

MEMORANDUM

To: All Councilmembers

From: CURO By: Jared Reese

CC: Justyn Hawkins and Anita Curran

Date: January 22, 2026

RE: The Sewerage and Water Board of New Orleans Meeting 1/22/2026

Executive Director Report

Smart Meter Program

SWBNO completed residential smart meter upgrades. The utility replaced manual meter reading with automated smart meters. Smart meters detected continuous water use and identified potential leaks on customer properties. The company sent over 350 leak alerts per day. 76% of customers who received notifications opened them, customers who addressed leaks saved an average of \$41 on their bills. SWBNO stated that the smart meter program improved customer confidence in billing accuracy and increased collections.

Customer Portal

SWBNO launched the customer portal in 2024. The portal registered 92,000 accounts, representing 70% of total accounts. The company enrolled 60,000 customers in paperless billing. 51,000 customers used the service, representing 45% of total accounts.

Customer Service

The average wait time decreased from 7 minutes and 34 seconds in 2024 to 1 minute and 36 seconds in 2025. The percentage of customers billed based on actual meter reads increased from 86% in 2024 to 98% in 2025. Bill disputes decreased by 90%, dropping from 6,844 in December 2024 to 536. 60% of customers with outstanding balances enrolled in payment plans.

Power Complex

SWBNO completed construction and opened the power complex in December 2025. The facility provided electrical equipment to support drainage power pumps. The power complex increased sustainability and reliability of the power supply for pumps and motors.

Drainage System Consolidation

S&WBNO assumed responsibility for the entire drainage system in early 2025. The company removed 10.5 million pounds of debris in 2025, compared to 4.1 million

pounds in 2024. The utility cleaned over 9,000 catch basins in 2025 compared to 6,000 in 2024. The company cleaned 93,000 drainage lines in 2025.

Additionally, SWBNO launched drainage and drain cleaning dashboards that displayed catch basin locations, lateral lines, and drainage mains.

ADA Compliant Website

S&WBNO completed a new ADA compliant website ahead of the April 2026 regulatory deadline. The website used cloud hosting, which eliminated dependency on the board's physical data center and improved user experience.

Human Resources

HR expanded the onboarding process to include a second day of orientation in the first and second quarters of 2025. The department established satellite HR hubs across multiple locations and installed employee kiosks. HR launched an employee electronic information system to broadcast agency-wide information on television screens across all campuses.

Safety Performance

SWBNO reduced OSHA incidents by 70% over the last two years. The company reduced digging and excavating incidents by 25%. Risk management decreased workers' compensation costs by 24.5%. The improvements resulted from focused training and increased availability and use of personal protective equipment.

Future Priorities

Technology Modernization

SWBNO began major software upgrades in 2025. Oracle Financial, the new financial system, was scheduled to go live in Q1 2026. The company entered final contract negotiations for a new human resources system. The asset management system transitioned to CityWorks. SWBNO prepared requests for proposals for a new customer information system.

Water Treatment Investment

The water quality master plan identified investments for water treatment facilities. The plan addressed water quality regulations, climate change, and saltwater intrusion. The company finalized short-term and long-term capital plans and planned for treatment chemical optimization in 2026.

Long-term Strategic Plans

SWBNO established standards for contractors to maintain cleanliness during construction and complete timely pavement restorations. The company developed a team to address neighborhood-specific issues. The utility conducted concentrated work in Treme. The company held a customer meeting, deployed the team, and returned four months later to receive positive feedback on efficiency and work quality. The company

said the current strategic plan was set to end in 2027. The company planned to expand the vision for utility projects and operations.