

ORANGE WATER AND SEWER AUTHORITY
WORK SESSION OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

JANUARY 8, 2015

The Board of Directors of the Orange Water and Sewer Authority (OWASA) met in a Work Session on Thursday, January 8, 2015, at 7:00 PM in OWASA's Community Room at 400 Jones Ferry Road, Carrboro.

Board Members present: John A. Young, Chair; Michael M. Hughes, P.E., Vice Chair; Heather Payne, Secretary; Terri Buckner; Stephen (Steve) Dear; Quinton Harper; David (Dave) Moreau; Ruchir Vora; and Amy Witsil.

OWASA staff present: Ed Kerwin; Denise Battle; Alex Braxton; Mary Darr; Patrick Davis; Monica Dodson; Greg Feller; Stephanie Glasgow; Alicia Grey; Randy Horton; John Kiviniemi; Andrea Orbich; Dan Przybyl; Ruth Rouse; Kelly Satterfield; Todd Taylor; Ronnie Weed; Stephen Winters; and Robert Epting, Esq., Epting and Hackney.

Others present: Myra Dotson, Ed King and Harry Phillips, Sewage Sludge Action Network; Tom O'Dwyer and Richard Paddock, Chapel Hill; Richard Crandall, Pittsboro; Orange County farmers: Raeford Thompson, Lester Ray (Twin Branch Farm), Warren Ray, Rubin Herndon, Dallas and Lou Ann Vaughan Myatt (Blue Moon Meadows); Bonnie Hammersley, Orange County Manager; Ben Poulson, Associate Director of Energy Services and Meg Holton, Water, Wastewater, and Stormwater Manager at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill; Peter Schuler and Alex Travaglia, Brown and Caldwell; Sean Fallon, McGill Environmental; and Tammy Grubb, Chapel Hill News.

There being a quorum present, Chair John Young called the meeting to order.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Ed Kerwin said that former General Manager of Operations, John W. Greene, Jr., passed away suddenly on January 4, 2015. The Board requested staff prepare a resolution for John's family honoring his service to the community at the January 22, 2015 meeting. John Young ask for a moment of silence for John Greene.

Without objection, John Young said that there will be a change in the Agenda: Item 2, Draft Biosolids Report (Part 1), will be considered first to accommodate the speakers present tonight, and followed by Item 1, Employee Health Insurance.

Steve Dear said the Community Engagement Committee met on January 7, 2015, and did not reach consensus on whether to recommend authorizing staff to design a customer survey to be done in 2015. (Please see Item Five below for related discussion.)

Terri Buckner said the Natural Resources and Technical Systems Committee will meet on Tuesday, January 13, 2015 at 5:30 PM in the OWASA Board Room to discuss a petition regarding lake recreation.

ITEM ONE: DRAFT BIOSOLIDS MANAGEMENT REPORT (PART 1)

The Board received a presentation from John Kiviniemi, Wastewater Treatment and Biosolids Recycling Manager, on the Draft Biosolids Management Report (Part 1). Following the presentation, the Board received comments from: representatives of the Sewage Sludge Action Network (Ed King and Myra Dotson) who opposed recycling of biosolids on farmland or through composting; farmers (Raeford Thompson, Lester Ray, Dallas Vaughn Myatt) who supported continuing land application of biosolids to enhance soil productivity; and Tom O'Dwyer, OWASA customer and local builder. Mr. O'Dwyer supports farmers' participation in OWASA's biosolids land application program and expressed his concern that lower quality biosolids will be used by farmers if OWASA's Class A Exceptional Quality land application program is discontinued.

After discussion, the Board determined that OWASA will: 1) continue its current program which includes land application of liquid biosolids through calendar year 2015, and dewatering of biosolids for composting when needed to ensure reliable management of biosolids; and 2) continue to receive and analyze additional information about disposition of biosolids before making any changes to OWASA's existing program.

Steve Dear expressed concern about whether land application of biosolids is safe and requested that the practice be described as risk-acceptable instead of "safe" as on page 3 of Draft Biosolids Management Report (Part 1).

ITEM TWO: EMPLOYEE HEALTH INSURANCE

The Board received and discussed information from Ellen Tucker of Hill Chesson & Woody, OWASA's health insurance consultant, about changes and trends in health insurance and a proposed process this spring to negotiate costs and consider options for coverage after the current one-year insurance contract ends in June 30, 2015.

Staff will propose a timetable for actions by the Board, staff and consultant including a process to inform and receive feedback from employees about changes which may be proposed this spring. The Board agreed that health insurance will be addressed by the full Board rather than referring this matter to the Human Resources Committee.

ITEM THREE: UPDATE ON IMPROVEMENTS FOR THE BILLING AND FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

The Board received a presentation by Dan Przybyl, Director of Information Technology, and Denise Battle, Customer Service Manager, about progress in improving the financial management and billing system. The improvements, which will enhance service to customers and increase efficiency, are expected to be complete in August 2015.

ITEM FOUR: REVIEW BOARD WORK SCHEDULE

Ed Kerwin reminded the Board that the January 22, 2015 meeting will be held in OWASA's Community Room at 7:00 PM.

ITEM FIVE: REQUEST(S) BY BOARD COMMITTEES, BOARD MEMBERS AND STAFF

Michael Hughes requested OWASA's consultant or staff provide an update on information learned from Phase I of the preliminary engineering study of sewer for the Rogers Road neighborhood. Ed Kerwin suggested, and the Board concurred, that Mr. Hughes meet with staff to be briefed on the project and then inform the Board if there is a need for a project update to the full Board.

Terri Buckner requested a follow up on the sub-metering primer from staff; staff will follow up with the Board via email.

Steve Dear requested the Board add an item for discussion and action on whether to authorize the design of a potential 2015 customer survey for the Board's consideration on January 22nd and requested staff to propose objectives for the survey. The Board concurred.

ITEM SIX: REVIEW OF BOARD WORK SESSION FORMAT

The Board deferred this matter to January 22, 2015 Board meeting.

ITEM SEVEN: EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR WILL SUMMARIZE THE KEY ACTION ITEMS FOR STAFF FROM THE WORK SESSION

Ed Kerwin summarized the key action items for staff as follows:

- Two items will be added to the January 22, 2015 agenda: a resolution for John Greene's family and a discussion and action item on a potential 2015 customer survey the Board;
- Staff will evaluate the schedule for the next biosolids management report in light of tonight's discussion and inform stakeholders of the Board's guidance to staff;
- A schedule will be developed for health insurance to ensure objectives are met;
- Staff will follow up with Michael Hughes regarding the preliminary engineering work for the Rogers Road neighborhood; and
- Staff will provide the Board on a primer on sub-metering.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:30 PM.

Respectfully submitted by:



Andrea Orbich
Executive Assistant/Clerk to the Board