

Board Minutes for the Board of Sanitary Commissioners Meeting of September 6, 2023

THE BOARD OF SANITARY COMMISSIONERS conducted a regularly scheduled meeting.

Board members present; Stephen Brand, President; Adam Leach, Vice President; Michael Wolfe, Board Secretary; David Smith, Board Member; and Tim Overton, Board Member.

Department managers and staff present; John Barlow, District Administrator; Joe Rhetts, Legal Counsel; Deana Cox, Financial Manager; Thom Noble, Director of Engineering; Harvey Wright, Sewer Maintenance Superintendent; Phil Reagon, Sanitation Superintendent; Rick Conrad, BWQ Director; John Anderson, District Engineer; Jason Ingram, WPCF Superintendent; Jason Donati, Sustainability Coordinator; Cedric Powell, Sanitation; and Maggie Bales, Executive Office Manager.

Public present: None.

Consideration of Minutes: Mr. Brand entertained a motion to approve the minutes as presented. Mr. Leach moved to approve the Board Meeting Minutes as submitted for the meeting of August 23, 2023. Mr. Wolfe seconded the motion. The motion was passed (5-0).

Consideration of Claims: Mr. Brand entertained a motion to consider the register of claims totaling \$789,142.41. Mr. Brand stated this is a smaller list of claims. He stated the tenth levee mow is listed. Mr. Smith moved to approve the consideration of claims. Mr. Leach provided second. Motion passed (5-0).

District Administrator Update – Mr. Barlow stated the Northview Glenwood drainage project is moving along. He stated the project has not had any issues. Mr. Barlow stated Indian Village is progressing closer to completion as well as Drum Addition drainage project. He stated those are the three drainage projects and all are progressing as scheduled. Mr. Barlow stated that this morning at the Board of Works meeting bids were opened for a joint project between the City of Muncie and Muncie Sanitary District at the Aultshire drainage project. He stated this will be a partnership with the city for the costs of the project. Mr. Barlow stated that Mr. Leach will be doing an engineer review of the bids and will be submitted for approval at the Board of Works meeting next Wednesday. He stated then on the next MSD board meeting the bids will be brought to the board for final approval. Mr. Barlow stated that at the Drive Clean Summit in Michigan City, Phil Reason was named as a Drive Clean Indiana Hall of Famer. He stated we are proud of Phil and all that he has done over the years. Mr. Wolfe stated a congratulations to Phil Reagon. Mr. Leach stated a congratulations to Phil. Mr. Smith stated a congratulations to Phil and that it is well deserved. Mr. Brand stated his congratulations and appreciation to Phil for doing a great job.

Department Head Update – None.

Old Business: None.

New Business:

1. Resolution 2023-06 Amendment to Personnel Policies Handbook – John Barlow. Mr. Barlow stated that this amendment is to the current handbook of chapter two section 2.1. He stated language has been added to the normal job posting section. Mr. Barlow stated into the record that whenever a vacancy occurs or a new position is created, a list of current District personnel shall be examined to determine whether an existing District employee is already performing essentially the same or similar duties that will be required to be performed by the individual filling the vacant or newly created position. If so, the existing District employee may be considered for a direct appointment

to fill the vacant or newly created position. If no such situation exists, then job information shall be first posted within the Department facilities for seven (7) calendar days to encourage internal promotion. If the position is not filled within seven (7) calendar days, the job information shall be posted District wide within District facilities for seven (7) calendar days. Thereafter, the job position may be posted and advertised outside of the district. He stated that the second part of that is the normal posting procedure of seven days within the department and seven days within the district. Mr. Barlow stated that the amended portion states that if we have personnel doing a job that is outside the job description and then that job becomes available this person may be directly appointed to that due to experience in doing that job. He stated that if there is no condition that exists like that it will go toward its normal handbook language. Mr. Barlow asked the board to consider this for approval. Mr. Wolfe appreciates the modifications in the amendment. He stated that it allows for more transparency regarding what the employees can expect as far as position postings are concerned and as a department grows. Mr. Wolfe stated this is just another way that internal applicants can be eligible for positions. Mr. Leach stated that this is good to have something to point to when going about our business. He stated this is error apparent where you could have guys doing the job for months or years while basically not getting paid for that job. Mr. Leach stated that being able to directly promote them is good business. Mr. Brand stated he is in support and one of his goals is to have a genuine succession plan for the District Administrator and Department Heads. Mr. Brand stated that he would accept a motion to approve Resolution 2023-06. Mr. Wolfe moved to approve. Mr. Leach provided second. Motion passed (5-0).

2. Resolution 2023-07 Establishment of Fees for Certain Sewer Line Inspections – John Barlow. Mr. Barlow stated that historically the Sanitary District Engineering Department has allowed the public to come in and file affidavits to do inspections of private property if the customer seems to have a problem. He stated that the numbers have increased over the years to the extent that it is just taking a great amount of time and effort. Mr. Barlow stated that the best policy going forward would be to add a fee to this. He stated that Thom Noble, Director of Engineering, that \$100 is a fair fee to file the affidavit. Mr. Barlow stated that this resolution allows us to create that fee schedule. He stated that the fee may adjust or be changed from time to time with board approval. Mr. Barlow stated that the main thing is that if a customer signs an affidavit and pays the fee for the inspection and it turns out to be an MSD problem the fee will be credited to the customer's account. He stated that if it is a maintenance problem on the customer's private property, the fee for inspection is still of good value because the problem will already be better identified when they need to contact a plumber or contractor. Mr. Wolfe stated that this was one of the first things that he heard when coming onto the board from the Engineering Department. He stated that he appreciates Mr. Barlow bringing this to the board. Mr. Wolfe stated this is fair and equitable in the sense that the fee will either help lessen the plumbing bill for private solution or be credited to the customer's account. He stated the goal is not to limit the number of people coming to MSD and getting help in looking at the problem. Mr. Wolfe stated that the goal is to make sure the time is being spent widely and that these are probable to have MSD involvement and benefit from looking at the problem. He stated that his recommended fee would be \$100.00. Mr. Overton stated that he is in favor of the \$100.00 fee but will be abstaining from the vote due to legal advice. He stated that this recommendation for the fee came directly from our employees on the ground noticing an issue in a way that everyone could be better served in a more equitable way. Mr. Overton stated to piggyback on that and state that employee surveys will be going out. He asked department heads if they could strongly encourage them to participate. He stated that the board will receive the surveys and if they have ideas on how we can be better we want to know. Mr. Overton stated that we will act on those things. He stated that he will investigate each response personally and so will the board. Mr. Overton stated that some of the best ideas on how to make changes come from the guys on the ground. He stated his appreciation to the employees mentioning the idea and

the board willing to see it through and make it policy. Mr. Overton stated that this is a great example of how to work together and get things done. Mr. Leach stated that his recommendation would be for a \$100.00 fee. He stated that from a customer standpoint he likes it when people have skin in the game. Mr. Leach stated that each one of our camera trucks are in the \$200,000 to \$350,000 range. He stated that it is an expensive piece of equipment that we must have to do this job plus an employee on it. Mr. Leach stated that this is not a money-making endeavor by the district. He stated that it is fair in that the fee will be credited if it is an MSD problem and the fee covers an inspection. Mr. Smith stated that it is a great policy and a great service we will be able to provide to our customers. He agrees with the \$100.00 fee. Mr. Brand stated that he agrees with the \$100.00 fee. He wrote the fee into the resolution. Mr. Brand entertained a motion to approve Resolution 2023-07 for a \$100.00 fee as described. Mr. Leach moved to approve. Mr. Smith provided second. Motion passed (4-0) with Tim Overton abstaining from the vote.

Additional Board Topics:

1. Mr. Wolfe stated that we will be conducting the first employee survey. He stated that for the department heads in the room and folks listening we will be conducting some employee survey questions that will be an anonymous survey. Mr. Wolfe stated this way everyone can participate and give candid feedback. He stated that we do want to hear everyone's feedback and that is why we are making it anonymous. Mr. Wolfe stated that there will be a comment section, there will also be structured questions to let us know the temperature on a bunch of different topics. He stated we will look at the responses and discuss what the plan would be to release data on the responses.
2. Mr. Overton stated his appreciation to Mr. Wolfe for putting this together and his contributions to the board. He stated that he appreciates Mr. Wolfe for providing technical experience and for getting the survey put together.
3. Mr. Leach stated a thank you to Jason Ingram and those at the Water Pollution Control Facility for what they do to keep the plant running smoothly. He stated that Mr. Ingram and his team are doing everything as they should, and it is appreciated.
4. Mr. Brand stated that for the employee survey the benchmark participation is about 85%. He stated that MSD is typically better than benchmark and he would like to see 100% participation. Mr. Brand stated that he would encourage Department Heads to encourage the employees to participate and he assures them that it is anonymous. He stated that the goal is not to find out who said what, but to find out honest feedback from everyone.

Public Comments:

1. Jason Donati, Sustainability Coordinator, stated a public service announcement for the upcoming White River Cleanup on Saturday, September 16th at West Side Park from 8am to noon. He stated that they are looking for crew leaders. Mr. Donati stated that they do crew leader training leading up to the river cleanup because we could have anywhere between 200 and 500 volunteers. He stated that we are shooting for at least 30 crew leaders and right now we are at about five. Mr. Donati explained that those who wish to volunteer or be a crew leader to go to beautifulmuncie.org and sign up to participate or be a crew leader. He stated the face-to-face training will be September 11th at 4 pm at the West Side Park shelter closest to the river and there will also be online training for those who cannot make the in person one. Mr. Donati explained that this is a crucial volunteer role for the success of the White Rier Cleanup because we depend on the crew leaders to guide us to do about 15 different locations and about 15 miles along the river. He suggested companies, businesses, and organizations that may be thinking about a volunteer opportunity for their organization. Mr. Donati stated that we can designate certain areas for companies with large groups of volunteers. Mr. Leach stated to put a link for the signup on MSD's Facebook page.

Mr. Donati stated that he will do that today. Mr. Brand requested that Mr. Donati send him an email with some information he would pass along to the Muncie Manufacturing Alliance Group.

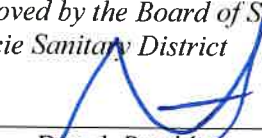
Adjourn: Mr. Brand stated our next regularly scheduled meeting will be held on Wednesday, September 20, 2023, at 11:30 a.m. in the City Hall Auditorium. Mr. Brand stated he would accept a motion to adjourn. Mr. Smith made a motion to adjourn the meeting for September 6, 2023. Mr. Leach seconded the motion. The motion was approved (5-0).

Respectfully Submitted,



Maggie Bales, Executive Office Manager

*Approved by the Board of Sanitary Commissioners
Muncie Sanitary District*

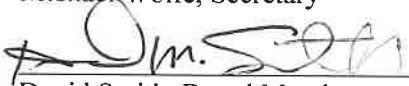


Stephen Brand, President



Adam Leach, Vice President

Michael Wolfe, Secretary



David Smith, Board Member

Tim Overton, Board Member