

MINUTES OF THE EMERALD COAST UTILITIES AUTHORITY BOARD MEETING

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 23, 2021, 3:00 P.M.

ECUA BOARD ROOM

9255 STURDEVANT STREET, ELLYSON INDUSTRIAL PARK

PENSACOLA, FLORIDA

Members present: Lois Benson, Chairman
Kevin Stephens, Vice Chairman
Vicki Campbell
Dale Perkins
Larry D. Williams, Sr.

Members absent:

Counsel present: Robert Beasley

Staff present: J. Bruce Woody, Executive Director

ITEM 1 – CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Benson called the regular meeting of the Emerald Coast Utilities Authority Board to order at approximately 3:00 p.m.

ITEM 2 – INVOCATION AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mr. Stephens provided the invocation and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

ITEM 3 - ADOPTION OF AGENDA

Chairman Benson added the following item to the agenda under New Business: Item 13(a) Evaluations of the Executive Director and Attorney.

A motion was made by Ms. Campbell, seconded by Mr. Stevens, to adopt the agenda as presented and amended.

Motion carried 5-0.

ITEM 4 – PUBLIC HEARINGS

There were no public hearings.

ITEM 5 – OPEN FORUM

(a) Septage Receiving – Fees and Hours of Operation

Comments:

Mr. Woody informed the Board that the subject relates to the fees and hours of operation of our septic receiving station. ECUA's station is located at the Central Water Reclamation Facility (CWRP) and is used for receiving septage from various vendors throughout the community. The vendors are disposing of grease pumped from commercial locations, septic tanks that have been pumped from residential properties or commercial businesses, and various haulings from other industrial applications. At this time, ECUA manages the septage receiving station using in-house staff.

Mr. Al Cheney, owner of Roto-Rooter Sewer Drain Service of Pensacola, Florida, addressed the Board and spoke on behalf of the citizens of Escambia County. Mr. Cheney wanted to express his support for extending hours of operation in order to reduce the cost passed on to customers who require service after hours. Ms. Benson mentioned an on-going rate study and assured Mr. Cheney that rates and fees related to septage receiving would be considered as part of this study.

Mr. Randy Sears, Director of Water Reclamation informed the Board that when ECUA took over from the third-party operator in 2012, we expanded the service options by providing emergency hours and service on Sundays.

After considerable back and forth discussion of rates, hours, overtime and staffing considerations, the Board referred the issue back to staff to develop various potential options for action.

ITEM 6 – PRESENTATIONS

(a) Recycle Star - Random Selection of Monthly Winner

Mr. Perkins, selected number twenty, Ms. Roberta Mueller, for the Recycle Star Award.

Chairman Benson recognized all twenty of the Recycle Star contestants: Mr. Willie Durant, Ms. Deborah Bowen, Ms. Debbie Bossom, Ms. Jackie Van Pelt, Ms. Barbara Murray, Ms. Cheryl Stone, Ms. Jennifer Pease, Ms. Alexis Dickey, Ms. Iris Ingram, Mr. and Ms. George and Betty Bennett, Mr. Larry Rowe, Mr. and Ms. Pamela & Rob Dewhurst, Ms. Sandra Crosby, Mr. Wendrell Lawrence, Mr. Kenneth Shaw, Mr. Jeff Heddy, Ms. Andy Shutt and Larry Legg, Mr. Anthony McArthur, Ms. Sylvia Sims, and Ms. Roberta Mueller.

Ms. Campbell requested that the names of the Recycle Star winners be placed on our ECUA website.

ITEM 7 – APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Ms. Campbell stated that she had a correction to the Regular Board meeting minutes of January 26, 2021. Under New Business: Item 14 (a) Trash on Roadways - The comment states that Ms. Campbell informed the Board that she received an answer from FDOT regarding these issues and was informed that mowers are run seasonally and due to COVID-19, it is unsafe for prisoners to clean up trash on the roadways for fear of exposure. Ms. Campbell stated at the February 23, 2021, Board meeting that she actually received an answer from one of the County Commissioner's Aides, not FDOT.

A motion was made by Ms. Campbell, seconded by Mr. Stephens, to approve the minutes of the Regular Board meeting of January 26, 2021, as amended.

Motion carried 5-0.

ITEM 8 – CONSENT AGENDA

(a) Adoption of General Resolution No. GR21-12

A GENERAL RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR AUTHORITY TO EXECUTE A UTILITY SERVICES AGREEMENT FOR THE HURST HAMMOCK SUBDIVISION SYSTEM EXTENSION PROJECT FOR WATER AND SEWER, AND AUTHORIZE THE TRANSFER OF FUNDS IN THE AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED \$105,000 FROM CIP PROJECT NO. RS 121 – LIFT STATION REPLACEMENT AND UPGRADE TO A NEWLY CREATED CIP PROJECT NUMBER FOR THE HURST HAMMOCK DEVELOPMENT PROJECT.

(b) Adoption of General Resolution No. GR21-13

A GENERAL RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE ACCEPTANCE OF BID FROM TALCON GROUP, LLC., FOR THE DETROIT BOULEVARD LIFT STATION #50 REPLACEMENT PROJECT IN THE AMOUNT OF \$2,400,756, AND AUTHORIZING THE TRANSFER OF PROJECT FUNDS.

(c) Adoption of General Resolution No. GR21-14

A GENERAL RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR TO EXECUTE AN INTERLOCAL AGREEMENT WITH THE CITY OF PENSACOLA FOR THE REIMBURSEMENT OF A WATER MAIN RELOCATION PROJECT ON BURGESS ROAD AND AUTHORIZE THE TRANSFER OF PROJECT FUNDS.

(d) Adoption of Special Resolution No. GR21-15

A GENERAL RESOLUTION TO THE GRINDER PUMP REIMBURSEMENT PROGRAM RELATIVE TO INNERARITY ISLAND SEWER SYSTEM CUSTOMERS; AUTHORIZING THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR TO DISTRIBUTE FUNDS PER THE BOARD'S DECISION; AND AUTHORIZING A BUDGET TRANSFER OF \$120,000 FROM CIP PROJECT CS317 SEWER EXPANSION PROGRAM TO CIP PROJECT CS318 – NON GRAVITY SEWER CONNECTIONS.

Comments:

Chairman Benson requested that the Board discuss Item 8(d) Adoption of General Resolution No. GR21-15 separately from all other items.

Motion and Vote:

Motion made by Mr. Campbell, seconded by Mr. Perkins, that the Board approve Items 8(a) through 8(c) under a consent agenda.

Motion carried 5-0.

Comments:

Chairman Benson opened discussion for Item 8(d) Adoption of General Resolution No. GR21-15.

Mr. Woody explained to the Board that General Resolution No. GR21-15 comes to us from the Innerarity Island Homeowner's Association (HOA) requesting that the Board provide an exception to a current program that, under normal circumstances, provides a \$1,500 reimbursement to property owners who move from an existing septic pump systems to a grinder pump system. There are many homeowners in this subdivision who do not fit that definition of this policy and are asking for this to be applied to them.

This project is funded through a Municipal Service Benefit Unit (MSBU); however, there is some expense to the property owners for the overall improvements. Mr. Woody explained that staff is recommending that the Board not grant the exception request, and consider not passing this Resolution.

Mr. Stacy Hayden, Director of Engineering, provided the Board with a Project Location Map to help identify those customers that switched from gravity sewer to low pressure as part of this project. Essentially, those customers were forced to have a grinder pump installed rather than gravity sewer. These customers are the ones for who the HOA is requesting the \$1,500 reimbursement. Mr. Hayden noted that in the Project Location Map, those areas that are highlighted in grey represent the 100 lots that are currently owned by Escambia County and at the request of the HOA, those lots are reserved for conservation purposes and are not anticipated to be sold. The area designated in yellow, is a mixture of county-owned properties and private property owners and the area designated in orange represents those customers that are on septic and have chosen to remain on septic, even though sewer is available as part of this project. Those customers may be eligible for the grinder pump reimbursement program in the future, should they choose to abandon their septic tank and switch to the low pressure sewer system. The area designated in purple, represents a few customers that were already on low pressure system, so they would not be eligible for this program. Lastly, the area designated in blue, represents those that were on a gravity sewer system before this project, and they will remain on gravity sewer afterwards. Staff recognizes that this is a financial burden for those residents and we are looking for ways to help.

After much discussion from the Board, a motion was made to reject the exception to the grinder pump reimbursement policy to reimburse those property owners that were transferred from gravity sewer and placed onto the new low-pressure sewer system with grinder pumps; and approve reimbursement to the 24 owners that have elected to

switch from septic to sewer and who qualify for the grinder pump reimbursement program.

Motion and Vote:

Motion was made by Mr. Perkins, seconded by Ms. Campbell, that the Board reject the exception to the grinder pump reimbursement policy to reimburse those property owners that were transferred from gravity sewer and placed onto the new low-pressure sewer system with grinder pumps; approve reimbursement to the 24 owners that have elected to switch from septic to sewer and who qualify for the grinder pump reimbursement program.

Motion carried 3-2, with Mr. Williams and Chairman Benson voting against the motion.

ITEM 9 – BUDGET REPORT

- (a) First Quarter FY 2021 Interim Financial Statements

Comments:

None.

ITEM 10 – EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

- (a) Update on Sanitation Cans

Mr. Woody relayed to the Board that with discontinuing sanitation service in Santa Rosa County, we have brought back equipment and resources to Escambia County. One major resource is garbage cans. A large number of properties served in District Five have older style cans that were provided to the customers in this area prior to ECUA providing sanitation service in the north end. There are a multitude of blue cans still in use and over the last several weeks, staff has been working to remove and replace those cans with the ones that have been recovered (and are in good condition) from Santa Rosa County. After this operation is complete, we estimate about two years' worth of additional cans will be available to us to serve our existing customers. Mr. Woody complimented Mr. Randy Rudd, Deputy Executive Director of Shared Services, and staff, for all their hard work during this process.

Mr. Perkins stated that he read some comments online that were posted to North Escambia regarding can issues. Comments included issues regarding spending unnecessary money on new cans, when the blue cans were just fine. Mr. Perkins asked if staff could explain to the residents in the Northern part of the county that they will receive new cans at no cost because the replacement cans are coming from Santa Rosa County and are not being purchased. Mr. Woody stated that the blue cans that are being recovered are 12 to 15 years old and their condition is questionable; however, the cans that are taken out of service are being baled and run through our recycling facility.

(b) Update on fire at Godwin Lane

Mr. Woody informed the Board that the fire at Godwin Lane is still under investigation. Mr. Woody stated that we lost one front-loader, one roll-off truck and three side loader trucks due to the fire damage and there was some peripheral damage to other trucks nearby, but this was just heat related damage. We have side loaders in reserve from Santa Rosa County and in the short term, we are renting two front loaders and one roll-off truck. This will assist us during the short period of time between when the damages occurred and receipt of our insurance proceeds, so that we can purchase replacement vehicles. Most of the vehicles are all back in service. Mr. Woody and Mr. Perkins complimented Mr. Randy Rudd, Deputy Executive Director of Shared Services, and Mr. Gerry Piscopo, Deputy Executive Director of Maintenance and Construction, and their staff for responding so quickly when the event took place.

Ms. Campbell asked Mr. Woody where we stand with Mr. Gary Sapp. Mr. Woody explained that Mr. Gary Sapp is a property owner adjacent to our Godwin Lane facility. Mr. Woody stated that ECUA has been in touch with Mr. Sapp and an adjuster from Florida Municipal Insurance Trust (FMIT) has visited Mr. Sapp; however, we do not have a report back from him at this time.

(c) Update on the Finance Department

Mr. Woody informed the Board that the Finance Department recently completed the 2020 Comprehensive Annual Financial Plan and is submitting the plan for State review. Outside auditors provided staff with a great review and Mr. Woody complimented the Finance Department for their hard work. Although, we are only a few months into the current fiscal year, it is time to start looking at the fiscal year 2022 budget. Toward the end of March, staff will begin to work on the Operations Budget and the first draft will be provided to Mr. Woody by the second week of April. Mr. Woody further added that staff is currently reviewing the Capital Improvement Projects (CIP) Budget as well.

ITEM 11 - ATTORNEY'S REPORT

No report.

ITEM 12 – UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None.

ITEM 13 – NEW BUSINESS

(a) Evaluations of the Executive Director and Attorney

Chairman Benson stated that the Board needs to complete evaluations for the Executive Director and Attorney, and requested that Ms. Kimberly Scruggs, Director of Human Resources and Administrative Services, provide the Board with the appropriate forms. Mr. Perkins expressed his support for Executive Director and Attorney evaluations and the valuable feedback this process provides.

Mr. Perkins added that in regard to evaluations, customer surveys are also very important on receiving feedback on areas we need to improve in and how to work hard to make those improvements happen. Mr. Woody explained to the Board that staff is working on drafting such a survey and will be conducting it in a way that makes the results statistically significant. Our vendor will reach out to our customer base in a scattered and random method and we have the confidence within a certain margin of error on the accuracy of the results we get. Our intention is that the information derived from the survey will allow us to make good management policy decisions with confidence.

ITEM 14 – BOARD COMMUNICATIONS

Chairman Benson asked Mr. Woody when the plaque for Mr. Tweedie will be ready. Mr. Woody explained that the language has been approved and is at the vendor being prepared. Chairman Benson requested that we present the plaque at a Citizens' Advisory Committee (CAC) meeting since Mr. Tweedie was part of the CAC.

Ms. Campbell complimented our Public Information staff for their hard work on promoting the Recycle Coach app.

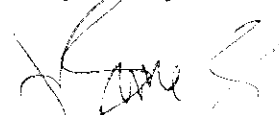
ITEM 15 – OPEN FORUM

There were no requests to address the Board.

ITEM 16 – ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Board, Chairman Benson adjourned the meeting at approximately 4:39 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



J. Bruce Woody, P.E.
Executive Director

APPROVED BY THE ECUA BOARD
IN REGULAR SESSION ON March 23, 2021.

(X) Without corrections/amendments
() With corrections/amendments being: