

MEMORANDUM

To: All Councilmembers

From: CURO By: Jared Reese

CC: Paul Harang and Anita Curran

Date: April 17, 2024

RE: The Sewerage and Water Board of New Orleans Meeting 04/17/2024

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Sewerage and Water Board of New Orleans (SWBNO) Board of Directors (the Board) met on Wednesday, April 17, 2024. 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 Report

A. Pumping and Power

- 89 of 99 pumps were available. SWBNO said 3 more pumps were going to be online by the end of the week.
- Turbine 4 was unavailable, Turbine 5 was online, Turbine 6 was available for use.
- EMDs #3, #4 and #5 were in service. EMD #1 was offline due to a radiator leak, #2 was out due to electrical issues.
- Frequency Changer #1, Frequency Changer #2, and Frequency Changer #3 were available for use. Frequency Changer #4 at Station D was out of service due to electrical issues. Plant Frequency Changer at Carrollton Water Plant was out of use due to an electrical issue. Frequency Changer #3 at Algiers Water Treatment Facility were available for use.

SWBNO stated 93 of 99 pumps were going to be operational before storm season. Also, Turbines 4, 5, and 6 were going to be running by the same time and supply an additional 70 megawatts of 25hz power.

SWBNO planned to update the Pumping and Power dashboard with more detailed information in the next few months.

EMDs were unavailable due to power issues and suspected vandalism on April 10th, which lead to higher canal levels a DPS 1, 3, and 6.

B. Power Complex

SWBNO reported that the utility rack was 90% complete and transformers were delivered to the site. SWBNO continued work on the foundations of the Turbine 7, SFCs, transformers, and auxiliary equipment.

C. Contract 1402

Funding Source

\$10M – FEMA (HMGP)

\$16M – HUD’s earmarked grants

\$6.4M – IMF from previous allotments

\$21M – City Allocation. The city offered two installments of \$8M and \$13M committed by late summer. \$10M from the Infrastructure Maintenance Fund was approved at the March 28th, 2024 IAB meeting.

Timeline

The board awarded the contract this meeting, the April 2024 meeting. The NTP awaited contract execution, which would be resolved by May or June of 2024. SWBNO estimated the project would be completed by July of 2025.

D. Customer Service

SWBNO replaced 9,600 meters and stated it would issue bills this month. SWBNO anticipated installed approximately half of its smart meters, a total of 6,450 1.5” meters and 68,575 5/8” and 1” meters, by the end of 2024.

Customer Portal was going to be available in summer or fall of 2024.

The company sent notification messages to customers of lead lines during smart meter installations. Also, it sent letters notifying customers know about potential leaks.

E. Smart Metering

SWBNO replaced 9,600 meters and stated it would issue bills this month. SWBNO anticipated installed approximately half of its smart meters, a total of 6,450 1.5” meters and 68,575 5/8” and 1” meters, by the end of 2024.

SWBNO anticipated the Customer Portal launch in summer or fall of 2024.

The company sent notification messages to customers of lead lines during smart meter installations. Also, it sent letters notifying customers about potential leaks.

F. Promise Pay

Over 6,800 customers made active plans with S&WBNO. The company said it collected \$1.3M with an additional \$15M promised.

SWBNO assembled a research team to study the data management systems, data entry process, validation mechanisms; and system integration to find the potential flaws, which contributed to billing errors and assist the transition to Smart Meters.

G. Judgement Payments

SWBNO paid \$973,889.26 to judgement debtors from March of 2023 to February of 2024. The company intended to pay an additional \$900,000 throughout the rest of the year.

SWBNO stated 296 judgement debtors were on the settlement list awaiting payment, with offers of payment through 221 of the 296 judgement creditors. Once those creditors received payment, SWBNO intended to negotiate payments owed to the SELA litigants.

H. Louisiana Legislative Updates

HB 525 Rep. Matthew Willard.

The bill stated that the SWBNO could not bill if it did not capture an accurate reading. S&WBNO hoped to set an effective date for the bill after the completion of the Smart Meter installations, so they would be able to generate accurate readings for all customers and avoid any potential revenue loss. The negotiations were ongoing.

HB 965 Rep. Stephanie Hilferty

The bill substituted HB 574, also from Rep. Hilferty, which provided a fixed billing and bill dispute arbiter for each Council District. The communications remained ongoing.

HB 593 Rep. Stephanie Hilferty

The bill authorized SWBNO to lift the residency requirement for a position if no New Orleans resident filled the vacancy within 90 days of being advertised.

SB 305 Sen. Jimmy Harris

Senator Harris's bill proposed consolidation of the drainage system under SWBNO. The company said it would take over those responsibilities, but certain cost and funding needed to be as well.

SB 460 Sen. Royce Duplessis

SWBNO requested legislation regarding lead line removal right of entry and use of public funds.

SWBNO stated there were three other bills that the authors decided against moving through legislature. SWBNO also said it would speak at the Joint Committee on Capital Outlay, where it would request \$29M for the Power Complex on Friday April 19, 2024. [Here.](#)