



Joseph I. Giarrusso III

New Orleans City Council
District A



Friends,

The 2025 budget season has officially begun. Please remember that voters approved a charter change, so we now have two months for department budget presentations, budget negotiations, and public outreach. In this newsletter, I touch on a collaborative effort by the City Council and the state legislative delegation to fund the \$17 million gap needed to automate the new SWBNO power substation. I also want to highlight the beginning of some positive news on the SWBNO front – a new billing appeal process with an outside contractor. Finally, the impact of our NET30 vendor payment legislation has been promising. Check out below to learn all about these substantive topics to serve you.

Best,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Joe Giarrusso III".

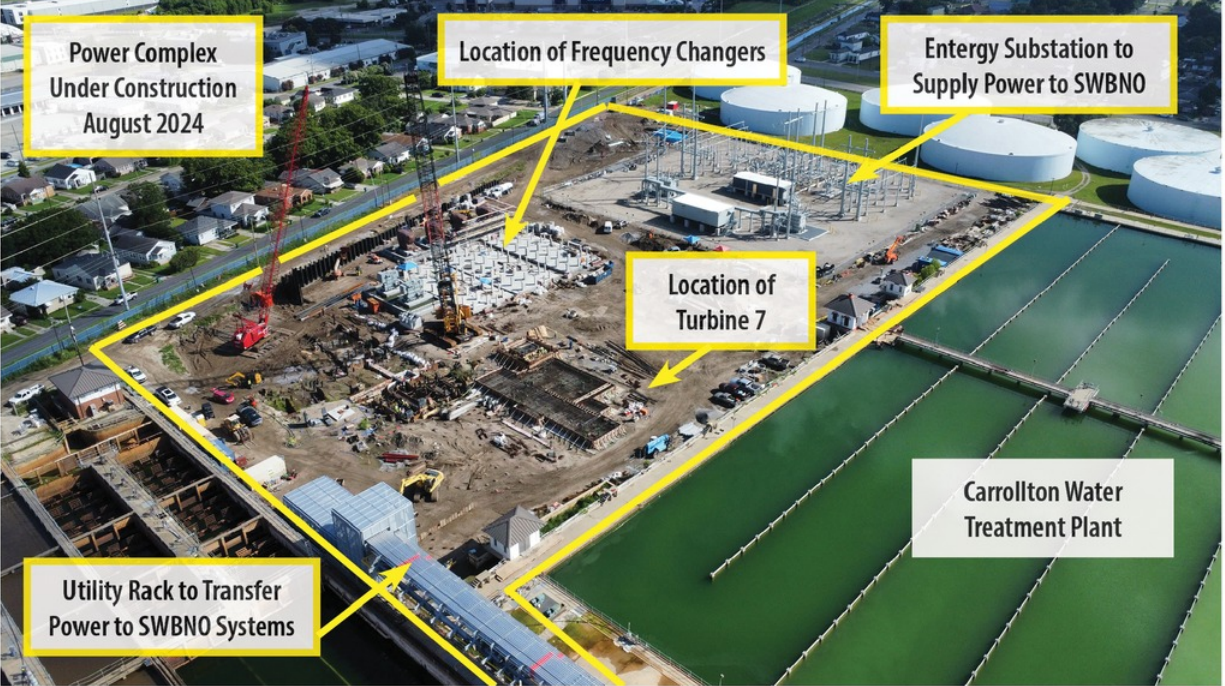
COUNCIL FUNDS \$17 MILLION FOR SWBNO AUTOMATION

The West Power complex, which will provide dedicated transmission-level power to SWBNO's drainage, sewerage, and drinking water systems, needs \$34 million to fully automate the substation element. The New Orleans City Council, in collaboration with the New Orleans legislative delegation, secured \$17 million to match federal funds for the \$34 million deficit.

This power complex is one of the most important infrastructure projects in our lifetime. The \$17 million in City funds will ensure the substation does not rely on physical manpower to manage the power and is instead fully automated. The substation will come online in June 2025.

\$14 million will come from recently sold General Obligation bonds, and the remaining \$3 million will come from Sewerage & Water Board funds. We have introduced the funding ordinance, and the full City Council will consider it for final approval at our October 10 meeting.

I want to thank my Council colleagues for their urgent attention, my legislative colleagues for their continued support, particularly Senator Jimmy Harris and Representative Stephanie Hilferty, the Governor's office for the state, and Mayor Cantrell for getting behind these efforts for all New Orleanians. You can read more about how the Council and state legislators worked together on this funding [at this link](#).



BGR diagram of key components of the future Power Complex, based on information provided by the Sewerage & Water Board, August 2024.

ANNUAL BUDGET HEARINGS BEGIN OCTOBER 8

The City Council officially received the [Mayor's proposed budget](#) on October 1 – and thanks to voter approval of the charter change - a full month earlier than prior years. The departmental budget hearings begin on Tuesday, October 8 and tentatively run through November 4. You can find the full schedule [at this link](#).

We will also be hosting four community budget meetings throughout the city after the budget hearings conclude. These public meetings will allow us to listen to your budgetary priorities and to get feedback on proposals from Mayor Cantrell's administration and the City Council. We have split the meetings to roughly cover the city. Please note that these Council-led meetings are open to all residents, regardless of Council district.

October 2024

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8 Day 1 Proposed Budget Hearings	9	10	11 Day 2 Proposed Budget Hearings	12
13	14	15 Day 3 Proposed Budget Hearings	16	17 Day 4 Proposed Budget Hearings	18	19
20	21 Day 5 Proposed Budget Hearings	22	23 Day 6 Proposed Budget Hearings	24	25	26
27	28 Day 7 Proposed Budget Hearings	29	30 Day 8 Proposed Budget Hearings	31	1	2

November 2024

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
					1 Day 9 Proposed Budget Hearings	2
3	4 Day 9 Proposed Budget Hearings	5	6 Districts A & B Community Budget Meeting	7	8	9
10	11 Algiers Community Budget Meeting	12 Districts C,D,E Community Budget Meeting	13	14 District E Community Budget Meeting	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30

For far too long, the public has struggled with SWBNO billing irregularities and errors. In September, the Council funded a third-party contractor to assist SWBNO customers. Folks who need to appeal incorrect Sewerage & Water Board bills can now utilize a new – and more effective and efficient – process.

We're improving our
bill dispute process.



TO DISPUTE A BILL, YOU CAN:



Call
504-910-6484



Email
support@swbno.zohodesk.com



Visit
Eastbank Customer Service Center
625 St. Joseph St.
Monday - Friday
8:30 AM - 4:00 PM

*All existing bill disputes have been transferred to HGI.
No action is required for customers with existing disputes.*

NET30 LEGISLATION DRAWS VENDORS BACK TO THE CITY

Contractors and vendors are once again bidding on contracts with the City. This is a direct result of my legislation – passed with the support of the full Council – requiring vendors to be paid on time.

Until earlier this year, vendors and contractors were not being paid on time. Understandably, those vendors did not want to continue working for the City. So, my office successfully codified the City's NET30 policy, which requires full payment of all undisputed invoices within 30 days of submission by a vendor or contractor.

Our NET30 legislation requires the Department of Finance to compile a monthly report of unpaid invoices within 30 days, including the reason for delayed payment. Department heads of City departments with unpaid invoices must appear before the Council to discuss and answer questions. The first NET30 report, submitted in May, showed 286 invoices over 30 days late. Just this month, that number dropped to 80.

This legislation not only made things right with our vendors but also brought small businesses back to work with the City.

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