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Augusta Water
Regular Board Meeting, Thursday, October 19, 2023, at 1:30 p.m.
Board Meeting Room

PRESENT: Andrew C. Middleton, Chairman, North River District
Garry R. Gordon, Vice Chairman, Middle River District
Harvey Almarode, South River District
Matthew Egeli, Wayne District
Timothy Simmons, Pastures District
Phil Martin, Executive Director
Brent Canterbury, Treasurer
Jean Marshall, Board Secretary

ABSENT: Michael Shull, Riverheads District

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CALL TO ORDER

The Chairman called the meeting to order at 1:31 p.m.

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ADOPTION OF AGENDA

Mr. Gordon moved, seconded by Mr. Almarode to adopt the Agenda as presented.

Vote was as follows:

Yeas: Middleton, Gordon, Almarode, Dahl, Egeli, and
Simmons
Nays: None

Motion approved.

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APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Egeli moved, seconded by Mr. Simmons, to approve the Minutes of the Regular Board Meeting of September 21, 2023, which have been mailed to the members.

Vote was as follows:

Yeas: Middleton, Gordon, Almarode, Dahl, Egeli, and
Simmons
Nays: None

Motion approved.

MATTERS PRESENTED BY THE PUBLIC

Mr. John Nalberczinski of 85 Briar Creek Circle, Weyers Cave, stated he is concerned about the hardness of the water coming from the Dices Spring water treatment plant into his home, as he has seen an increase in the grains per gallon over the last several years. Due to the increase in the hardness of his water, he has had to replace the electrodes in his water heater, as well as several faucets throughout his home.

Mr. Martin stated a water softener is installed at the Dices Spring plant. There are minor fluctuations from day to day and occasionally there are spikes in the amount of grains per gallon on specific days. Mr. Martin will ask the treatment plant operators to check the equipment at the plant to make sure it is operating efficiently. Mr. Martin will contact Mr. Nalberczinski once he receives a report from the operators.

Mr. Egeli asked if Staff has received complaints of hard water from other customers in the area where Mr. Nalberczinski resides.

Staff is not aware of any other complaints regarding hard water in the aforementioned area.

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EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR’S HIGHLIGHTS

1. Mr. Martin informed the Board members new email addresses have been set up for each of them through the Augusta Water domain. The change to the email addresses will allow business communications to be made through the official email. Mr. Martin asked the Board members if they would prefer to be contacted through the new Augusta Water email or if they would prefer to continue to use their current email address. Mr. Martin reminded the Board members, if their personal email is being used for Augusta Water business, it becomes subject to FOIA requests. The Board members indicated they would let Mr. Martin know of their decision at a later date.
2. Mr. Martin asked the Board members to be considering a location where they would prefer to have the Strategic Planning Board Retreat, which will be held in February.
3. Mr. Egeli stated he is pleased to see Augusta Water is moving forward with hiring for the Project Coordinator and Engineering Tech positions.
4. Mr. Martin stated the December Board meeting is scheduled for December 21. Given the closeness to the Christmas holiday, he asked the Board to consider if the meeting should be moved to a different day within December, or canceled altogether. He reminded the Board the Finance and Audit Committee generally provides an audit report at the December meeting. Dr. Middleton suggested the Board should wait until the November meeting before deciding whether or not to change the date of the December meeting.

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PROGRESS REPORT

There were no questions or discussion by Board members regarding the Progress Report.

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COMMITTEE REPORTS

Land & Water Committee

On behalf of the Committee, Mr. Martin reported a new brewery is being constructed in Weyers Cave. The project, which meets Augusta County's Agri-tourism policy standards, is located in close proximity to the Weyers Cave wastewater treatment plant, but is within an Agriculture Conservation area. Agriculture Conservation areas do not permit the extension of public water and sewer services. Mr. Eric Pisk, owner of the property, has requested the sewage generated at the brewery be accepted at the Weyers Cave Wastewater Treatment Plant. Mr. Martin stated the projected flow is minimal; however, the BOD (biochemical oxygen demand) is going to be significant, making pretreatment a requirement. Mr. Martin informed the Board, Mr. Shull, Chairman of the Land & Water Committee has spoken with Augusta County representatives regarding this project. Augusta County has indicated they are in support of the development and will provide a letter to Augusta Water supporting Mr. Pisk's request.

Mr. Martin asked for direction from the Board in creating a policy to address any future requests similar to this one. The Board indicated direction on a policy would be provided at a later time.

Dr. Middleton asked for confirmation Augusta Water will not be extending public sewer lines for this project.

Mr. Martin stated the owner will install a private force main which will tie into the public system near the treatment plant. The project will be metered by Augusta Water at the owner's private pump station.

After discussion by Staff and the Board members, Mr. Dahl moved, seconded by Mr. Egeli to honor the request by Mr. Pisk for Augusta Water to provide sewer services to his brewery in Weyers Cave, based upon the conditions discussed at this meeting. The conditions will be set forth in a written agreement between Mr. Pisk and Augusta Water, and will be recorded in the Augusta County Circuit Court.

Vote was as follows:

Yeas:	Middleton, Gordon, Almarode, Dahl, Egeli, and Simmons
Nays:	None

Motion approved.

Executive Committee

Mr. Gordon stated he has frequently visited the construction site of the new Field Operations and Maintenance facility. He commended Jesse Roach, Director of Field Operations, and his staff, as well as staff from the Maintenance Department for the great job they are doing on the construction of the new facility.

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BILL ADJUSTMENT – AUGUSTA COUNTY SCHOOL BOARD

On August 22, 2023 the Augusta County School Board requested a water and sewer adjustment for an underground leak that had occurred at Stuarts Draft High School. The affected bills were mailed on July 14, 2023 and September 11, 2023 for a total of \$39,170.53 (2.205 million gallons).

Per Augusta Water Policy 5.4, for underground leaks that have been repaired, Augusta Water may grant an adjustment in cases where water usage is at least double the customer’s average water consumption. Per Augusta Water Policy 5.5, If a customer has an underground leak, a leak in a crawl space, or a similar area where it can be reasonably assured the water from the leak did not enter the sewer system, the customer may be eligible to receive a sewer adjustment of 100% of the difference between the actual sewer usage and their average bi-monthly usage. The school’s average consumption is 353,000 gallons. These adjustments will result in a 793-thousand-gallon credit to their water billing and a 1.499-million-gallon credit to their sewer billing. As a result of these adjustments, the revised bill would be \$17,815.32.

The overall adjustment is \$21,355.21 and policy requires approval from the Board prior to adjusting a customer’s account for more than \$5,000.

Staff recommends approval of the requested bill adjustment.

After discussion, Mr. Gordon moved, seconded by Mr. Almarode to approve the request for the bill adjustment as presented.

Vote was as follows:

Yeas:	Middleton, Gordon, Almarode, Dahl, and Egeli
Nays:	None
Abstained:	Simmons

Motion approved.

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BID AWARD – VERONA SEWER COLLECTION SYSTEM REHABILITATION

Invitation for Bid (ITB) number 2309 was issued on August 31, 2023, requesting sealed bids for trenchless pipe rehabilitation of 17,428 linear feet of sanitary sewer line by cured in place

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pipe (CIPP) including 64 manhole rehabilitations and 262 lateral reinstatements. One Addendum was issued on September 25, 2023 addressing questions raised by bidders.

Bids were opened on October 5, 2023. Of the five bids received, Insituform Technologies offered the lowest total cost at \$842,512.65, but they failed to acknowledge the Addendum as required and were ruled a Non-Responsive Bidder. The second low bid was from Visu-Sewer Inc. for a total cost of \$853,768.10. All bids exceed the budgeted amount of \$750,000.

The scope of the project was determined by inspecting lines in the area and scoring defects by the National Association of Sewer Service Companies (NASSCO) standardized system, then including any pipe segments scoring above a specified defect value.

When groundwater or surface water finds its way into sanitary sewer lines, it increases the amount of flow, and thereby the cost to pump and to treat the sewage. Lining of sewer mains creates water-tight lines and reduces those costs.

Staff recommends the bid be awarded to Visu-Sewer in the amount of \$853,768.10, with additional funding above the \$750,000 budgeted to be paid from Augusta Water's Reserve Funds.

After discussion, Mr. Gordon moved, seconded by Mr. Simmons to award the bid to Visu-Sewer in the amount of \$853,768.10 as presented.

Vote was as follows:

Yeas:	Middleton, Gordon, Almarode, Dahl, Egeli, and Simmons
Nays:	None

Motion approved.

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UTILITY SCALE SOLAR PROJECT

Mr. Martin reminded the Board members of the discussion regarding the Utility Scale Solar Project from the September meeting and the potential economic impact it may have on Augusta Water. Mr. Martin stated Augusta County has confirmed the applicant is claiming only 168 acres of the 1,903-acre project area will be paneled, with 613 acres being fenced.

Mr. Martin stated he received a comment suggesting the utility scale solar projects be assessed the same way as the smaller solar projects, by keeping the assessment simple and not calculating how developable the property is. The Board members agreed with this suggestion.

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BOARD COMMENTS

Dr. Middleton stated since the discussion at the September meeting regarding the fees Augusta Water charges, he has had a chance to give the topic more thought. He feels there should be more consideration given to the fee schedule than what was given at the last meeting. As Chairman of the Finance Committee, Mr. Gordon has agreed for the Finance Committee to meet and discuss the zero-based fee structure and make a report to the Board in a timely manner.

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There being no further discussion, Mr. Egeli moved, seconded by Mr. Dahl to adjourn the meeting at 2:48 p.m.

Vote was as follows:

Yeas:	Middleton, Gordon, Almarode, Dahl, Egeli, and Simmons
Nays:	None

Motion approved.

Board Secretary

Chairman