt skin and bone. The safety gear required during system maintenance is rubber gloves up to the elbow, face shields, and goggles. Mr. Pedersen inquired about how the fluoride was stored. Mr. Gilbert shared that the fluoride is stored in a fiberglass container. The bulk storage tank was replaced approximately ten years ago with an approximate cost of \$90,000.00. The existing system, if fluoride continues to be used in water treatment, will require upgrading due to the age of the system. Mr. Cameron asked if the remaining amount of fluoride would last until September 1, 2025. Mr. Gilbert shared that the remaining amount would probably be completely gone before September 1, 2025. The process of ordering fluoride requires CCW to share a load with another water treatment plant. The fluoride cannot be replenished until a whole load can be delivered, the process of finding another water plant to share a full load is a difficult process. The price for a load of fluoride is approximately \$10,000.00. The plant requires two loads in a twelve-month period to provide the predetermined required amount. The original required amounts of fluoride have been reduced over the years because fluoride is so readily available.

The EPA has mentioned further reductions, but no publications have been made. Fluoride is a natural element found already in water. Mr. Pedersen asked if the City of Shelby was currently feeding fluoride at their water treatment plant. Mr. Gilbert and Mr. Cornwell were unsure of the status of that water plant. Mr. Cornwell noted that when the water plant is waiting for a shared load of fluoride that there have been times in the past that fluoride has not been fed. Mr. Brooks inquired about the response from the Health Director. Mr. Cornwell shared that the Health Director understood the decision being made because of employee safety and cost effectiveness.

ACTION TAKEN: Upon a motion by Mr. Martin, second by Mr. Cameron, the Board of Commissioners voted unanimously to adopt Resolution Number 24-2025 *A Resolution to Cease the Addition of Fluoride into the Cleveland County Water System PWS ID: 01-23-055*

F. General Manager's Report:

Mr. Cornwell introduced the Finance Director, Ginger Fern, to present the financial reports. Mrs. Fern noted that her presentation would be the financial report for June. The amounts shared were unaudited and only included revenues and expenditures that were available at the time of reporting. The audit will be conducted during the last week of August. The FEMA reimbursement was received in June, in the amount of \$151,937.00. The final quarterly capital project transfer in the amount of \$125,000.00 to the NC Capital Management Trust account was completed. The balance in the NCCMT account is now over \$4,000,000.00. The maintenance materials expense account has a negative amount. The materials transfer for Sulphur Springs Road left the account with a negative balance. Mrs. Fern asked for any questions or comments. The General Manager report continued with Michelle Alexander, Customer Service Director. The numbers are included in the report, Mrs. Alexander asked if the members had any questions about the information. Mr. Cornwell continued with the General Manager's report. The maintenance and water plant numbers are included in the members' packets. There will be several projects completed soon, and an updated project list will be shared when those projects are removed. The water plant is currently under construction with several projects. Mr. Cornwell noted appreciation to Mr. Gilbert and the operators at the water plant. Mr. Cornwell noted appreciation to Mr. Hayes and his team for completing the scheduled line extensions. Mr. Chris Hayes has been recently promoted to

the Project Manager position. Jeff Earl retired but returned temporarily to assist in the position of Part Time Capital Project Manager. Mr. Earl has now officially retired. Mr. Alan Willis was introduced to the members. Mr. Willis has been promoted to Distribution Superintendent. Mr. Cornwell noted that Mr. Willis went through an extensive interview process and was selected as the best suited candidate for the position. Mr. Cornwell continued with his General Manager Report. The pictures were shared of the newly renovated bank building in Lawndale. This project was funded through a grant in the amount of \$415,000.00 specifically for interior renovations. The restrooms have been upgraded, and the old drive-thru has been converted into a preparation area. The intentions of the building were to be incorporated with the Greenway. Attorney Delton Barnes will be assisting in the preparation of a lease for the building. Grant applications have been submitted, over the last couple of years, for funding to assist with parking issues at the bank building. The Downtown Streetscape Project and Downtown Redevelopment Project for Building Reuse and Rehabilitation and both projects were denied funding for various reasons. Mr. Cornwell shared a proposed layout designed by TGS Engineers for parking around the Bank Building. The Greenway budget contains approximately \$105,000.00 for area repairs. The estimate for the parking lot designed by TGS Engineers is \$95,000.00. Mr. Cornwell inquired about using the budgeted funding for the repair of the parking lot around the bank building. Mr. Cornwell also noted some adjustments, for example eliminating a couple parking places, that could be made to the estimate that would present cost savings. Attorney Barnes noted that Mr. Cornwell had provided a recent tour of the Greenway. The area of the parking lot at the door of the bank building is a liability. This area should be addressed and repaired to not present a future problem. Mr. Martin inquired if the estimate included the concrete repairs. Mr. Cornwell verified that the broken concrete would also be addressed. Mr. Brooks inquired about which parking spaces would be eliminated. Mr. Cornwell answered that the two closest to the old Cleveland Mill location would be eliminated. Mr. Cornwell offered to give tours of the building to any available members that requested a tour. Mr. Cameron asked if there would be curbing. Mr. Cornwell replied that there would not be curbing. The original plan called for curb and gutters but that would add to the expense of the project. Mr. Cameron inquired about the square footage of the building. Mr. Cornwell answered that the building was 1,326 square feet. Mr. Cornwell noted that the tickets for the American Legion World Series games were at the members' seats. The August board meeting is scheduled for the

same time as the legion baseball games and the August board meeting is typically cancelled in support of the ALWS games.

ACTION TAKEN: Upon a motion by Mr. Pedersen, second by Mrs. Maddox, the Board of Commissioners voted unanimously to cancel the August board meeting.

G. Board Members Announcement and Remarks

The members noted appreciation to the employees and congratulations to Mr. Hayes and Mr. Willis on their promotions.

H. Adjournment

Action Taken: Chairman Melton called for a motion to adjourn. Upon a motion by Mr. Cameron, second by Mr. Pedersen, the Board of Commissioners voted unanimously to adjourn at 6:31 PM.

Respectfully submitted,



Amy Elliott Bridges, Secretary

