



MEMORANDUM

To: All Councilmembers
From: CURO
By: Shannon Blanks
CC: Paul Harang and Theresa Becher
Date: February 25, 2021
RE: SWBNO Meeting 01.20.2021

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Sewerage and Water Board of New Orleans (SWBNO) Board of Directors (the Board) met Wednesday, January 20, 2021, via video and teleconference. The full packet for the meeting may be found [here](#). The Board received updates on the general standing of the Sewerage and Water Board.

The agenda was read aloud by SWBNO Counsel Yolanda Grinstead.

Mayor Cantrell opened the meeting to highlight some of the plans for 2021.

- A \$23 million project to repair 122 blocks of roads and utilities in Bayou St. John, fairgrounds, and the seventh ward neighborhoods begins January 21, 2021, with expected completion in spring 2022. Additional information may be found [here](#).
- Infrastructure Industry Day was held on January 19, 2021, to inform the public of progress and bidding opportunities available in the city. Additional information may be found [here](#).
- To date, projects under construction include over ten maintenance and Joint Infrastructure Recovery Roads (JIRR) projects valued at \$71 million and sixty-nine Department of Public Works (DPW) projects valued at \$480 million.
- The city is moving forward with selling \$300 million of tax-exempt bonds.
- The JIRR program will issue \$110 million within the next 60 days for work to be completed in various areas across the city.

Executive Director Report

A. Power

Electro-Motive Diesel (EMD)

SWBNO continues to improve and test the EMDs to ensure greater reliability.

Turbine 4 ("T4") – Out of Service. Inspection of the unit is complete. The repairs will cost approximately \$1.5 million. SWBNO is expediting the repairs and anticipates the unit to be available by late May 2021.

Turbine 5 ("T5") – Out of Service. T5 failed in December 2019, and repairs are underway. SWBNO is expediting repairs. A contract for the exhaust system fabrication and installation has been awarded to M.R. Pittman Group, and the unit is expected to be available in early May 2021.

Power Substation – SWBNO continues to work closely with Entergy New Orleans, New Orleans City Council and the Mayor's leadership on the substation's development and financial obligations.

Sub-Station Site Prep – The site work is underway and progressing on schedule. The site preparations will complete and ready to accept equipment in May 2021.

B. Meter Reading

SWBNO collected actual readings on 65 percent of meters in January 2020. The lower percentage of reads is a reflection of several holidays. Therefore, SWBNO staff was asked to work on Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day to keep up with production.

SWBNO hired 25 new meter readers on January 1, 2021 and increased the department's capacity to 60 meter readers. The increased capacity will meet or exceed the goal of 80% of actual readings.

The staff augmentation contract with Olameter will be extended for one final month. Only the highest performers will be retained for the remainder of the contract.

SWBNO evaluates accounts for accuracy. Any accounts that appear to have a discrepancy are flagged and investigated before sending the bill. Additionally, SWBNO is including inserts in the bills of impacted customers, explaining the reason for any delays or updates to their bill.

C. Communications Update

Social Media: SWBNO utilizes social media platforms to show fieldwork, potential impacts to residents, coordination efforts, and response plans.

D. Customer Service

Mr. Rene Gonzalez has filled the Chief Customer Service Officer position.