

Orange Water and Sewer Authority
Virtual Meeting of the Board of Directors
October 8, 2020

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, October 8, 2020, 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, Robert Morgan, John N. Morris, Bruce Runberg and Ruchir Vora.

OWASA staff present: Mary Darr, Monica Dodson, Jesse DuClau, Robert Epting, Esq. (Epting and Hackney), Stephanie Glasgow, Blake Hodge, Robin Jacobs (Epting and Hackney) Andrea Orbich, Nicholas Rogers, Ruth Rouse, Todd Taylor, Stephen Winters and Richard Wyatt.

Others present: Peg Carlson (Director, Center for Public Leadership and Governance at UNC School of Government), Meg Holton (UNC Water Resources Manager) and Ed Kerwin.

Motions

1. Bruce Runberg made a motion to approve the Minutes of the September 10, 2020, Virtual Work Session of the Board of Directors; second by Robert Morgan and the motion was unanimously approved.

2. Bruce Boehm made a motion to approve the personal leave bonuses as follows in lieu of traditional cost of labor and merit-based compensation adjustments for the Fiscal Year 2021 Budget Year and the additional personal leave days are eligible to be used during calendar year 2021:

- Employees that earn an ‘Exceptional’ rating on their annual performance evaluation will receive five additional personal leave days on January 1, 2021.
- Employees that earn an ‘Exceeds Expectations’ rating on their annual performance evaluation will receive four additional personal leave days on January 1, 2021.
- Employees that earn an ‘Meets Expectations’ rating on their annual performance evaluation will receive three additional personal leave days on January 1, 2021.
- Employees that earn a “Below Expectations” rating on their annual performance evaluation in October 2020 are not eligible to receive additional personal leave.”

Second by Ruchir Vora and the motion was unanimously approved.

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Announcements

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 said the Chapel Hill Town Council delayed the OWASA Board Member appointments planned for October 7, 2020. The appointments are now tentatively scheduled for a November Council meeting.

Item One: Quarterly Report on Attendance at Board and Committee Meetings

The Board received this as an information item.

Item Two: Minutes

Bruce Runberg made a motion to approve the Minutes of the September 10, 2020, Virtual Work Session of the Board of Directors; second by Robert Morgan and the motion was unanimously approved. Please see Motion 1.

Item Three: One-time Additional Employee Personal Leave Merit Bonuses

Todd Taylor, Executive Director, proposed the Board approve providing additional personal leave day bonuses to employees in lieu of traditional compensation adjustments. He noted that due to budget impacts from COVID-19, OWASA's Fiscal Year 2021 Budget does not include compensation adjustments for employees. He proposed the Board approve additional personal leave days to acknowledge the stellar performance of OWASA's essential employees during the extraordinary circumstances of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Bruce Boehm made a motion to approve the personal leave bonuses as follows in lieu of traditional cost of labor and merit-based compensation adjustments for the Fiscal Year 2021 Budget Year and the additional personal leave days are eligible to be used during calendar year 2021:

- Employees that earn an 'Exceptional' rating on their annual performance evaluation will receive five additional personal leave days on January 1, 2021.
- Employees that earn an 'Exceeds Expectations' rating on their annual performance evaluation will receive four additional personal leave days on January 1, 2021.
- Employees that earn an 'Meets Expectations' rating on their annual performance evaluation will receive three additional personal leave days on January 1, 2021.

- Employees that earn a “Below Expectations” rating on their annual performance evaluation in October 2020 are not eligible to receive additional personal leave.”

Second by Ruchir Vora and the motion was unanimously approved. Please see Motion 2.

Item Four: Annual Review and Update of Strategic Trends and Utility Planning Issues for Fiscal Year 2020

Ruth Rouse, Planning and Development Manager, provided an update on strategic trends and utility planning issues for fiscal year 2020. Staff reported that based on current demands and projections, we have sufficient raw water supply for the next few decades under most conditions; there is no anticipated need to expand capacity of our treatment plants for several decades; and continued investment in renewal and replacement of infrastructure is needed to ensure reliable and high-quality service. Staff will stay abreast of research and advances in technology.

The Board expressed appreciation to staff for a report well done and suggested the following additions for consideration into the next report: provide information in reclaimed water technology section regarding direct potable reuse; contact national (USGS/NOAA/NASA) agencies regarding a study on remote sensing to evaluate algal blooms in reservoirs; and information about the impact of climate change on wastewater treatment plant capacity and integrity of the site.

Staff will develop a summary of strategic and key initiatives as part of the update of OWASA’s new strategic plan and set up an information session for interested Board Members to learn about OWASA’s participation in America’s Water Infrastructure Act.

Item Five: Review Board Work Schedule

There were no items of note.

Item Six: Summary of Work Session Items

Todd Taylor noted the following items for staff follow-up:

- Develop summary of strategic and key initiatives as part of the update of OWASA’s new strategic plan.
- Consider in 2021 Strategic Trends Report: including information in RCW technology section on direct potable reuse; summarizing USGS/NOAA/NASA study on remote sensing to evaluate algal blooms; and including information about impact of climate change on WWTP capacity and integrity.
- Set up information session for interested Board Members to learn about OWASA’s participation in America’s Water Infrastructure Act and General Counsel will provide an opinion on this topic.

Item Seven: Discuss the Results of the 2020 Board Self-Assessment

The Board reviewed and discussed the results of 2020 Board Self-Assessment which was facilitated by Peg Carlson, Director, Center for Public Leadership and Governance at UNC School of Government.

The Board identified the following next steps which will be discussed at the October 22, 2020 Board meeting:

- Clarify how issues/topics are assigned to various Board committees.
- Evaluate/revisit the purpose and process for Board Work Sessions and committee structures.
- Board Members should speak up if they did not hear an action item recorded.
- Ask Community Engagement Committee to define the nature and types of public comments that require responses from the Board.
- Determine if the Board wants to solicit staff and general counsel input on how the Board is functioning.
- Create methods for addressing and tracking Board-only issues; i.e., those not assigned to staff.

Without objection, the Board meeting was adjourned at 9:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by:



Andrea Orbich
Executive Assistant/Clerk to the Board