

# NORTHWEST OTTAWA WATER SYSTEM

## Administrative Committee Minutes

February 15<sup>th</sup>, 2023

A regular administrative committee meeting of the Northwest Ottawa Water System was called to order by Christine Burns at 9:07 a.m. Wednesday, February 15<sup>th</sup>, 2023, in the Council Chambers at Grand Haven City Hall.

Present: Christine Burns (Village of Spring Lake), Craig Bessinger (City of Ferrysburg), Pat Staskiewicz (Ottawa County), Bill Cargo (Grand Haven Township), Gordon Gallagher (Spring Lake Township), Derek Gajdos (City of Grand Haven)

Also Present: Alando Chappell (Grand Haven Township)

Absent:

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A motion by Gallagher, supported by Staskiewicz, to accept the minutes for the November 16, 2022, NOWS Committee Meeting. The motion was unanimously approved by voice vote.

### **Manager's Report, February, March, April '23**– By Law

Law provided the Managers report with the following highlights presented.

Law started with a discussion on staffing. Law told the committee that the F2 operator hired from Holland had moved on to be closer to his property in the U.P. and that the effort to find a replacement was swift. Law is enthusiastic about the new hire with no experience but lots of promise. Law expressed confidence in the plant's onboarding process and explained that the new hire was on track to operate on a provisional license.

Pumpage totals align with historical averages, with the reporting quarter slightly increased over LY. YTD, the system is down 26 MG from the previous year. System allocation metrics show that the allocations remain historically consistent. The Northside is becoming an outlier at 96% to LY when looking at total pumpage % change YTD. Charts and graphs are provided. Gallagher raised concerns about demand-side management and supported planning that includes a rate structure design. Law expressed encouragement that the topic continues to be discussed and acknowledged the importance of rate structure design but also pointed to its complexity. Gajdos, when discussing the AMI technology that COGH uses and the software's limited ability to bill for peak flows. Gajdos thought it might be available through updates to the software but wasn't certain. Staskiewicz suggested partnering with Holland BPW representative Pieter Beyer. Beyer heads the BPW's efforts to manage the demand side for the Holland Water System and has a presentation that may be useful. Additional discussion took place on how to start this process and the complexity of the challenges ahead.

59% of the fiscal year has been reported, with revenue at 54.7% and expenditures at 43.9%. Chemical price increases have leveled off. Power expense increases have been anticipated. Charts and graphs are provided.

Water quality remains excellent. Quarterly turbidity, TOC, and PFAS sampling results have all been excellent. All communities remain well within regulatory compliance. Charts and graphs are provided. Staskiewicz asked if consideration be given to changing from the monthly PFAS sample due to the consistent results. The committee agreed to continue the monthly sample at this time.

A draft copy of the NOWS water plant budget was provided with a discussion. Law pointed to a conservative projection on annual water projection that would keep Revenue relatively flat to LY. Savings were realized in payroll due to employee turnover and pension option outs. Even with inflationary pressure and money added to specific line items, expenditures are also projected to remain mainly flat from removing unplanned capital investment (VFDs), payroll obligation (pension), Cost of benefits (younger employee base), and bond refunding. A motion to approve the draft copy of the NOWS water plant budget by Cargo supported by Burns was approved by a unanimous vote.

The finished meter and valve replacement project received two bids, with the awarded bid given to DHE Mechanical in the amount of \$89,400.00. Due to the lead time delay, the project will be scheduled for October 2023.

Law requested that the committee consider using Raw Meter #1 data for billing purposes until the completion of the new meter project. The differential between the finished and the raw meters is expected to remain significant. UIS flow tested Raw Meter #1 and found the meter highly accurate at all flow ranges. UIS flow test report detailed substantial errors with FM1. Finished Meter #2 could not be flow tested because of limitations on pipe run length and access for mounting the Clampon Technology. Finished Meter #2 is known to be in a compromised location and historically has shown a significant differential from RM#1. Law suggested moving to the flow totalization of RM#1 to avoid a substantial revenue reimbursement event. The committee approved this suggestion and asked Staskiewicz and Law to collaborate on a final decision and would support the outcome.

Adjournment – 9:54 a.m. - Submitted by Eric Law