

MINUTES
HAMMOND SANITARY DISTRICT
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS MEETING
MAY 14, 2024
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The Board of Sanitary Commissioners of the Sanitary District of Hammond, Lake County, Indiana held a regular meeting at 4:04 p.m. in the Conference Room of the Administration Building located at 5143 Columbia Avenue, Hammond, Indiana.

President Dimopoulos called the meeting to order at 4:04 p.m. He stated that the Board held an Executive Session prior to the meeting to discuss personnel and litigation matters in accordance with Indiana Codes.

Commissioners Present: Dimopoulos, Dye, Hawkins, Miller

Commissioners Present via Zoom: Rubio

Commissioners Absent: N/A

District Personnel Present: Milan Kruszynski, District Manager
Matthew Muta, Deputy District Manager
Rachel Montes, Business Manager
Joseph Allegretti, HSD Attorney
Jeffrey Massey, HSD
Sharon Szany, HSD
Jack Smith, Sewer Department
Kaleigh Boyle, HSD
Jessie Amezcua, HSD

Others Present: Mike Hickey, MJHY, LLC
Alfonso Salinas III, Hammond City Council

Others Present via Zoom: Natalie Cook, Donohue

President Dimopoulos stated that the first order of business is the consideration of the April 23, 2024 Board Meeting Minutes.

Miller **moved** and Hawkins **seconded** to approve the April 23, 2024 Board Meeting Minutes.

Ayes: Dimopoulos, Dye, Hawkins, Miller, Rubio

Nays: None

Motion **carried** 5-0. Roll call votes taken.

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DISTRICT MANAGER'S REPORT

District Manager, Milan Kruszynski, stated that he would like to report on the following. Not only has Bob and IT saved them dollars and expenses by canceling unused phone lines, but Jeff Massey helped save \$40,000 of insurance costs because he went out and made sure that the boilers were covered by the policy that exists, so they did not have to get a special policy. He thanked Jeff for saving them that \$40,000. There have also been cuts to the vendors that have been operating out here at the Sanitary District and the outlying stations. By that he means, for example, there are some electrical contractors that went from four full-time electricians out here down to two. If necessary, they will call folks back out, but they will call them out only when needed. The same is going to go with a lot of other trades, specialty personnel and vendors as well. They will be on an as-needed basis, not just here doing normal business. Staff has been really good, actually great at following up and getting at least two or three proposals and quotes for materials that they need throughout the plant and at the outlying stations, So, they are trying to cut back on the dollars expended that way as well. He must applaud staff for helping try to bring the budget down. They need to save some significant dollars and are trying to do just that. He wanted to make sure the board knew that the staff is doing a great job with that.

One more thing he would like to report on is they are rewriting contracts that would last multiple years. He found them to be very difficult to follow and he knows they thought the same in finance, so they are going back to one-year contracts. The board will see in the packet for the next meeting an example of that. He knows Natalie is on with Donohue, so they will be providing a contract through the end of 2024 and then if their services are needed in 2025, they will reup at the end of 2024 for 2025. One-year segments at the most. That way it is confined to the dollars they will know that is defined within that contract.

President Dimopoulos said that they do that all the time at his work, but that they do have some client facilities that go to a three-year or two-year agreement because there is a cost savings. He does not know if that is something he would like to entertain, but if there is a way they could save money that way instead of having an evergreen clause where they renew automatically. He thinks a one-year is great, but if there is a way they can save a few bucks getting into a two or three-year contract, he thinks it is something to look at.

Milan thanked him for the input. He said it is important for them to try and have some continuity through this whole process- not one that started back in 2017. This will be easier for them to follow as well. He appreciates the suggestion and will take that into consideration moving forward.

Milan explained that it is going to be a little show and tell today. In regards to those who work the reception area (there a number of folks who do that throughout the day) are now going to be requesting folks who come to the gate that are visitors, there is going to be a visitor's pass and the contractors will have one very similar that says contractor and is going to be a different color. He verified with Jessie from IT that those would be a different color.

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Jessie answered yes and explained that the contractors' passes are going to have their actual pictures on them.

Milan replied that some will have pictures, but others will just be a different color if they are only coming in for a day. They are asking folks to come in to the office to sign in like they are supposed to, wear their badge so folks know who they are when they are out and about and bring it back and sign out at the end of their time here. A little bit more secure and helping everybody feel a little bit safer in and around the plant.

Vice-President Dye asked about PPE for visitors. He asked if there is a program in place.

Milan answered that there are hard hats here for them and eye protection if they need it.

Vice-President Dye questioned if they have to wear safety vests when they are out in the plant.

Milan responded not usually. Just the helmets.

Vice-President Dye asked if there is a reason why they don't because they have motor vehicles and people walking around. Just from what he sees in large corporate clients that he visits. Even a class 2 safety vest costs \$6 and you are protecting the liability of the District because if one of the drivers hits a visitor, well the District did not protect them properly without a safety vest and they are on our property. It is just a suggestion.

Matt Muta responded that the District does have safety vests available upon request.

Vice-President Dye stated that it should just be made mandatory.

Milan said he was going to move on to the IT department. They are helping finance go through the software change. They are currently doing scheduling, data pull, utility billing, job descriptions of every employee. Sharon is also helping do that as well. Rachel and her staff are also doing this. They are looking at doing some dual entries if they have to between the old software and the new software. Originally when he talked to staff and this is probably going to change every other day, but software is supposed to go live August 19th. He asked if that is still correct.

Rachel answered as of right now, yes. She said they can verify that tomorrow with Bill, but as far as they know, implementation starts in June, so that is still the plan.

Milan said that maintenance reported that tank #7 at primary work is going on. They are doing some chain replacements out there. The basin across the street was cleaned right before the last rain we received in the last few days. Robertsdale pump station is having its brick removed and new brick put back on. That is one of the oldest stations so it is getting a major upgrade and lift

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and there will be a check valve that needs to be checked on and changed out once the lake level falls to a certain point that they can plug the pipe and do the change out.

Milan reported on sewer department that in April they cleaned 13.86 miles of sewers. From January to April, they have done 43.84 miles. Through today in May, 4 miles have been done. There are nine cave-ins that have been repaired. There is one more to be started on May 20th over on Cedar that is going to need to be repaired as well. On that one, part of the street is going to need to be closed off.

Milan went on that Matt Muta reported safety training is scheduled for Friday on fall protection and they are going to be purchasing the next AEDs they need to be put around the plant and at outlying stations, so they can help people who might need an AED. Sharon in HR reported that the handbook acknowledgment letters are due by staff for the new handbook that went out. She is working on new job descriptions with Sharon Daniels because those are going to be done by the City sometime starting in the summer. Jeff reported in operations that the plant is running well even with the ½ inch of rain we received yesterday. We also had a couple of power outages. One was vehicle versus Nipsco pole, so that took power out. It was two blocks south down the street, so power went out once. Then, electric went out again, but Nipsco told us that was going to happen. There was a switchover made, all the right people were in place, the switchover took place and it went pretty seamless.

Milan stated the next item to cover is the Kennedy force main. He believes he talked to them about this with his first Director's report back in January. It has been going back and forth and finally INDOT just today approved the right lane closures for Michigan. Michigan is not going to be closed entirely in both directions. There will be traffic signals on the east and west end as well as a couple drives on Michigan Street, so traffic will be able to flow with these traffic signals. Attorney Allegretti was in Merrillville and seen this take place right across from the country club and it worked well there, so they are going to implement this. This project should start with Blue Tank arriving to start the piping work next Monday. Within two weeks the traffic signals should be up and operational then.

Jeff Massey added that they probably will not have a road closure for a month or so, but they are going to start to get the bypass pump in place and then while they are doing that, they will get the signage up so once the contractor gets here, they will dig and get it closed.

Milan explained that Kennedy Avenue will be closed in both directions right at the pump station, so that is going to have to be closed down. They have to open the street up in order to do the work. One more thing on the operations end, there was a concern with the basin across the street having some odors, so Jeff is looking into some Febreeze type of system to combat the odors. There could be a big Febreeze bottle across the street.

Vice-President Dye asked if residents are complaining.

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Milan answered that yes there has been a complaint. Milan said that Rachel mentioned with the Tyler training for the new accounting software has started and she wants all staff to register. They are in the process of making sure all that gets started the right way and staff being able to get into the system and start looking at what needs to happen. The 2023 State Board of Accounts audit has started. That is the District Manager's report.

PERSONNEL REPORT

The Board did receive a Personnel Report today.

Dye **moved** and Miller **seconded** for the approval of the Personnel Report dated May 14, 2024.

Ayes: Dimopoulos, Dye, Hawkins, Miller, Rubio

Nays: None

Motion **carried** 5-0. Roll call votes taken.

DEPARTMENT REPORTS

Sewer Maintenance

No questions or comments.

Safety

No questions or comments.

CONSULTANT REPORTS

MJHY, LLC

Mike Hickey stated that the Board should have a copy of his status report. The only thing he has to report is that he assisted HSD with preparing the quarterly consent decree status report and that was submitted on time- May 8th.

DONOHUE

Natalie Cook stated the Board has a status report from her as well. The only thing she wants to highlight is the timeline for survey has been difficult to pin down. As of right now, the only thing is the surveyors are promising to get this for the CMDF facility starting early June. She knows that is something that both Jeff and Milan were looking for an update on. Any other questions, please let her know.

RESOLUTIONS

The Board considered Resolution No. 9-2024: RE: A Resolution Authorizing Execution of a Release and Termination of Easement on Property Located at the Southwest Corner of Indianapolis Blvd. and Summer Street and 2030 Summer Street.

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Miller **moved** and Dye **seconded** to approve Resolution No. 9-2024.

Ayes: Dimopoulos, Dye, Hawkins, Miller, Rubio

Nays: None

Motion **carried** 5-0. Roll call votes taken.

The Board considered the Claims Approval Docket 05-14-24.

Hawkins **moved** and Miller **seconded** for the approval of the Claims Approval Docket 05-14-24.

Ayes: Dye, Hawkins, Miller, Rubio

Nays: None

Motion **carried** 5-0. Roll call votes taken.

President Dimopoulos called for Old Business

There was no old business to discuss.

President Dimopoulos called for New Business

There was no new business to discuss.

President Dimopoulos called for Reports from Commissioners

There were no reports from Commissioners.

President Dimopoulos called for Public Expression

Councilman Alfonso Salinas III said that he had a few items he wanted to bring up, but both were addressed by the District Manager's report. It was pretty extensive and thorough, so thank you for that. Michigan Street closure- the lanes and whatnot and then the odors from the retention basin. He could be the first to agree that the Febreeze type solutions are a bit comical, although the complaints he receives are not.

President Dimopoulos commented that he knows they do make chemicals for this.

Councilman Salinas III replied that they do- deodorizers and whatnot, so he just wanted to bring it to the attention, but it seems to be being thoroughly handled. He wants to make sure that it is a priority that they come up with a solution because the residents are definitely the ones experiencing and having to live with it during the episodes. That is all that he has. Thank you.

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President Dimopoulos called for a motion to adjourn the meeting

Miller **moved** and Dye **seconded** for adjournment.

Ayes: Dimopoulos, Dye, Hawkins, Miller, Rubio

Nays: None

Motion **carried** 5-0. The meeting was adjourned at 4:22 p.m.

Sam Dimopoulos, President

Michael Dye, Vice-President

Michael Hawkins, Sr., Member

Owana Miller, Member

Monica Rubio, Member

ATTEST: _____

Rachel Montes, Secretary

Kaleigh Boyle, Assistant Secretary

Board Minutes Prepared By: Kaleigh Boyle