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Augusta Water
Regular Board Meeting, Thursday, October 17, 2024, at 1:30 p.m.
Field Operations Training Room

PRESENT: Andrew C. Middleton, Chairman, North River District
Garry R. Gordon, Vice Chairman, Middle River
Harvey Almarode, South River District
Allen Dahl, Beverley Manor District
Matthew Egeli, Wayne District
Phil Martin, Executive Director
Brent Canterbury, Treasurer
Jean Marshall, Board Secretary

ABSENT: Michael L. Shull, Riverheads District
Timothy Simmons, Pastures District

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CALL TO ORDER

The Chairman called the meeting to order at 1:31 p.m.

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ADOPTION OF AGENDA

Mr. Gordon moved, seconded by Mr. Almarode to adopt the Agenda of the regular Board meeting as presented.

Vote was as follows:

Yeas: Middleton, Gordon, Almarode, Dahl,
and Egeli
Nays: None

Motion approved.

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APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Gordon moved, seconded by Mr. Egeli, to approve the Minutes of the Regular Board Meeting of September 19, 2024, which were sent to the members prior to this meeting.

Vote was as follows:

Yeas: Middleton, Gordon, Almarode, Dahl,
and Egeli
Nays: None

Motion approved.

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MATTERS PRESENTED BY THE PUBLIC

No members of the public were in attendance to make comments and no public comments were brought forth by Staff.

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EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR’S HIGHLIGHTS

The Executive Director’s Highlights were included in the Board packet and reviewed with the Board members.

- A. Mr. Martin informed the Board the required inventory of public and private water service line materials has been submitted to the Virginia Department of Health, Office of Drinking Water. The inventory was required by the EPA with a goal of identifying any lead service lines. Augusta Water utilized a statistical method to reduce the number of field investigations required and a letter has been submitted to VDH containing a report showing the requirements to use the statistical method were met. The submitted inventory reported all non-lead materials on both the public and private water service lines.

- B. Mr. Martin stated he received an email from Karen Willoughby at AquaLaw regarding a ruling by the Northern District Court of California on the risk of fluoridation of drinking water. There is concern the fluoridation of drinking water at levels typical in the United States pose an unreasonable risk of injury to the health of the public, specifically, an unreasonable risk of reduced IQ in children. As of now, VDH, CDC, and WHO continue to recommend fluoridation of drinking water at the optimal amount of 0.7 milligrams per liter.

- C. Mr. Martin informed the Board members the Project Engineer position has been filled, and the candidate will start employment with Augusta Water on November 4.

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PROGRESS REPORT

The September Progress Report was included in the Board packet and reviewed with the Board members. There were no questions or comments.

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COMMITTEE REPORTS

Dr. Middleton reviewed the Minutes of the Technology Committee meeting held on October 8, 2024, which each Board member received a copy of. The purpose of the meeting was to initiate the Technology Committee, whose overall objective is to

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involve the Board in technology projects where there are alternative technologies or approaches from inception through selection of a technology, not including projects already identified in the budgeting process. Examples of possible technology projects are the expansion of the Weyers Cave Wastewater Treatment Plant and upgrading the Middle River Wastewater Treatment Plant.

Mr. Egeli stated he believes it is important to examine the potential technology projects early on, especially for the expansion or upgrade of treatment plants.

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UPDATE ON RECENT FLOODING

Mr. Martin gave an update on the recent flooding event which began on Friday, September 27, and lasted through Tuesday, October 1, 2024.

At the Augusta Water treatment plants, the most severe issues took place at the Fishersville WWTP and the Harriston WWTP. At Fishersville, there was significant flooding, with the parking lot being under more than 2' of water and some water getting into the Lab, Alum Building and Control Room. At Harriston, the lagoons were pushed to their capacity before the inflow abated enough to pump them down. The events there will likely result in an increased monitoring frequency for Biochemical Oxygen Demand. No WWTPs failed during the event.

The Route 608 Pump Station saw flooding at its entrance. Also, there were 13 sanitary sewer overflows at various other pump stations.

Although rain primarily is welcomed from a drinking water point of view, the storms did cause a loss of power at Gardner Springs (City of Staunton water supply) and Waynesboro's westside pump station. We were able to increase the output in the South River zone to provide additional water to Waynesboro, as well as compensating for the loss of water from Staunton.

The rain also caused increased flows in the sewer. Augusta Water received seven insurance claims from customers for sewer backups. The claims were turned over to VRSA; however, they were denied because VRSA does not provide coverage for floods. Customers have been encouraged to file with their homeowner's insurance. Several customers who filed claims already had either a backflow preventer, a gate valve, or both on their sewer lateral.

Field Operations assisted nine customers with closing valves, plugging toilets and drains, removing debris from culverts and coning off overflowing manholes. They also adjusted valves to provide water to Waynesboro. After the event, they have investigated overflows, repaired cleanouts, and replaced manhole covers.

Mr. Martin stated there were also flooding issues at the Landfill resulting in an excess of water in the leachate lagoon, requiring it to be pumped out and hauled to a nearby sewer system manhole.

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After the flooding event, Mr. Martin, Jesse Roach, Director of Field Operations, and Ron Elkins, Director of Treatment Operations discussed several ideas they felt could help improve conditions in certain areas in the event of significant flooding in the future: in the Ridgeview area, additional I & I work needs to be done; a gauge or a graduated post be installed at the Fishersville treatment plant as a way for employees to prepare for evacuation, if necessary; in the Ridgeview and Cold Springs area, consider eliminating the 90° bend in the existing sewer line, if possible; and the undermining of the membrane at the Harriston Lagoon should be assessed by a contractor.

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BOARD COMMENTS

There were no comments from the Board members.

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ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Mr. Gordon moved, seconded by Mr. Egeli to adjourn the meeting at 1:55 p.m.

Vote was as follows:

Yeas:	Middleton, Gordon, Almarode, Dahl, and Egeli
Nays:	None

Motion approved.

Board Secretary

Chairman