

MEMORANDUM

To: All Councilmembers

From: Jared Reese

CC: Justyn Hawkins and Anita Curran

Date: May 21, 2025

RE: The Sewerage and Water Board of New Orleans Meeting 05/21/2025

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Sewerage and Water Board of New Orleans (SWBNO) Board of Directors met on Wednesday, May 21, 2025. The Executive Director provided comprehensive updates on major infrastructure projects and operational initiatives. The complete packet for the meeting may be found [here](#).

A. Power Complex

SWBNO anticipated the completion of the power complex construction by summer 2025. The company delivered and installed all major equipment on site, including Turbine 7, three static frequency converters, and auxiliary equipment. SWBNO completed the water line installation, which provided fire protection around the site. The team finalized ongoing connections between the Entergy substation and the power complex. Staff started control installation and medium voltage cable work, with commissioning activities underway. SWBNO submitted a formal application to the Department of Natural Resources for \$34 million in additional funding for Phase 2 operations, which included the operation center and critical connections to three substations: Polola, Clayborn, and Sycamore. The first static frequency converter targeted the first week of July for coming online, followed by SFC 2 and 3, with Turbine 7 scheduled for September completion.

B. Smart Metering Program

SWBNO completed installation of 112,000 smart meters out of approximately 140,000 total meters, representing 78% of the overall meter population. The company identified that 31% of customers experienced continuous usage since smart meter installation. SWBNO staff proactively notified customers through the portal and direct mail, resulting in approximately 44% of identified leaks receiving repairs. The program achieved water savings of 69 million gallons since inception in March 2024, with estimated customer bill savings of roughly \$1 million. SWBNO planned to complete remaining installations within three months, with some customers requiring additional coordination.

C. Drainage Consolidation (Act 763)

SWBNO awarded a cleaning contract to CES with an anticipated start date at month's end to assist crews with minor drainage cleaning. The organization added repairs to existing contracts through change orders and completed 16 contracts along with an initial engineering management consultant contract for CCTV tape review and repair recommendations. SWBNO received and operated five vac trucks from the Department of Public Works, cleaning over 54,000 linear feet of drain lines and approximately 770 storm drain structures. The organization collected nearly one million pounds of debris, with initial assessments showing 50% of lines required cleaning. SWBNO continued workforce expansion efforts within the newly formed department and searched for four new employees by month's end.

D. Hurricane Season Preparation

SWBNO coordinated with Louisiana Southeast Louisiana Flood Protection Authority (East and West), NORA, Entergy, and AT&T. SWBNO scheduled its internal hurricane preparation meeting with all hands on dehands-occipation and attended New Orleans hurricane prep meetings. The organization conducted monthly testing of drainage pumps and generators at various pumping stations. SWBNO identified generator issues at Pump Station 14 but deployed portable generators on site as backup. The organization planned to rent three to four additional portable pumps and five generators during hurricane season. SWBNO maintained approximately 35 miles of open canals within the metro area, primarily in New Orleans East and Algiers. The organization tested wastewater treatment plant generators. SWBNO acquired additional generators through HMGP program funding from Hurricane Zeta as part of long-term equipment investment strategy.

E. Louisiana Department of Health Performance

The Louisiana Department of Health released grades showing significant improvements in SWBNO facilities. The Algiers Water Treatment Plant advanced from a B grade to an A grade. The Carrollton Water Treatment Plant improved by one grade point from a D to approximately a C+, with plans to achieve B and A grades in the following year. SWBNO operated under an administrative order for the Carrollton plant due to its age and infrastructure challenges. The organization planned infrastructure improvements at Carrollton, with the power complex expected to enhance turbine operations and overall system performance.