



MEMORANDUM

To: All Councilmembers
From: CURO
By: Shannon Blanks
CC: Paul Harang and Anita Curran
Date: March 17, 2022
RE: SWBNO Meeting 02.16.2022

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Sewerage and Water Board of New Orleans (SWBNO) Board of Directors (the Board) met Wednesday, February 16, 2022, via video and teleconference. In addition, the Board received updates on the general standing of the SWBNO. The complete packet for the meeting may be found [here](#).

Executive Director's Report

A. Leadership

Revised statute RS 33:4071 relates to the creation and organization of the Board of Directors. The statute has been amended, removed the requirement for a retired civil engineer, and applied new term limits for board members. RS 33:4071 may be found [here](#).

SWBNO welcomes two new board members, Nichelle Taylor, representing Council District "D" and Councilmember Freddie King, representing the City Council.

B. Federal Funding

SWBNO continues to examine opportunities to compete for federal funding. Communications with local, state, and national agencies are underway. Additionally, SWBNO is receiving support from a team of consultants and lobbyists to ensure that priority projects align with the requirements of federal programs. A list of priority projects has been developed and shared with partners and stakeholders. Two of the federal programs include:

- [1] [Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act](#) - provides infrastructure investments for low-income communities, wastewater collection and treatment, water distribution, eliminating lead service lines, and improving infrastructure resiliency. The majority of these funds are managed by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) through state drinking water and wastewater revolving funds.

- [2] [Low Income Household Water Assistance Program \(LIHWAP\)](#) – The federal grant provides one-time funds to assist low-income households with water and wastewater bills. The Louisiana Housing Authority (LAH) is expected to distribute approximately \$3 million in assistance to qualifying SWBNO customers. SWBNO and LHA are completing the vendor agreement which allows Total Community Action, a non-profit, to manage and disperse the funds.

C. Operations

- [1] [Mardi Gras](#) – SWBNO stages response teams and equipment to respond to calls accordingly during the carnival season. Personnel and equipment are also on schedule to support post-parade cleanup.
- [2] [Major Repairs](#) – Two significant repairs on Panola Street are complete. The repairs included replacing approximately 100 feet of large diameter water transmission main. Another major repair on General Ogden and Nelson will begin on February 21. The press release may be found [here](#).
- [3] [FEMA Tour](#)- On February 3rd SWBNO hosted a tour of the Carrollton water plant (CWP) to national and regional officials. During the visit, officials were provided updates on the water hammer mitigation program, Claiborne pump station rehabilitation project, and the West Power Complex construction progress. The tour successfully demonstrated the use of federal funds for extensive infrastructure improvements.

D. Drainage

97 of 99 drainage pumps are available for use. Offline pumps include:

- [1] [DPS 6 \(Carrollton/Lakeview\)"I"](#) pump (1100 CFS) - Offline and undergoing repairs. The return to service date is to be determined.
- [2] [DPS 14 \(NO East\)](#) - Number 4 pump (300 CFS) is under repair. The return to service date is to be determined.

E. Power Assets

- [1] [Turbine 1 "T1"](#) - Offline due to vacuum issues. The repair is underway.
- [2] [Turbine 4 "T4"](#) - Online and available for use.
- [3] [Turbine 5 "T5"](#) - Online and available for use.
- [4] [Turbine 6 "T6"](#) - Online and available for use

SWBNO has procured a static frequency changer. The Board approved an addendum to the frequency changer procurement contract to purchase two additional frequency changers. The frequency changes will be used to operate equipment powered by the future turbine and substation

F. Customer Service

- The Westbank payment center at 4021 Behrman Place is open
- The Downtown office hours are adjusted for parade days.

- The meter reading team lost several employees after Hurricane Ida. The department is being restaffed, and seven new employees are in training. At the request of Director Sholas, the training program and staffing data will be monitored by the audit committee.

G. Strategic Plan

On February 16th SWBNO adopted a 5-year strategic plan for the utility (**Attachment 1**). The plan will guide the organizational goals, support budget development, and monitor the organization's progress. Additional information may be found [here](#).

H. Carrollton Water Plant Power Substation

The mayor provided closing remarks to emphasize the importance of a thorough evaluation of substation funding and associated agreements. The assessment areas include ownership, power purchase agreements, repayment responsibilities, rate and amortization schedules, affordability, future energy projects, and Entergy's infrastructure improvements, to name a few.