



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

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Wednesday, January 15, 2020

6:00 PM Detroit Police Department Eighth Precinct Auditorium  
21555 W McNichols Rd, Detroit, MI 48219

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## BOWC Meeting and Public Hearing-DWSD Fiscal Year 2021 Budget Location and Time Change

### 1. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Einheuser called the meeting to order at 6:04 p.m.

### 2. ROLL CALL

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

### 3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Chairman Einheuser requested approval of the amended agenda.

Presentation by Durfee Elementary School was added.

**A motion was made by Commissioner Mary Blackmon, seconded by  
Commissioner Linda Forte that the agenda be approved as amended. The  
motion carried by a unanimous vote.**

### 4. PUBLIC HEARING - Fiscal Year 2021 Budget

Chairman Einheuser opened the public hearing at 6:08 p.m.

#### A. [20-0015](#) DWSD FY2021 Budget

**Sponsors:** Naughton

**Attachments:** [PUBLIC HEARING ON DWSD FY2021 BUDGET 1.15.20](#)

**This Communication or Report was received and filed.**

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

1. Cindy Darrah came before the Board to speak about the drainage charge that she feels should be a tax and not a fee.

2. Sylvia Orduno with Michigan Welfare Rights and Peoples Water Board came before the Board with concern about water being unaffordable and that citizens cannot afford

another rate increase.

3. Russ Bellant came before the Board about stormwater drainage fees. He asked had the department considered that if any blockage retained in parking lots were associated with DWSD portion of the system, would warrant a reimbursement to the customer.

4. Bernadette Williams with the Harvest Community Block Club, asked about the costs of batteries and tires. These two contracts are on the agenda for approval.

5. Eric Blount asked why the department does not provide a reference number to track a customer's complaint.

Chairman Einheuser closed the public hearing at 6:50 p.m.

## 6. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Chairman Einheuser requested approval of the minutes of December 18, 2019.

**A motion was made by Commissioner Jonathan Kinloch, seconded by Commissioner Mary Blackmon that the minutes be approved. The motion carried by a unanimous vote.**

## 7. PUBLIC COMMENTS (3 minutes per speaker)

1. Ali G. Cheaito came before the Board about a water bill balance inherited after purchasing a home through a quick claim deed.
2. Rachel Hesse came before the Board about her monthly fluctuating drainage bill.
3. Kwaku Atara with Trinity Detroit came before the Board about a flooded crawl space due to a water main break.
4. Karen Miller with Bread of Life Ministry came before the Board about her drainage bill.
5. Sylvia Orduno commented about the Director's report and that page 5 does not reflect the number of low-income customers disconnected from the system. She spoke about page 25, of the report that shows more concern about the number of followers on social media. She said that most customers impacted by shut offs are not on social media.
6. Bernadette Williams came before the Board about late fees being assessed to her bill.
7. Nayda Taylor came before the Board about a billing dispute.
8. Gwendolyn Taylor came before the Board about a delinquent bill assessed through property she purchased through probate court.
9. Jerina Cleveland came before the Board about her water bill that increased astronomically after a meter installation.
10. Sonja Davis came before the Board about flooding (sidewalk and backyard) at her property.
11. Michele Emerson came before the Board about a backyard sinkhole that has been there for over three years.
12. Cheryl Minnifield came before the Board about flooding for years on the block of Faust from Schoolcraft to Kendall causing backup into homes.
13. Gary Little came before the Board about a water main replacement problem.
14. Eric Blount came before the Board about a billing complaint.
15. Cindy Darrah commented that the lead pipe replacement project should be zone

approved.

## 8. COMMUNICATIONS

### A. [20-0012](#) Receipt of Correspondence

**Sponsors:** Customer Service

**Attachments:** [Cindy Darrah 12.18.19](#)  
[Elvis Deberry 12.18.19](#)  
[Valerie Glenn 12.18.19](#)  
[Gerald Givens 11.20.19](#)  
[Deon Jenkins & Crystal Rice 12.18.19](#)  
[Brenda Lee 10.16.19](#)  
[Dominique Nance 12.18.19](#)  
[Ruby Riley 12.18.19](#)  
[Reverend James Smith 12.18.19](#)  
[Melony Smith 12.18.19](#)  
[Vaughn Tolliver 9.18.19](#)  
[Hydrate Detroit 12.18.19](#)

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.

### B. [20-0013](#) Receipt of Correspondence

**Sponsors:** Pospiech

**Attachments:** [FOIA REQUESTS - DECEMBER 2019](#)

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

## 9. ITEMS FROM THE COMMISSIONERS

Follow-up Items  
Joshua Ronnebaum at 19410 Lucerne-Pending  
Tracy Reynolds/Juan Moore-AFSCME Local 2920-Pending

## 10. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

There was none.

## 11. NEW BUSINESS

### A. APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA (Items A I - V)

- I. [20-0002](#) The Board of Water Commissioners for the City of Detroit, Water and Sewerage Department authorizes the Director to approve **DWSD Contract 6002625 for three years with Motor City Pipe & Supply Co. to provide Soft Type K Copper Pipe for a total contract amount not-to-exceed \$185,352** and also authorizes the Director to take such other action as may be necessary to accomplish the intent of this vote.

**Sponsors:** Burgi

**A motion was made by Commissioner Jonathan Kinloch, seconded by Commissioner Mary Blackmon that this Contract be approved. The motion carried by a unanimous vote.**

- II. [20-0003](#) The Board of Water Commissioners for the City of Detroit, Water and Sewerage Department authorizes the Director to approve **DWSD to utilize a State of Michigan MiDeal cooperative contract with Staples for the as-needed purchase of office and breakroom supplies for a total amount not-to-exceed \$1,500,000 and a term of up to 4 years**, and also authorizes the Director to take such other action as may be necessary to accomplish the intent of this vote.

**Sponsors:** Burgi

**A motion was made by Commissioner Jonathan Kinloch, seconded by Commissioner Mary Blackmon that this Contract be approved. The motion carried by a unanimous vote.**

- III. [20-0004](#) The Board of Water Commissioners for the City of Detroit, Water and Sewerage Department authorizes the Director to approve **two three-year contracts for automotive batteries with Detroit Battery Company (#6002635) in the amount of \$46,282.02 and with Start All Enterprises dba Complete Battery Source (#6002636) in the amount of \$62,277.00**, and also authorizes the Director to take such other action as may be necessary to accomplish the intent of this vote.

**Sponsors:** Burgi

**Attachments:** [Auto Batteries Bid Tab Final](#)

**A motion was made by Commissioner Jonathan Kinloch, seconded by Commissioner Mary Blackmon that this Contract be approved. The motion carried by a unanimous vote.**

- VI. [20-0005](#) The Board of Water Commissioners for the City of Detroit, Water and Sewerage

Department authorizes the Director to approve **three-year contracts for vehicle tires with Shrader Tire & Oil (#6002631) in the amount of \$99,417.20 and Jefferson Chevrolet dba Trader Ray Tire (#6002632) in the amount of \$209,129.63**, and also authorizes the Director to take such other action as may be necessary to accomplish the intent of this vote.

**Sponsors:** Burgi

**Attachments:** [Tires Bid Tab](#)

**A motion was made by Commissioner Jonathan Kinloch, seconded by Commissioner Mary Blackmon that this Contract be approved. The motion carried by a unanimous vote.**

**V. [20-0006](#)**

The Board of Water Commissioners for the City of Detroit Water and Sewerage Department **approves the proposed reallocation of five Customer Service Specialist positions and associated funds from the Customer Service Budget to Billing and Collections Budget for Fiscal year 2019-20**; and further authorizes the Director and Chief Financial Officer to take such other action as may be necessary to accomplish the intent of this vote.

**Sponsors:** Naughton

**Attachments:** [Reallocate 5 CSS positions 1.2020.att](#)

**A motion was made by Commissioner Jonathan Kinloch, seconded by Commissioner Mary Blackmon that this Contract be approved. The motion carried by a unanimous vote.**

**12. DIRECTOR'S METRICS**

**A. [20-0014](#)**

**Director's Metrics**

**Sponsors:** Office of the Director

**Attachments:** [Board Report - Metrics - 01.15.2020](#)

Director Brown reported that the procurement division held a vendor fair at Marygrove College in an attempt to hire more Detroit-based vendors and contractors involved in helping the department build its system. Deputy Director Mobley thanked the Public Affairs team for assisting with the fair. She said it was well-attended and allowed vendors the opportunity to sign up for infrastructure work.

Director Brown spoke with City Council to discuss the uranium spill that took place at the Detroit River and said the chemicals had no adverse effect to the water. He also spoke about an article published in the news about water shut offs and that the data used were from metrics taken from the BOWC's public record. The reporter did not give the Department an opportunity to explain how the data was aggregated.

Director Brown said the department appreciates the advocates who bring customers to our attention for assistance. He is advocating to GLWA for change in the criteria for more customers to benefit from the WRAP program.

Director Brown also thanked the 8th Precinct for hosting the BOWC evening meeting.

**13. COMMENTS BY COMMISSIONERS**

Commission Blackmon wanted to assure constituents that customer service is our top priority. The department has a new chief customer service officer Matthew Phillips with ideas on improving training and retention.

Commissioner Kinloch asked for follow-up on customer who file a claim about his vehicle tires and also requested a copy of the department's damage claim policy. He also asked for followup to Maggie Lee's non-profit community center drainage matter.

Commissioner Blackmon passed along accommodations from the Russell Wood's Community to thank Mohamad Farhat, DWSD Field Services and Engineering Manager for the water main replacement project aftermath clean up in their community.

**14. COMMENTS BY THE CHAIR**

Chairman Einheuser echoed the Director's comment on the Eighth Precinct hospitality for hosting the Board's meeting.

**15. OTHER MATTERS**

**There was none.**

**16. ADJOURNMENT**

**A motion was made by Commissioner Mary Blackmon, seconded by Commissioner Linda Forte that the meeting be adjourned. The motion carried by a unanimous vote.**

**There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 8:01 p.m.**