



## MEMORANDUM

To: All Councilmembers  
From: CURO  
By: Shannon Oldfield-Blanks  
CC: David Gavlinski, Eric Granderson, and Theresa Becher  
Date: April 3, 2020  
RE: SWBNO Meeting 02.19.2020

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### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Sewerage and Water Board of New Orleans (SWBNO) Board of Directors (the Board) met Wednesday, February 19, 2020. The full packet for the meeting may be found [here](#). The Board received updates on the general standing of the Sewerage and Water Board.

#### **Executive Director Report**

##### **A. French Quarter Electrical Vault Explosion**

SWBNO has concluded its investigation of the vault explosion that happened in December 2019, which included cleaning & inspecting the sewer mains on St. Louis Street. According to Executive Director Korban, the inspection did not find any breaks or intrusions. Furthermore, no combustible gas was detected in the sewer lines.

A high liquid level was observed in Entergy's vault. However, the level was above any nearby sewer levels found making it impossible for SWBNO's liquid waste to flow into the vault. There is the possibility that a smaller diameter pipe that connects to the main sewer line (lateral) is not intact; however, the source of the fluid in the vault has not been determined at this time.

Korban stated that it is logical that the agency that owns the vault be responsible for determining the root cause of the explosion. SWBNO remains ready to assist while the vault owners continue to search for the cause.

## **B. Power**

1. Turbine 5 (T5) Explosion Root Cause Analysis - SWBNO retained ABS to perform the root cause analysis with a focus on operational and mechanical possibilities that led to the failure(s) in T5. This analysis is underway and will take several months to complete.
2. Power -SWBNO is capable of generating a total of approximately 59.25 megawatts (MW) of 25 Hz power, 50 MW is required at any given time. As a result, SWBNO retains an excess of available power. Maintenance and system changes are being made to ensure frequency changers, feeders, and EMDs are performing efficiently.
3. New Power- SWBNO is considering a lease-to-own option for a 25 Hz generator to replace T5. This option is expected to be a \$10 to \$15 million investment that will last approximately 20 years and will fit into the plan for power generation. The generator will free up the frequency changers for other uses. The long-term solution is to construct a new transmission substation adjacent to SWBNO's Carrollton plant. Site preparations for the substation are underway.
4. Redundancy - Entergy (60Hz) and Turbine 1 (25Hz) are powering the water distribution system and are demonstrating sufficient redundancy. Power generation is slated for upgrades in the Master Plan. SWBNO expects to present the plan by March 2020.
5. Frequency Converter- SWBNO is soliciting a request for qualifications (RFQ) to provide professional engineering services for the design and installation of a medium voltage frequency converter to be located at the Carrollton Water Plant. This converter is intended to mitigate the expense of using boilers and steam turbine generators to maintain 25 cycle power required for Drainage and Potable Water Pumping facilities. Entergy power will be used in conjunction with the frequency converter. Under conditions where Entergy power is not the optimal choice, the Board will utilize the frequency converter with the 60 cycle generation facilities to produce 25 cycle power as needed. The details of the RFQ may be found [here](#).

## **C. 2019 SWBNO Reported Accomplishments**

1. An employee advisory committee has been established and consults with the Executive Director to discuss concerns and improvements for the utility.
2. Billing issues allegedly continue to be improved
3. All drainage pumps are operational
4. Canal cleaning schedules have been updated
5. Carrollton water towers are constructed and operational.
6. Fair Share deal has allowed space to be proactive financially

#### **D. Progress on 2020 Priorities**

1. Chief Customer Service Officer - SWBNO has selected a firm to conduct a nationwide search for an executive-level Chief Customer Service Officer. This position is expected to be staffed in March 2020.
2. Master Plan - Master Plan development has launched, and tasks and timeframes have been established. SWBNO received 24 responses to the “Integrated Master Planning” request for information (“RFI”) on February 18, 2020. Information on the RFI may be found in **Attachment 1**.
3. Rate Study - A comprehensive rate study is underway. A national firm has been selected to conduct a comprehensive study of all SWBNO funding options. The rate study will evaluate the water and sewer rates as well as the concept of introducing a storm-water fee. The last rate study and financial plan were conducted in 2011 and included the plan for years 2011 through 2020. The 2011-2020 rate study and financial plan may be [here](#).
4. Automated Metering Infrastructure (“AMI”)- SWBNO is in the final stages of selecting a project manager to assist in the implementation of the AMI project.
5. Winterizing T6- SWBNO is preparing the documents to begin the design on the project.

#### **E. Canal Cleaning**

1. Algiers Canal- In February, SWBNO removed a car from the Algiers Canal that runs under Tullis Dr. on the West Bank.
2. Drainage Inspection- A comprehensive 5-year drainage system inspection plan has been announced. The inspections will provide a complete condition survey of the SWBNO portion of the New Orleans drainage system. Residents can expect to see minimal impacts to traffic patterns with temporary lane closures or one lane shifts for traffic control during drainage system access. Details about the 5 year drainage plan may be found [here](#).

#### **D. Pumps**

1. Storm Water Pumps - 99 of 99 storm water pumps are available for service
2. Water Distribution Pumps- One pump at the Panola pump station is down. Enough redundancy is available, and the system continues to produce ample drinking water. The time for this pump to be returned to service is to be determined.