



Detroit Water and Sewerage Department Meeting Minutes - Final Board of Water Commissioners

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Detroit, Michigan 48226
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Wednesday, May 21, 2025

2:00 PM

5th Floor Board Room, Water Board Building

To attend by phone call one of these numbers:
+1 301 715 8592, +1 312 626 6799, +1 267 831 0333
Use Meeting ID: 815 7263 5118
Use Passcode: 482262021

To attend online: <https://cityofdetroit.zoom.us/j>

BOWC Meeting

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson Einheuser called the meeting to order at 2:00 p.m.

2. ROLL CALL

Present: 6 - Commissioner Linda Forte, Commissioner Lane Coleman, Vice Chairperson Mary Blackmon, Commissioner John Henry Davis, Commissioner Jane Garcia and Chairperson Michael Einheuser

Absent: 1 - Commissioner Jonathan Kinloch

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Chairperson Einheuser requested approval of the agenda.

A motion was made by Commissioner John Henry Davis, seconded by Commissioner Jane Garcia that this be approved. The motion carried by a unanimous vote.

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Chairperson Einheuser requested approval of the minutes of April 16, 2025.

A motion was made by Commissioner John Henry Davis, seconded by Commissioner Jane Garcia that this be approved. The motion carried by a unanimous vote.

5. PUBLIC COMMENTS (3 minutes per speaker)

Cecily McClellan comment was regarding the letter that was issued by Norrel Hemphill. She asked will it be discussed at the BOWC meeting and publicly posted on website? Also will DWSD's response be publicly discussed? Will Promise Pay's relationship with DWSD be discussed publicly? Ms. McClellan wants to know when the contractual relationship occurred and when DWSD will address it.

Alice James of East Village stated that her property flooded and is requesting help from DWSD. (Director Gary Brown stated that Ms. James leave contact number to assist DWSD in resolving this matter).

Adam Gaffin of English Village stated that the catch basins near his property are routinely failing. (Deputy Director Samuel Smalley stated him and his team will address the problem).

Jacob Letterman of West Village is pushing DWSD for more strategic planning regarding its capital funds and to address lower eastside of Detroit. He wants the issues on the lower eastside issues to be addressed more seriously by DWSD.

Rob Volks of the Villages commented about the storm drains not functioning and wants the issues to be resolved.

Susan Letsman of 9200 Whitestreet stated that during heavy rainfall her property turns into swamp. Says that the nearest storm drains are not effective (Deputy Director Samuel Smalley stated that if the storm drains are not functioning properly that this will need to be referred to DPW) .

Ms. Ashley Raleigh commenting is regarding a storm drain that is continuing to overflow and the sinkhole in the area is growing. The sinkhole matter continues to be not addressed and says that just a cone has been placed when it was reported and has since has doubled in size. Says that no further action has been taken by DWSD (Deputy Director Samuel Smalley explained the process saying that the recent grant received by DWSD is to assist in alley sinkholes. Deputy Director Samuel Smalley also stated that him and his team will investigate this issue).

Ms. Kristin Sims comment is regarding flooding issues in area when heavy rain occurs.

Mac Farr comment regarding storm drains are in the Villages are a major issue and people are being severely affected and losing their vehicles. Mr. Farr says DWSD needs to do more than the bare minimum when it comes to maintenance and repair.

Diandra Goulay (VP of East Village) says after heavy rainfall that flooding occurs and is inquiring why can't this be resolved. Wants a resolution to this.

Mr. Joseph of East Village says sinkhole in alley are affecting the storm drains. Has been reporting flooding and other issues.

Steven Veal says during a water main replacement his property was disconnected now has a the sewer line issue (Deputy Director Samuel Smalley and Director Gary Brown says it will be addressed this week).

John D. Laslau is thankful for DWSD and Customer Service Team Leader Constance Sloan for resolving his issue. Request that he would like new format for the date on the bill to avoid confusion.

Ms. Charlene Redmond is a landlord that owns several properties and has issues with tenants taking accounts out of their name and changed to the landlord of the property. When they move, the landlord is stuck with the bill although the lease says it is the tenant's responsibility. She also stated that the pipe burst at property and with DWSD not coming out to shut the water, she now have large water bill. (Director Gary Brown explained the landlord tenant process and also cutting the water at home so a large bill

will not occur).

Norrel Hemphill thanks the BOWC and Director Brown for their service and creative solutions to solve problems. She is requesting solutions in resolving water bills that are not affordable to customers. Request that there is a need for public engagement between DWSD and the community.

6. COMMUNICATIONS

A. [2025-106](#) Receipt of Correspondence

Sponsors: Phillips

Attachments: [Letter from We the People of Detroit \(WTPOD\)](#)

A motion was made by Commissioner Linda Forte, seconded by Commissioner Lane Coleman that this Communication or Report be received and filed.. The motion carried by a unanimous vote.

7. ITEMS FROM THE COMMISSIONERS

8. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

There were none.

9. APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA (Items 9A-D)

A. [2025-94](#) The Board of Water Commissioners for the City of Detroit, Water and Sewerage Department authorizes the Director to **approve DWSD Contract 6007113 with EJ USA, Inc. for Manhole Covers & Catch Basins; for a total contract amount not-to-exceed \$465,889.35 and a term of two years.** The BOWC also authorizes the Director to take such other action as may be necessary to accomplish the intent of this vote.

Sponsors: Welch

Attachments: [6007113 bid tab for manhole covers](#)

A motion was made by Vice Chairperson Mary Blackmon, seconded by Commissioner John Henry Davis that this Contract be approved..The motion carried by a unanimous vote.

B. [2025-95](#) The Board of Water Commissioners for the City of Detroit, Water and Sewerage Department authorizes the Director to **approve DWSD Contract 6007125 with Ellsworth Industries, Inc. for the as-needed purchase of backfill sand; for a total contract amount not-to-exceed \$519,600.00 and a term of two years.** The BOWC also authorizes the Director to take such other action as may be necessary to accomplish the intent of this vote.

Sponsors: Welch

A motion was made by Vice Chairperson Mary Blackmon, seconded by

Commissioner John Henry Davis that this Contract be approved. The motion carried by a unanimous vote.

C. [2025-96](#)

The Board of Water Commissioners for the City of Detroit, Water and Sewerage Department authorizes the Director to **approve DWSD Contract 6007124 with Ferguson Waterworks for Coupling Transitions; for a total contract amount not-to-exceed \$566,500.00 and a term of one year.** The BOWC also authorizes the Director to take such other action as may be necessary to accomplish the intent of this vote.

Sponsors: Welch

Attachments: [6007124 bid tab for transition couplings](#)

A motion was made by Vice Chairperson Mary Blackmon, seconded by Commissioner John Henry Davis that this Contract be approved. The motion carried by a unanimous vote.

D. [2025-97](#)

The Board of Water Commissioners for the City of Detroit, Water and Sewerage Department authorizes the Director to approve **DWSD Contract 6007166, with Etna Supply Company and DWSD Contract 6007167, with Progressive Plumbing Supply, to provide copper piping, for a combined total not-to-exceed amount of \$1,105,581.40, and a term of 2 years.** This also authorizes the Director to take such other action as may be necessary to accomplish the intent of this vote.

Sponsors: Welch

A motion was made by Vice Chairperson Mary Blackmon, seconded by Commissioner John Henry Davis that this Contract be approved. The motion carried by a unanimous vote.

10. NEW BUSINESS

A. [2025-107](#)

The Board of Water Commissioners for the City of Detroit, Water and Sewerage Department authorizes the Director to **enter into an Easement Agreement with SLR Fairgrounds A Owner, LLC,** and also authorizes the Director to take such other action as may be necessary to accomplish the intent of this vote.

Sponsors: MacGriff

Attachments: [SLR Fairgrounds A Owner, LLC - Water Main Easement](#)

A motion was made by Vice Chairperson Mary Blackmon, seconded by Commissioner John Henry Davis that this Resolution, BOWC be approved. The motion carried by a unanimous vote.

B. [2025-108](#)

The Board of Water Commissioners for the City of Detroit, Water and Sewerage Department authorizes the Director to **enter into an Easement Agreement with SLR Fairgrounds A Owner, LLC,** and also authorizes the Director to take such other action as may be necessary to accomplish the intent of this vote.

Sponsors: MacGriff

Attachments: [SLR Fairgrounds A Owner, LLC - Sewer Main Easement](#)

A motion was made by Vice Chairperson Mary Blackmon, seconded by Commissioner John Henry Davis that this Resolution, BOWC be approved. The motion carried by a unanimous vote.

11. DIRECTOR'S METRICS

A. [2025-109](#) Director's Report

Sponsors: Brown

Attachments: [Board Report - Metrics - 05212025](#)

This matter was received and filed

12. COMMENTS BY COMMISSIONERS

Commissioner Jane Garcia asked about the status of Southwest Detroit water main break. (Director Gary Brown says Mackinaw Adjusters came to Detroit for a meeting to explain the claims process in detail. Most customers have been educated about the process. Also says that the claims process is going well).

Commissioner Lane Coleman asked for clarification of the alley sewer line whether it is public or private sewer line. Director Brown gave clarification.

13. COMMENTS BY THE CHAIR

There were none.

14. OTHER MATTERS

There were none.

15. ADJOURNMENT

Chairperson Einheuser requested a motion to adjourn.

A motion was made by Vice Chairperson Mary Blackmon, seconded by Commissioner Lane Coleman that this be adjourned. The motion carried by a unanimous vote.

How to Make a Request for Public Comment

You may provide your public comment via Zoom link:

<http://cityofdetroit.zoom.us/j/81572635118>

During the public comment section for each committee meeting, raise your hand using the Zoom hand icon on your desktop or mobile device, or if calling into the meeting by phone, press *9 to raise your hand (press *6 to unmute when called upon)

We respectfully request that you maximize your three minutes by sharing all your comments/questions at one time. You will only be called upon once for public comment during the same committee meeting, full board meeting, or hearing.

Once the Chair closes public comment, there will be no other public comments accepted and all the attendees will remain muted for the duration of the meeting

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 3:03 p.m.