Orange Water and Sewer Authority

Virtual Work Session of the Board of Directors

February 11, 2021

The Board of Directors of the Orange Water and Sewer Authority (OWASA) held its duly noticed regular work session by virtual means in accordance with law, on Thursday, February 11, 2021, at 6:00 p.m. utilizing Microsoft Teams software.

Board Members present: Raymond (Ray) DuBose (Chair), Bruce Boehm (Vice Chair), Jody Eimers (Secretary), Yinka Ayankoya, Kevin Leibel, Robert Morgan, John N. Morris and Bruce Runberg. Board Members absent: none.

OWASA staff present: Amy Armbruster, Mary Darr, Jesse DuClau, Monica Dodson, Robert Epting, Esq. (Epting and Hackney), Vishnu Gangadharan, Stephanie Glasgow, Andrea Orbich, Dan Przybyl, Ruth Rouse, Todd Taylor, Mary Tiger, Stephen Winters and Richard Wyatt.

Others present: Meg Holton (UNC Water Resources Manager), Michelle Mayes (Jacobs Engineering), Dennis Kaebisch, Ed Kerwin, Simon Lobdell and Kelly Satterfield.

Motions

1. Bruce Boehm made a Motion to approve the Minutes of the January 14, 2021, Work Session of the Board of Directors; second by Bruce Runberg and the Motion was unanimously approved.

2. Jody Eimers made a Motion that the Board of Directors approves the proposed Affordability Program Plan Update and authorizes staff to proceed in accordance with the approach described in the proposed Plan, second by Kevin Leibel and the Motion was unanimously approved.

* * * * * * *

Announcements

Chair Ray DuBose announced that due to COVID-19 public health concerns, the OWASA Board of Directors held the work session virtually utilizing Microsoft Teams software. Mr. DuBose stated that Board Members, General Counsel, and staff participated in the meeting remotely.

Mr. DuBose asked if any Board Member knew of a conflict of interest or potential conflict of interest with respect to any item on the agenda tonight to disclose the same at this time. None were disclosed.

Mr. DuBose provided an update on the Boards February 4, 2021 special meeting to discuss the process to develop a new Strategic Plan, specifically to review and comment on the Guiding Principles for the process of developing the plan. He said the revised Guiding Principles will be presented for the Board's approval on February 25, 2021.

Mr. DuBose announced that on February 16, 2021, Jody Eimers and he will provide OWASA's Annual Update and Ruth Rouse, Planning and Development Manager, will provide a Long-Range Water Supply Plan Update to the Orange County Board of County Commissioners at its virtual meeting.

John Morris announced a virtual Zoom meeting between Chapel Hill's OWASA Committee and Chapel Hill Appointees to the OWASA Board on February 23, 2021 at 3:00 p.m. Mr. Morris notes agenda topics include: an update on Agua Vista; methods for engaging with residents of multifamily housing properties as it pertains to water conservation; ensuring sufficient capacity for meeting water and sewer needs of new development; OWASA COVID update; an update on OWASA's Diversity and Inclusion Program; and Chapel Hill Appointments to the OWASA Board.

Yinka Ayankoya announced that Robert Morgan and she will provide an OWASA Update to the Carrboro Town Council at its meeting on Tuesday, April 20, 2021 at 7:00 p.m. on topics of mutual interest.

Mary Tiger, Strategic Initiatives Manager, announced that on February 2, 2021, the Orange County Board of County Commissioners' approved Climate Action Grant Funding for OWASA to advance the Cane Creek Reservoir Solar PV Project.

Item One: Minutes

Bruce Boehm made a Motion to approve the Minutes of the January 14, 2021, Work Session of the Board of Directors; second by Bruce Runberg and the Motion was unanimously approved. Please see Motion 1.

Item Two: Affordability Program Update

Mary Tiger (Strategic Initiatives Manager) provided a presentation on the Affordability Program in 2020 and the proposed Affordability Program in 2021.

Kevin Leibel asked about the communication of Care to Share, why the program is called Care to Share, and if it is possible to test messages on the bill. He suggested optimizing the program and asked what other resources were needed to increase donations as well as what the Board could do to assist.

John Morris said the report was well done, and he would email his contacts informing them of and inviting them to support Care to Share.

Mr. Leibel suggested a committee of the Board might be established to discuss Care to Share.

Ray DuBose asked Mr. Leibel and he agreed to Chair the ad hoc Committee; Bruce Boehm and John Morris also agreed to serve on the Committee. A doodle poll will be sent to the full Board to schedule the meeting.

Jody Eimers made a Motion that the Board of Directors approves the proposed Affordability Program Plan Update and authorizes staff to proceed in accordance with the approach described in the proposed Plan, second by Kevin Leibel and the Motion was unanimously approved. Please see Motion 2.

Item Three: Department Managers Fiscal Year (FY) 2022 Budget Presentation

Stephen Winters (Director of Finance and Customer Service) introduced and explained the FY 2022 budget schedule. Mr. Winters noted the Manager's presentations will provide information in advance of formal budget discussions that will give the Board better insight into the factors the Managers are considering in developing their budgets.

Jesse DuClau (Distribution and Collection Systems Manager) and Monica Dodson (Wastewater Treatment and Biosolids Recycling Manager) and Mary Darr (General Manager of Operations) provided departmental presentations that included updates on the individual department's mission, opportunities for improvements, and challenges to address in the future.

The Board expressed appreciation to staff for an exceptional presentation.

Item Four: Apprenticeship Program Update

Stephanie Glasgow (Director Human Resources and Safety) provided an update on the merits of implementing an apprenticeship program with the Rural Water Association and that a key focus of the program would be on expanding career opportunities for underrepresented groups. Ms. Glasgow said the program would not be implemented in Fiscal Year 2022 due to budget constraints.

Jody Eimers asked if the program included mentoring of basic skills such as living, food and other necessities; staff will share her suggestion with the Rural Water Association.

Item Five: Review Board Work Schedule

The Board agreed the February 25, 2021 consent agenda would include the Guiding Principles for the Development of OWASA's New Strategic Plan and the review of comments on Sewer Use Ordinance and Sewer Policy updates will be moved from the February 25th agenda to the March 25, 2021 agenda.

Item Six: Summary of Work Session Items

Todd Taylor said a doodle poll will be sent to the full Board to schedule ad hoc Committee Meeting to discuss efforts to raise awareness of the Care to Share program.

Item Seven: Closed Session

Without objection, the Board convened in a Closed Session for the Purpose of discussing a personnel matter as provided in North Carolina General Statutes 143.318.11(6).

Following the Closed Session, the Board reconvened in open session, reported no action was taken in the closed session, and the meeting was adjourned at 8:24 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by:

Andrea Orbich

Andrea Orbich
Executive Assistant/Clerk to the Board