



**MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING  
COMMISSIONERS OF PUBLIC WORKS  
407 W. Broad Street, Level 2,  
Greenville, South Carolina  
May 2, 2023  
8:15 a.m.**

## **GreenvilleWater**

Commissioners of Public Works in attendance:

Chairman Phillip A. Kilgore, Vice-Chairman James W. Bannister, and Wil Brasington. Absent: Debra M. Sofield and Mayor Knox H. White. A quorum was present.

Greenville Water Senior Staff in attendance:

Interim Chief Executive Officer Jeff Boss, Chief Financial Officer Phil Robey, Chief Administrative Officer Dr. Bob Schmidt, Director of Operational Technical Services Dr. Jane Arrington, Director of Engineering Mark Hattendorf, Director of Human Resources Lisa Bryant, Assistant Director of Water Resources Elizabeth Pierczynski, Controller Brian Bearfield, Manager of Facilities and Maintenance Allen White, Internal Auditor Jacob Polson, and attorney Adam Bach.

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The Regular Meeting of the Commissioners of Public Works was called to order at 8:15 a.m. by Chairman Kilgore.

### **1. WELCOME**

### **2. PUBLIC COMMENT**

No comments were presented.

### **3. CONSENT AGENDA**

Chairman Kilgore asked for questions pertaining to the consent agenda items. There being none, he called for approval of the items of the Consent Agenda which were the meeting minutes of the Regular Commission Meeting April 4, 2023, the Water Resources Report, the Finance Update, New Development, and New Annexations. Vice-Chairman Bannister moved, seconded by Commissioner Brasington, to approve the items of the consent agenda. The motion passed unanimously.

### **4. LEGISLATIVE UPDATE**

Chairman Kilgore called on Legislative Liaison Bob Knight to provide an update on activities in Columbia. Mr. Knight shared the bill to be introduced to increase trespassing fees had a hiccup. After speaking with Representative Mike Burns regarding an issue with illegal harvesting of native plants, a recommendation was made to charges being made for offences other than trespassing which carry stiffer penalties.

The South Carolina Rural Infrastructure Authority (SCRIA) announced grants to be awarded. Greenville Water was awarded \$10 million for the Adkins Water Treatment Plant Parallel Water Transmission Main, Phase I.

## **5. FLEXIBLE/COMPRESSED SCHEDULE POLICY CHANGE**

Chairman Kilgore welcomed Director of Human Resources Lisa Bryant to present the proposed policy change to employee scheduling. Ms. Bryant took a moment to share her experiences with work schedules for Pickens County employees and explained flexible scheduling is a beneficial tool. This tool could be used to help achieve and maintain Greenville Water's goal of being the preferred employer in the Upstate. Eligibility will be dependent on customer and operational needs determined by department directors and managers. Ms. Bryant provided the following examples for both non-exempt and exempt team members:

- Four 10-hour days each week with one traditional workday off
- Four 9-hour days and one 4-hour day each week
- Team members may start earlier in the morning and leave earlier in the afternoon.
- Team members may start later in the day and work into the evening.

All of these options will help Human Resources to recruit employees but will not increase costs for Greenville Water.

Commissioner Brasington stated that on the surface he is a big proponent of flexible scheduling. Interim Chief Executive Officer Jeff Boss suggested a six-month pilot to prove that productivity and customer service increased or remained the same. Staff will be briefed on setting up metrics for re-evaluation in six months. Commissioner Brasington asked that employee satisfaction be included in the evaluation.

Vice-Chairman Bannister moved, seconded by Commissioner Brasington, to approve the concept of flexible scheduling for Greenville Water employees as presented. The motion passed unanimously.

## **6. BENEFITS POLICY UPDATE**

In the Fall of 2022, Greenville Water hired HR Management (HRM) to review current recruitment and retention initiatives. HRM confirmed Greenville Water offers great benefits. As a Human Resources professional Ms. Bryant commended the Commission and Management for the work that had already been done, and shared she was excited to present Greenville Water's benefits to new hires in her first orientation session. Management Staff worked with HRM to improve a few things highlighted in the report where changes could be made. The following recommendations were presented:

- Tuition Reimbursement Proposed Increase= \$11,500 annual reimbursement with individual employee max of \$23,000
- Add one (1) Floating Holiday to be used annually at employee's discretion, with supervisor's approval.
- For General Leave, add Length of Service steps at 3, 5, and 15 years to better align with industry peers:

Length of Regular / Full-time Service	Current Leave Days earned	Proposed Leave Days earned	Increase in Leave Days Earned
1 <sup>st</sup> year	12	12	0
1 <sup>+</sup> up to 3 yrs.	18	18	0
3 <sup>+</sup> up to 5 yrs.	18	20	2 days
5 <sup>+</sup> up to 10 yrs.	18	22	4 days
10 <sup>+</sup> up to 15 yrs.	24	24	0
15 <sup>+</sup> up to 20 yrs.	24	26	2 days
20 yrs. and over	30	30	0 days

The Commission evaluated each item separately with the following motions:

- Chairman Kilgore asked that the Tuition Reimbursement Policy include the flexibility, to exceed the employee maximum tuition reimbursement if it is in the interest of the organization and the desire of Management, to request an employee pursue a higher degree. Commissioner Brasington recommended increasing the annual reimbursement to meet/exceed the industry average. Commissioner Brasington moved, seconded by Vice-Chairman Bannister, to approve the tuition reimbursement increase to \$11,600 annual reimbursement with an individual employee max of \$23,200 with the flexibility to exceed the employee maximum tuition reimbursement if it is in the interest of the organization with Management approval. The motion passed unanimously.
- Commissioner Brasington moved, seconded by Vice-Chairman Bannister, to approve the addition of one (1) floating holiday as presented. The motion passed unanimously.
- Commissioner Brasington moved, seconded by Vice-Chairman Bannister, to approve the addition of general leave to length of service steps 3, 5, and 15 years as presented to better align with industry peers. The motion passed unanimously.

Commissioner Brasington added he was pleased to see Greenville Water taking steps to further bolster the benefits offering but the big takeaway from the study done by HRM was that across the board, in so many elements of the total benefits package, Greenville Water exceeds the industry average. Mr. Boss added the first five pages of the report covered the impressiveness of the existing benefits.

## **7. BUSINESS METRICS**

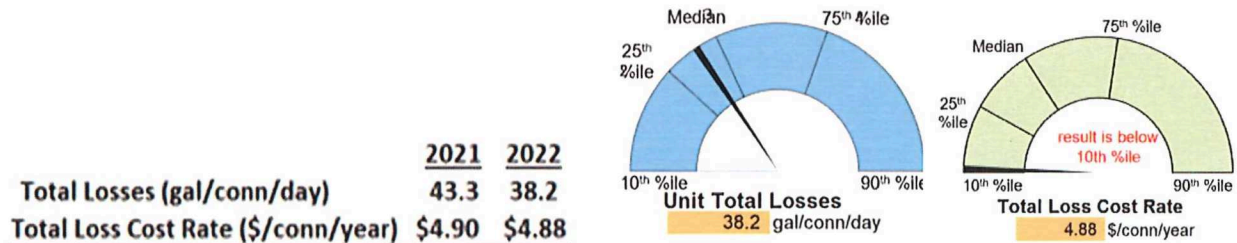
Chairman Kilgore called on Director of Operational Technical Services Dr. Jane Arrington to give an update on business metrics. Dr. Arrington presented the Commission with a copy of the 2023 Annual Greenville Water Business Plan pointing out organizational priorities and strategic projects with the list of owners for each. A recommendation for a slight revision to

the mission statement was presented for consideration: Greenville Water's Mission is to serve customers by protecting our water resources and providing affordable, pristine water for our vibrant community through innovative utility leadership. The Commissioners were favorably inclined to accept the revision. Chairman Kilgore asked that the Commissioners not attending the meeting be made aware of the change.

Chief Financial Officer Phil Robey began review of long-term viability goals by explaining that Greenville Water's financial management objective is to maintain financial resources and have them available in order to accomplish the organizations mission. To aid this objective, Sage Intacct, a new financial software implemented in January, allows Management to view budget information in real time. This provides information helpful to maintaining Commission objectives. Also, Public Relations is developing a customer survey to gauge Greenville Water's responsiveness to service requests and flexibility in managing accounts. The survey is expected to launch in August or September.

Dr. Arrington provided an update on non-revenue water, sharing that the Finance and Operations departments collaborate monthly to identify and reduce non-revenue water to improve efficiency and cost recovery. The annual American Water Works Association audit provides industry standards for unit total losses, and total loss cost rate. Greenville Water's annual audit for 2022 shows a slight improvement from 2021 to 2022:

**From the AWWA Annual Water Audit**



This places Greenville Water in the lowest tenth percentile. Even though losses are just slightly below median, the cost rate is very low. This audit is completed every year. Chairman Kilgore asked if it is possible to attain even better performance on unit total losses and if so, what would be a strategy for doing that. Dr. Arrington explained Staff meets monthly to discuss possible options. Trending over the past six years shows total losses have greatly improved over this time period. Mr. Boss shared ways that processes have been honed to reduce losses.

Dr. Arrington added that operational changes have been implemented to further decrease non-revenue water. Operational excellence is honed through the Hexagon Enterprise Asset Management (EAM) system, managing assets to achieve acceptable levels of service while balancing financial viability and the minimization of risk. Greenville Water is currently at 78% department implementation of the EAM system. Engineering, Watershed and Right-of-Way teams are yet to be added to EAM.

In the area of social responsibility, Chief Administrative Officer Dr. Bob Schmidt shared that Greenville Water is at less than 10% annual turnover year to date which is less than the 14% industry average. Dr. Schmidt also updated the Commission on public relations,

environmental stewardship, operational excellence, cyber security and systems risk management goals and achievements.

#### **8. CHIEF EXECUTIVE REPORT**

Greenville Water Management staff has met with a third-party fleet manager to assess the possibility of outside fleet management rather than internal management. The possibility is promising. There will be more information provided at a future meeting.

A proposed sunshade design, prominently displaying the Greenville Water logo, has been submitted to the City of Greenville for approval for use in Unity Park. There will also be a sign will be prominently displayed showing Greenville Water's contribution. There will be an opening of the Splash Pad area of Unity Park on May 5<sup>th</sup> at 4:00 p.m. Phil Robey will represent Greenville Water at the event.

Greenville Water Staff met with representatives of the Economic Development Administration (EDA) to review grant opportunities. There are two areas of interest in Greenville on Bracken Road near the Donaldson Center. Chairman Kilgore asked if the funding would be for Greenville Water to provide the additional infrastructure to support the new industries coming to the area. Mr. Boss explained the new developments are required to get lines to the far property line. The Federal funds would be used to loop the lines for redundancy.


In celebration of the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Watersheds Conservation Easement with The Nature Conservancy, Greenville Water will provide all employees with a boxed lunch on May 24<sup>th</sup> and a historical presentation showing the importance of the conservation easement.

#### **9.COMMISSION COMMENTS**

No comments were presented.

#### **10. ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned 9:04 a.m.

  
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Phillip A. Kilgore, Chairman

  
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Kimberly Haulter, Executive Assistant