



Orange Water and Sewer Authority

OWASA is Carrboro-Chapel Hill's not-for-profit public service agency delivering high quality water, wastewater, and reclaimed water services.

Summary of the OWASA Board of Directors' Virtual Work Session on May 14, 2020

Please note: The summary below was prepared by staff and is not approved by the OWASA Board. OWASA's [webpage with Board meeting information](#) includes the Board's adopted minutes, agenda materials, staff's meeting summaries, audio recordings of Board meetings on second Thursdays of the month, and videos of Board meetings on fourth Thursdays. The agenda and related information for the May 14th meeting that was held virtually are available [here](#).

The Board of Directors:

- Received an update on OWASA's response to COVID-19 and a phased plan for returning to normal operations. OWASA continues to take proactive measures to ensure we provide the Carrboro and Chapel Hill communities with high-quality and reliable water, wastewater, and reclaimed water services during the COVID-19 pandemic. Administrative offices and lake recreation activities remain closed. OWASA staff who are able to telework will continue doing so. Best practices are being implemented to allow for field crews to begin preventative maintenance and lab staff to operate in a limited capacity.
- Authorized the Executive Director to execute contracts for employee health and dental insurance plans with Blue Cross and Blue Shield of North Carolina. The contracts for the term beginning on July 1, 2020, include a 10 percent decrease for health insurance premiums and a 5 percent increase for dental insurance premiums.
- Received draft budget and rate adjustment information for Fiscal Year (FY) 2021. A 5 percent rate increase had been anticipated for FY21, but the impact of COVID-19 on our community has been significant. Therefore, the Board is considering a budget with no rate increase in FY21. The proposed budget includes roughly \$23.2 million for operating expenses, \$20.3 million for capital projects, and \$7.6 million for making principal and interest payments on loans and bonds used to finance system improvements. The Board of Directors will hold a virtual public hearing on the proposed budget and rates on May 28, 2020 at 7 p.m. and will vote on the final budget and rates in June.
- Discussed the onboarding program for OWASA's next Executive Director to prepare for a smooth and effective transition. COVID-19 may impact the schedule, format, and priorities of the onboarding program.
- Nominated Board members to serve in leadership roles of Chair, Vice Chair, and Secretary. The Board will vote on election of officers at the first meeting in June.

The Board will hold its next meeting remotely on Thursday, May 28, 2020 via Microsoft Teams at 7 PM; a link will be provided on OWASA's website at www.owasa.org/board-of-directors-meetings. OWASA's administrative office is closed to the public to help mitigate the spread of COVID-19. Customers in need of assistance can still contact OWASA from 8 a.m. – 5 p.m. Monday through Friday by calling (919) 968-4421, emailing customerinquiries@owasa.org, or using the chat function available in the bottom-right corner of www.owasa.org. Please allow for additional time for OWASA staff to respond during this time. We appreciate your patience.

