**Louisa County Water Authority**

**Board of Directors**

**September 18, 2024**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Mr. Judson Foster, Chairman; Mr. Douglas Smith, Vice-Chairman; Mr. Robert Morgan; Mr. Tom Filer; Mr. Byron Wilson

 (arrived at 6:04 pm)

MEMBERS ABSENT: Mr. David Kies; Mr. Bob Hardy

OTHERS PRESENT: Ms. Pam Baughman, General Manager; Mr. Cody Langridge, Water Operations Manager; Ms. Danielle Mychajlonka, Human

 Resources Manager; Mr. Manning Woodward, Louisa County Water Authority Board of Supervisors, Ms. Patricia Smith, County

 Attorney

**A. Call to Order**

Chairman Foster called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm.

1. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

Chairman Foster asked if there were any changes or additions to the agenda. Hearing none, Mr. Smith made a motion to adopt the agenda as presented. The motion was seconded by Mr. Morgan and carried 4-0 among the members present.

**B. Presentations**

**C. Citizen Information**

**D. Consent Agenda**

2. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES:

A. AUGUST 14, 2024 – REGULAR BUSINESS MEETING

3. TREASURER’S REPORT:

A. O & M REPORT / CAPITAL REVENUE & EXPENDITURE REPORT –AUGUST 2024

B. APPROVAL OF DISBURSEMENTS – AUGUST 2024

C. CONSTRUCTON FUND –AUGUST 2024

The Board reviewed the Consent Agenda and Treasurer’s Report. Upon completion of the review, Mr. Smith made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda and Treasurer’s Report. The motion was seconded by Mr. Filer and carried 4-0 among the members present.

*Mr. Byron Wilson arrived at 6:04 pm.*

**E. Old Business**

4. UPDATE – NEW BRIDGE WWTP

A. SHORELINE SIGN

The Board reviewed the proposed shallow water sign. The County of Louisa is completing the application and will be ordering the sign that is being proposed to be installed in the shallows above the effluent line.

B. NEW BRIDGE CHEMICAL ADDITION

The chemical addition of FLOPAM has reduced the Total Suspended Solids (TSS) sampling results to permitted limits for the month of August 2024. The General Manager, along with Ms. Patricia Smith, County Attorney and Mr. Dale Mullen, Interim County Attorney met with the Department of Environmental Quality on September 6, 2024. The meeting with DEQ was very pleasant and they recognized the efforts taken to bring the New Bridge WWTP back into compliance.

C. BUOY HIT – BEING EVALUATED AND REPAIRED

The damaged buoy was repaired and hit again. It will be repaired again once a new light has been received.

5. LEAD SERVICE LINE INVENTORY

All field work has been completed. All reports will be submitted by the end of the week. At the conference last week, other state agencies reported not needing access agreements and identified the pipe material by the service line leaving the meter box.

6. DRAFT 5 YEAR PLAN FOR CAPITAL PROJECTS

A. RIGHT-OF-WAY CLEARING OPTIONS – RFP

The Board was informed that the 5-year Plan for Capital Projects has been updated. Additionally, the RFP for right-of-way clearing has been advertised. Bids will be due to the Procurement Officer on September 24, 2024.

The Board expressed concerns with some of the language in the RFP for Tree Trimming / Right-of-Way Clearing services:

- Section II Statement of needs / scope of services does not include ongoing maintenance of reclaimed rights-of-way.

- The RFP does not specify bushhogging activities.

- Section II Statement of needs / scope of services paragraph G requires the contractor to sign in with LCWA upon arrival. The General Manager explained that the thought process was to have the contractor notify Authority staff to provide a way to control costs and notify staff that they are onsite for safety purposes.

- The RFP doesn’t designate between reclaiming and maintaining right-of-way.

- There was some discussion regarding if the contract should be billed by distance and not an hourly basis.

- Section II Statement of needs / scope of services Section A-2 calls for chips to be hauled to a designated location on the LCWA campus. The General Manager stated that more than likely the chips would be taken to the land fill.

The General Manager informed the Board that these concerns would be passed along to the Procurement Officer to see if clarification could be added to the RFP.

7. DROUGHT UPDATE

As of September 17, 2024, ground water and stream flow are under a watch. Reservoir and precipitation are in the normal range. As of September 12, 2024, Louisa County remains abnormally dry.

8. COMPREHENSIVE PLAN – LOUISA COUNTY WATER AUTHORITY SECTION

The Board reviewed the Louisa County Water Authority section of the Comprehensive Plan. Mr. Chris Coon, Deputy County Administrator and the General Manager have been working on the LCWA section together. Suggestions provided by the Board have been provided to Mr. Coon as well.

The Board reviewed the Louisa County Water Authority section of the Comprehensive Plan and requested that the two consecutive systems (Town of Louisa and Town of Mineral) are added to the document.

9. TOWN OF MINERAL APPROVAL LETTER FOR WATER SERVICE AT ST. FRANCIS AND LAGOON PUMP STATIONS

The Board reviewed the approval letter from the Town of Mineral to add water service to St. Francis and the Lagoon pump stations. Water service to the St. Francis pump station has been authorized by the Board and the connection has been completed. The original budget proposal was for $19,000. Total cost of waterline installation was just less than $10,000.

Water service to the Lagoon pump station has not been authorized by the Board. The General Manager will be requesting an updated proposal to add water service to the Lagoon Pump Station.

**F. New Business**

10. COST SAVING PROPOSAL TO COUNTY OF LOUISA – FERNCLIFF WELL

The General Manager has been looking for cost saving measures and came up with one for the operations of the Ferncliff Well. Currently, there is only one customer connected to the Ferncliff Well. This customer would need a ¾” commercial connection ($5,250). The actual cost for hooking up the customer would run in the $5,000 - $8,000 range because the water is on the opposite side of the road from the business.

The cost to operate the Ferncliff Well over the past three years has been $9,874.58, while the Authority has received $5,176.88 in revenue. Because the well is considered a public drinking water system, the sampling for the well, for one customer, is the same as the combined wells of Spring Creek Well #1 and #3 and Green Springs Wells #1, #2 and #3.

The General Manager reached out to the County to see if there was any interest and economic development money, or avenues to apply for money, to run a six-inch water line to the west side of Ferncliff Drive, which would benefit any future business locating in the Ferncliff Industrial Park on the west side of Ferncliff Drive.

The Board suggested contacting the health department to determine if the well could be turned over to the one customer connected to it.

11. NORTHEAST CREEK WATER TREATMENT PLANT – SURGE RELIEF VALVE

The Board reviewed the executed quote to repair the surge relief valve in at the Northeast Creek Water Treatment Plant. The valve was placed in the closed position until it could be removed and overhauled.

12. GRANT RECEIVED – TRAINING ON CHLORINE EQUIPMENT AND CHLORINE SAFETY

The Board was informed that a grant has been secured to train staff on chlorine equipment and chlorine safety. The grant was in the amount of $2,000, the training will cost $2,875. This training is especially critical for the new hires and trainees.

13. THIRD PILLAR – PROPOSAL FOR FLOATING SOLAR AT THE NORTHEAST CREEK RESERVOIR

The General Manager shared with the Board a proposal received from a company called Third Pillar for a floating aerator system at the Northeast Creek Reservoir. Moving forward would effectively end fishing. The General Manager recommends waiting to entertain this proposal while the Amazon project moves forward.

The Board had a few questions but took no action.

14. 600,000-GALLON STANDPIPE TANK AT THE INDUSTRIAL PARK

Staff have been actively looking for ways to utilize the 600,000-gallon standpipe tank to aid in the long run hours and early morning low level alarms in the 200,000-gallon multi-leg tank. The good news - after much investigation, calls to former employees, researching the plans and records, and a site visit by our tank maintenance company, it has been determined that the tanks are interconnected. The concern – the 600,000-gallon standpipe tank has a water turn over issue and there are concerns if the tank is brought back online, we could experience higher disinfection byproducts issues. The mixer was removed from the 600,000-gallon tank and installed in the 200,000-gallon tank and is currently not working.

The General Manager asked the Board how they would like to proceed – 1) bring the 600,000-gallon standpipe tank online and see what happens to the disinfection byproducts numbers – or 2) have a mixer installed in the 600,000-gallon tank (quote included in the packet) at a cost of $33,500 (price would be negotiated and expected to decrease closer to the $30,000 range).

The concern with waiting is if the disinfection byproducts numbers begin to increase, there is no guarantee that the mixing system could be ordered and installed quickly enough to prevent exceedances in the limits, which would result in notification to the customers. This leads to decreased confidence from our customers in their water.

The Board discussed the options. Upon completion of the discussion, Mr. Wilson made a motion to proceed with the installation of the mixer in the 600,000-gallon standpipe tank at a cost not to exceed $31,000. The motion was seconded by Mr. Smith and carried 4-1 with Mr. Filer voting against.

15. CYBERSECURITY

The FBI, along with the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA) and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), recently released a joint fact sheet addressing the increasing cyber threats against water and wastewater systems in the U.S. The fact sheet outlines several key actions that utilities can take to protect themselves from cyberattacks, including:

Reducing exposure to the public-facing internet

Conducting regular cybersecurity assessments

Changing default passwords immediately

[Developing and exercising cybersecurity incident response and recovery plans](https://www.cisa.gov/news-events/alerts/2024/02/21/cisa-epa-and-fbi-release-top-cyber-actions-securing-water-systems)

[The FBI has also highlighted the growing threat of cyberattacks from foreign actors, including China, Russia, and Iran, targeting critical infrastructure such as water supplies and electrical grids.](https://federalnewsnetwork.com/technology-main/2024/05/epa-warns-of-increasing-cyberattacks-on-water-systems-urges-utilities-to-take-immediate-steps/)

The Board was informed that Mary has been participating in the webinars provided by EPA to safeguard against cyberattacks.  We have been working closely with the County of Louisa’s IT Department to ensure that we are well protected and prepared if something happens.

Mr. Wilson offered to provide some information regarding safeguards such as air gaps for backups, email interface, and recoverable data systems. The General Manager will check with IT to determine if remote facilities have open ports for emails.

16. FUNDING REQUEST FROM THE COUNTY OF LOUISA

A. NORTHEAST CREEK WTP – SLUDGE VAC SYSTEM - $250,000

B. ZION CROSSROADS WWTP SCADA UPGRADE - $200,000

C. BOWLERS MILL - $250,000

D. Louisa Regional WWTP – Ammonia Nitrogen - $249,500

E. Louisa Regional WWTP – Operations - $275,000

The Board discussed the proposed CIP and Operations funding requests. Mr. Smith asked if it would make sense to request funding for critical infrastructure. The General Manager stated that over the past several years, staff has begun building critical inventory and are now continuing that process as critical components are discovered.

Upon completion of the discussion, Mr. Smith made a motion to proceed with the funding requests discussed. Mr. Morgan seconded the motion and carried 5-0 among the members present.

**G. Reports**

**H. General Manager’s Report**

● **August levels**: At the end of July 2024, the static well levels were up 98.5 feet from the end of July 2024 levels. From August 2023 to August 2024, the well levels are up 59.7 feet.

As of September 3, 2024, the Department of Environmental Quality Drought website is indicating normal conditions exist for precipitation, groundwater, reservoir levels and stream flow.

The US Drought Map is indicating a moderate drought for three quarters of the County and abnormally dry along the eastern border of the County.

● The current past due listing is down to $5,795.55 from the past due listing provided in the General Manager’s Report, which reported the past due balance of $29,600.15.

● James River Water Project Update – missed the meeting last week due to being out of town. Will have an update for the October meeting.

● The General Manager requested approval from the Board to send a letter to Senate and Congressional representatives requesting support for H.R. 7944 – Water Systems PFAS Liability Protection Act. Permission was granted with no formal action.

● At the conference last week, the General Manager discovered that since we are part of the lawsuit, any future discoveries of PFAS will be covered. Additionally, it was reported that they have discovered a way to breakdown the “forever chemical”. The General Manager recommended the movie “Dark Waters” to the Board.

● Mr. Filer requested a listing of the Town of Louisa Housing Projects; approved and projected. They are as follows:

Jouett Square Apartments – 150 apartment units

Timber Oaks – 154 townhomes and 13 single family dwellings

Laurel Ridge (IDA) – 120 apartment units and 36 townhomes

Pine Ridge – 159 townhomes

Epworth Manor – 54 apartment units

The Town of Mineral has an application for 313 single family and townhomes.

**I. Committees**

A. PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

The Deputy General Manager’s position has been advertised. Three complete applications and resumes have been received. The General Manager asked the Board which of the four components of the position they were looking for in a candidate (accounting, operations, engineering, regulation). The Board stated that they would like a candidate to comprise some experience in all four of the core components of the position. Additionally, the General Manager asked if the Personnel Committee would like to participate in second round interviews. Chairman Foster stated that two Board members would be asked to participate in second round interviews.

B. 2X2 Meeting

The next 2X2 meeting is scheduled for September 27, 2024, at 2:00 pm in the County Administration Building, Executive Meeting Room.

**J. Short Notice Items**

**K. Closed Session**

Next meeting date **-** The next business meeting is scheduled for October 9, 2024.

**L. Election of Officers**

Mr. Foster informed the Board that the Election of Officers is normally held at the September Louisa County Water Authority Board of Directors meeting.

After a brief discussion, Mr. Filer made a motion to retain the current slate of officers. The motion was seconded by Mr. Wilson and carried 5-0 among the members present.

**L. Adjournment**

THERE BEING NO FURTHER BUSINESS, Mr. Filer made a motion to adjourn at 7:38 pm. The motion was seconded by Mr. Wilson and carried 5-0 among the members present.

BY ORDER OF:

Judson Foster

Chairman

LOUISA COUNTY WATER AUTHORITY