

**REGULAR MEETINGS OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS FOR THE
METRO EAST SANITARY DISTRICT
ST. CLAIR AND MADISON COUNTIES, ILLINOIS
HELD ON TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 19, 2023, AT 9:00 A.M.
LOCATED AT: 1800 EDISON AVENUE, GRANITE CITY, IL 62040**

9:00 A.M.- President Oney called the meeting to order, and the Clerk recorded the attendance.

The following were in attendance:

Present: Commissioners, Darwin, Brinza, Dixon, Jackson, and President Oney
Absent: None

Others attending the meeting were:

Executive Director Rick Fancher, Treasurer Kim King, Attorney Robert Sprague, Attorney Tom Schooley, Engineer Charlie Juneau, Mayor Mike Parkinson, and Mike Nordstrom

PUBLIC COMMENT: None.

PUBLIC CORRESPONDENCE:

REPORT OF ENGINEERS:

Charlie Juneau reported following:

On August 24th, MESD submitted the initial application to FEMA for the Chouteau Slough Pump Station project. MESD received an email confirming approval and were instructed to submit a sub-application to IEMA by October 1st. This sub-application involves an extensive amount of paperwork.

- Mr. Fancher conveyed he just spoke with Chris Doucleff who oversees Planning and Development at Madison County. Mr. Doucleff had a conversation with Sam Al-Basha, a representative for IEMA, yesterday, in which they reviewed notes. Mr. Fancher explained that both he and another representative for the District were present when the flood mitigation resolution was passed by the Madison County Board. After speaking with Mr. Doucleff, this should be sufficient for MESD to be added to their list. The good news is MESD doesn't need to have its name on the list by October 1st. All other required documentation can be submitted. Once the Board adopts a resolution that approves the Madison County Flood Mitigation Plan, a copy can be sent to IEMA, resulting in MESD being added to the list. This will potentially enable MESD to work as its own sub applicant.

- Mr. Juneau asked Mr. Fancher, “One of the things we discussed yesterday was asking the City of Granite City to sponsor us. So, we no longer need that now?”
 - Mr. Fancher replied, “That is correct. We will act as our own sub-applicant.”

Mr. Juneau reported that the County Board had approved the mitigation project through a resolution, highlighting that the current plan is dated 2020 and is subject to renewal every 5 years. He mentioned the importance of having a mitigation package system in place. Notably, there is a list of 23 participants, and he was disheartened to hear that MESD was not on the list.

- Mr. Fancher replied, “We will be added once we pass our resolution. We can go ahead and submit our application.”

Mr. Juneau furthered the discussion, mentioning another mandatory requirement for the application. The MESD Board is obligated to adopt a resolution for the proposed project, which comes with a projected cost of \$10,500,000. This resolution would state MESD agrees to fund 25 percent of the project cost as the required local share. The next step in the sub-application involves approval, after which they can proceed to file the 200-page application. Mr. Juneau emphasized the project holds merit, particularly because it’s being advocated by the Corps of Engineers. He highlighted the determining factor whether to file or not is the cost to benefit analysis. According to his staff’s review, the designated area that could flood might suffer approximately \$27 million worth of property damage.

- President Oney inquired whether MESD has ever completed a priority of projects. His concern is spending \$2.5 million on a pump station when the Corps has a brand new station next to it. Mr. Oney questioned the scenario that would lead to \$25 million in property damage. He went on to explain, as a board member, the desire to assess the situation thoroughly. He suggested considering whether it would be more beneficial spending \$2.5 million on a project to improve East St. Louis or North Pumping Stations, potentially impacting \$100 million worth of property, including areas like Granite City. He stated he would not like to pursue a project solely because there’s a \$7.5 million grant available, and emphasized he would like to be well informed that spending \$2.5 million of taxpayers money for an area is needed. Mr. Oney requested that Mr. Fancher and Mr. Juneau collaborate to prioritize a list of projects. He questioned whether Madison County was willing to participate in the 25 percent, given MESD took over CNV because of the financial situation. All it did was put a burden on this District because the tax revenue wasn’t sufficient to cover the existing projects. Mr. Oney stressed the need to develop a 5–10 year plan before making commitments, allowing the Board to make well-informed decisions.
 - In response, Mr. Juneau added that the issue regarding the Corps of Engineers pump station arises consistently during the Corps meetings. He pointed out that the mandate from Congress states that the pump station should only operate when the relief wells require it. This station’s primary purpose is to manage high river stages, rather than internal flooding. Mr. Juneau mentioned, while there have been

instances where Mr. Fancher and the Corps cooperated and activated the pump station when MESD needed it, there was a period when, regardless of who made the request, the Corps refused.

- President Oney stated he believes a plan should be developed before the Board gives the final approval of the project.
 - Commissioner Brinza and Commissioner Dixon both agreed with President Oney.

REPORT OF EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR:

Mr. Fancher reported the following:

He and Charlie will collaborate to create a priority list of projects for the District. He mentioned it was positive news they did get the cooperation of Madison County to initiate the preliminary stages, enabling them to prepare for future available grants. This is a multistep process. Even if this is the initial project for the District, once on the FEMA list and the funding becomes available again, MESD will have a list of projects to submit. Due to short notice on the application, office staff have been diligently working on this project.

Mr. Fancher reported repairs were made along the Cahokia Canal, replacing old, corrugated pipe off Highway 162. This pipe was nearly 100 feet long, and 30 feet deep, serving as a drainage system for the fields behind Cargill Food Distribution.

The Regular Minutes for August 15th, 2023 were presented for approval.
Motion Commissioner Jackson: seconded by Commissioner Darwin to dispense with the reading of the minutes, approve them as submitted and place them on file.

The motion carried by the following vote:

Ayes: Commissioners Darwin, Brinza, Dixon, Jackson and Oney
Nays: None

CLAIMS AND SPECIFIC CLAIMS:

The General Fund and Specific Claims were submitted for approval:

Motion Commissioner Darwin: seconded by Commissioner Brinza to approve the General Fund and Specific Claims as submitted and order them paid.

Upon roll call, the motion carried by the following vote:

Ayes: Commissioners Darwin, Brinza, Dixon, Jackson and Oney
Nays: None

The Lansdowne Claims and Specific Claims were submitted for approval:

Motion Commissioner Jackson: seconded by Commissioner Brinza to approve the Lansdowne and Specific Claims as submitted and order them paid.

Upon roll call, the motion carried by the following vote:

Ayes: Commissioners Darwin, Brinza Dixon, Jackson and Oney
Nays: None

FINANCIAL REPORTS:

The General Fund Financial Reports for the month of August 2023 were submitted for approval:

Motion Commissioner Darwin: seconded by Commissioner Dixon to approve the General Fund Financial Report as submitted and place on file for audit.

The motion carried by the following vote:

Ayes: Commissioners Darwin, Brinza, Dixon, Jackson and Oney
Nays: None

The Special Funds Financial Reports for the month of August 2023 were submitted for approval:

Motion Commissioner Jackson: seconded by Commissioner Darwin to approve the Special Funds Financial Report as submitted and place on file for audit.

The motion carried by the following vote:

Ayes: Commissioners Darwin, Brinza, Dixon, Jackson and Oney
Nays: None

The Lansdowne Financial Reports for the month of August 2023 were submitted for approval:

Motion Commissioner Darwin: seconded by Commissioner Jackson to approve the Lansdowne Fund Financial Report as submitted and place on file for audit.

The motion carried by the following vote:

Ayes: Commissioners Darwin, Brinza, Dixon, Jackson and Oney
Nays: None

PAYROLL:

The Payroll for the period of August 6th, 2023, through August 19th, 2023, was submitted for approval.

Motion Commissioner Jackson: seconded by Commissioner Dixon to approve the Payroll as submitted.

Upon roll call, the motion carried by the following vote:

Ayes: Commissioners Darwin, Brinza, Dixon, Jackson and Oney
Nays: None

The Payroll for the period of August 20th, 2023, through September 2nd, 2023, was submitted for approval.

Motion Commissioner Jackson: seconded by Commissioner Brinza to approve the Payroll as submitted.

Upon roll call, the motion carried by the following vote:

Ayes: Commissioners Darwin, Brinza, Dixon, Jackson and Oney
Nays: None

LANSDOWNE ADJUSTMENT REPORT:

The Lansdowne Adjustment Reports were presented for approval:

Motion Commissioner Jackson: seconded by Commissioner Darwin to approve the Lansdowne Adjustment Report as submitted.

Upon roll call, the motion carried by the following vote:

Ayes: Commissioners Darwin, Brinza, Dixon, Jackson and Oney
Nays: None

REPORT OF ATTORNEYS:

Attorney Sprague had no report.

Attorney Schooley reported the following:

Attorney Schooley provided an update on the sale of the Eagle Park and Lansdowne system, mentioning two sets of documents. One set is the asset purchase agreement (APA), which he has reviewed and returned to Attorney Jones of Illinois American Water. There were very minor changes to it. The majority of work involves the schedules that are attached to the APA, which detail all the properties, parcels, right-of-ways, and easements. Joe Juneau and his staff have made excellent progress, completing 95 percent of the work already. Mr. Schooley has reviewed the schedules with Mr. Jones, who will seek further approval from his higher-ups regarding some of the language. The next steps are in the hands of Illinois American Water. The timetable under the APA for closing is June 2024. Again, the entire sale is contingent on Granite City Wastewater Treatment Plant sale.

OLD BUSINESS: None

NEW BUSINESS:

Discussion and/or approval of insurance quotes for commercial insurance package and workers compensation package for the policy year 12/1/2023 through 12/12024.

- President Oney stated that quotes were included in packets. He explained that after seeking RFQs, Dimond Bros. Insurance was the only provider to offer a complete package, while all others submitted only partial quotes. Dimond Bros Insurance has had a longstanding relationship with MESD. President Oney has found their experience in dealing with Illinois Counties Risk Management to be very positive. The Attorneys they have provided for various cases have been good to work with.

Motion Commissioner Brinza: seconded by Commissioner Jackson approval of commercial insurance package and workers compensation package with Dimond Bros for policy year 12/1/2023 through 12/1/2024.

Upon roll call, the motion carried by the following vote:

Ayes: Commissioners Darwin, Brinza, Dixon, Jackson and Oney
Nays: None

Discussion and/or approval of consulting agreement between Clayborne & Wagner LLP and the Metro East Sanitary District.

- Commissioner Brinza asked for more background on why this is needed.
 - o President Oney responded, “We have had multiple discussions on this topic, but we have not made any progress in requesting changes. One significant change we’ve been pursuing is related to the Southwest Flood Prevention District, specifically changing the language to allow some of the funds to be used for internal flooding. We have met with various representatives but have not had any results. We met with Mr. Clayborne, whose responsibility is to advocate for MESD’s interest, including pushing for this change and addressing other matters like annexations. We have provided him with a list of priorities that we’d like him to pursue.”
 - Commissioner Brinza inquired about the contract, noting that it’s based on hourly rates, with MESD covering expenses. He asked if there is a cap on these costs.
 - President Oney answered, “No, the contract doesn’t have a cap.”
 - o In response, Attorney Schooley added, “The terms of the consulting agreement can be terminated with just notice. After speaking with Mr Clayborne, he is at the point in his career where he just wants to give back to the community. He submitted the proposal but did say, anytime a fee is in question, just call and it can be discussed. As Mr. Oney said, we are talking about changing SWIFPD bylaws not only to help with internal flooding but also the maintenance on the relief wells, perhaps getting that funding done. I believe, Mr. Brinza, at the beginning of my start here at MESD, you asked me questions about trying to go up the hill and change boundaries, Mr. Clayborne has been aware of that, to perhaps change the boundaries of MESD to include that area up there. He was on board to try and help us.”
 - Commissioner Brinza responded, “That would be good.”

Motion Commissioner Darwin: seconded by Commissioner Jackson approval of consulting agreement between Clayborne & Wagner LLP and the Metro East Sanitary District.

Upon roll call, the motion carried by the following vote:

Ayes: Commissioners Darwin, Brinza, Dixon, Jackson and Oney
Nays: None

Discussion and/or approval of Ordinance 2023-0-014 establishing the salary of the Operations Manager for the Metro East Sanitary District pursuant to 70 ILCS 2905.

- Commissioner Brinza stated, “I have an issue creating a position at 100k for training an individual to eventually take Mr. Fancher’s spot as the Executive Director. It seems like a lot of money, and it has no difference at all whose appointing who; it just seems like a lot of money for someone doing that for about a year. We are getting to the point where we are selling off the sanitary part of the District, we should be reducing salaries because responsibilities are getting smaller, and yet we are adding. I have an issue adding that kind of money to a salary budget for a training position.”

Motion Commissioner Jackson: seconded by Commissioner Darwin approval of Ordinance 2023-0-014 establishing the salary of the Operations Manager for the Metro East Sanitary District pursuant to 70 ILCS 2905.

Upon roll call, the motion carried by the following vote:

Ayes: Commissioners Darwin, Dixon, Jackson and Oney
Nays: Commissioner Brinza

Discussion and/or approval of amending Ordinance 2023-0-003 with Ordinance 2023-0-015 establishing the salary of the Executive Director for the Metro East Sanitary District pursuant to 70 ILCS 2905.

- Commissioner Brinza asked, “That percentage is in line with what?”
 - o President Oney responded, “Mr. Fancher will have more duties and responsibility with training. Honestly, you do not want your subordinates making more money than you.”
 - Commissioner Brinza agreed.

Motion Commissioner Jackson: seconded by Commissioner Darwin approval of amending Ordinance 2023-0-0003 with Ordinance 2023-0-015 establishing the salary of the Executive Director for the Metro East Sanitary District pursuant to 70 ILCS 2905.

Upon roll call, the motion carried by the following vote:

Ayes: Commissioners Darwin, Brinza, Dixon, Jackson and Oney
Nays: None

Discussion and/or approval of Resolution 2023-R-003 authorization of bank signers.

- President Oney explained after Mrs. Parkison's departure, the names at the bank were updated to the correct names. However, this change had not been officially documented in the office.

Motion Commissioner Jackson: seconded by Commissioner Darwin approving Resolution 2023-R-003 authorization of bank signers.

Upon roll call, the motion carried by the following vote:

Ayes: Commissioners Darwin, Brinza, Dixon, Jackson and Oney
Nays: None

There being no further business placed before the Board, Motion Commissioner Darwin: seconded by Commissioner Brinza to adjourn.

- President Oney congratulated Mr. Nordstrom and welcome him aboard.

The motion carried by the following vote:

Ayes: Commissioners Darwin, Brinza, Dixon, Jackson and Oney
Nays: None

So, adjourned at 9:30 A.M.


Clerk