



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

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Wednesday, August 17, 2016

2:00 PM

5th Floor Board Room, Water Board Building

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## **Regular Meeting**

### **1. CALL TO ORDER**

Chairman Einheuser called the meeting to order at 2 p.m.

### **2. ROLL CALL**

**Present:** 7 - Commissioner Mary Blackmon, Commissioner Linda Forte, Commissioner John Henry Davis, Commissioner Michael Einheuser, Commissioner Lane Coleman, Commissioner Pamela Rodgers and Commissioner Jane Garcia

### **3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Chairman Einheuser requested approval of the agenda.

**A motion was made by Commissioner Mary Blackmon, seconded by Commissioner Jane Garcia that this agenda be approved. The motion carried by an unanimous vote.**

### **4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Chairman Einheuser requested approval of the Ad Hoc Committee and Regular meeting minutes.

#### **July 7, 2016 Ad Hoc Committee Meeting-Board Staff**

**The minutes, Ad Hoc Committee, were received and filed.**

#### **July 20, 2016 Regular Meeting**

**A motion was made by Commissioner Lane Coleman, seconded by Commissioner Mary Blackmon that the minutes of July 20, 2016 be approved. The motion carried by an unanimous vote.**

### **5. PUBLIC COMMENTS (3 minutes per speaker)**

Ms. Joyce Moore, 2044 Taylor, came before the board to oppose the \$30 in drainage that will be billed for a side lot as stated in a recent letter sent to her home, which she argues is more than the drainage fee for her home; she also asked questions pertaining to property liens and how money generated from water bills is used.

Director Gary Brown stated Ms. Moore's questions and responses will be put in writing by Chief Customer Service Officer Marc-Antonie Cooper.

Attorney Coleman Potts, 407 E. Fort Street Suite 103, came before the Board to resolve a water bill to his client's property at 34 Burlingame acquired through a tax auction, which was not abolished at the time of purchase.

Director Gary Brown referred Mr. Potts to Chief Customer Service Officer Marc-Antonie Cooper.

6. ITEMS FROM THE COMMISSIONERS

There was none.

7. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

There was none.

8. NEW BUSINESS

[16-0127](#)

The Board of Water Commissioners for the City of Detroit, Water and Sewerage Department **authorizes an amendment to the 2016-2017 Retail Water System Operations and Maintenance Budget of \$4,400,000.00 and an amendment to the 2016-2017 Retail Sewer System Operations and Maintenance Budget in the amount of \$14,298,000.00** and also authorizes the Director to take such other action as may be necessary to accomplish the intent of this vote.

**Sponsors:** Hudson

A motion was made by Commissioner Linda Forte, seconded by Commissioner Lane Coleman that this, Department Budget, be adopted. The motion carried by an unanimous vote.

9. DIRECTOR'S METRICS

[16-0129](#)

Director's Metrics

**Sponsors:** Brown

Attachments:    [Board Report - Metrics - 08172016](#)  
[Top 100 Alias handout Metrics-08172016](#)

This Report, Communications to BOWC, was received and filed.

**10.        COMMENTS BY COMMISSIONERS**

**Commissioner Forte**

I was reflecting on the impending need for green infrastructure - thinking about how can we connect the dots for potential suppliers particularly Detroit based suppliers for these products and services. Perhaps it's something connected to through city of Detroit Department of Economics - something that helps people develop before this need erupts and becomes a real need we don't have the resources to meet. This is really an opportunity. There is a role the city can play to develop these Detroit based businesses.

**Director Gary Brown responded:**

The Erb Foundation has given dollars to Bloomberg who has contracted with the DEGC to train individuals and also to put a business incubator for Detroit base. Crain magazine has an article on the Bloomberg program (Aug 17 issue).

**Commissioner Blackmon**

Gary, could you please comment on the shut off repercussions - I've noticed customers out of the doors; people staying to 8:30 p.m., centers are overflowing with customers coming in.

**Director Gary Brown responded:**

Yes, there have been long lines. We are hiring, we are training and getting more staffing in, six of them are Hispanic Americans. The shutoffs that are going on right now are customers on payment plans and they have broken the plans. We have 19,000 in that situation. What we can do is reduce the number of door hangers that we put out, which will give some relief to the customer service centers, but I want to assure you that 50 percent of the people within 48 hours of the door hanger come in and they make the payment.

Commissioner Garcia

I think you're all doing a great job as far as the WRAP, I think its a culture that has to change and it's all going to take time. Nothing come easy. It's important that we're patient while we educate the people on how to deal with it. Water is the last thing they think about when they pay bills. I want to make sure that I commend you for trying.

I also think that it's very hard to come down here, parking tickets if you get it is \$45. I look at the whole thing and I'm hoping that we will have community centers that they can go and pay their bill. I'm looking forward to the breakout of the mercado where they get their license, and pay the water bill and their light bill; the more you become part of the community easier it is for people to run down and pay their bills.

Director Gary Brown responded:

I couldn't agree more. We have to make it happen and we will.

**11. COMMENTS BY THE CHAIR**

My comment is reflecting on the questions that Commissioner Forte is asking the director telling us about this opportunity for us to be the greeniest city in the country as I thought about the big picture of what we do as policy makers here. A year and a half ago I went to see the Hoover Dam. That resevoir provides the water for much of Nevada Arizona and Southern California and you can see the water mark of where it was when it was built and where it is today and just as a novice looking at it you say, someone is going to have a real problem some time from now. As I was thinking about our role here I thought, we have no incentive for conservation because supply is not an issue. We've got twenty percent of the world's fresh water all around us - a couple of other states and Canada make their claim as well, but supply is just not an issue. I was thinking about the first part of summer when it didn't rain and people were buying water from us to water their grass and I'm going, yes! We don't have a Hoover Dam kind of a problem but it occurs to me, that's thinking about the water coming in and we better be thinking about the water going out. We have very strong incentive for conservation. You're right (director), if we don't take this opportunity then shame on us.

**12. OTHER MATTERS**

There was none.

**13. ADJOURNMENT**

Chairman Einheuser requested a motion to adjourn.

A motion was made by Commissioner Mary Blackmon, seconded by Commissioner Jane Garcia that the meeting be adjourned. The motion carried by an unanimous vote.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 3:09 p.m.