



LAURENS COUNTY WATER AND SEWER COMMISSION

MINUTES

Board of Commissioners Meeting
3850 Highway 221S, Laurens, SC 29360
June 24, 2025

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:

Dime Hollingsworth (County Council District I)
Philip O'Dell (County Council District II)
Jurell Byrd, Jr. Secretary (County Council District III)
Bill Teague, Vice Chairman (County Council District IV)
Lumus Byrd, Jr. (County Council District VI)
Ted Davenport, Chairman (County Council District VII)
Jimmy Young (Municipal)

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT:

Susan Curry, Treasurer (County Council District V)

STAFF PRESENT:

Jeff Field, Executive Director
Steve Griffin, Construction Manager
Damas Mattison, Regulatory Compliance & Operations Manager
Wendy Medlock, Director of Finance
Angie Nelson, Director of Administration & Customer Service
K.C. Price, Engineering Manager
Mary-Wallace Riley, Executive Administrative Assistant

ATTORNEY ABSENT:

Allen Wham

PRESS:

The Clinton Chronicle

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Davenport called the meeting to order at 8:24 a.m. in the Laurens County Water and Sewer Commission's training rooms. This meeting was advertised in accordance with the South Carolina Freedom of Information Act.

INVOCATION

Delivered by Commissioner L. Byrd, Jr.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Chairman Davenport asked if there were any additions or corrections to the May 27, 2025, minutes as submitted to the Commissioners. None were submitted.

Commissioner L. Byrd, Jr. **MOVED** that the May 27, 2025, minutes be approved as submitted. **MOTION SECONDED** by Commissioner J. Byrd, Jr. **MOTION CARRIED**. AYES, 6; NAYS, 0.

CHAIRMAN REMARKS

Chairman Davenport opened the meeting by welcoming everyone including Vic MacDonald from The Clinton Chronicle.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REMARKS

Mr. Field welcomed everyone and expressed his appreciation and concern for our personnel and others that are working out in the heat.

LCWSC MONTHLY FINANCIAL SUMMARY

The monthly financial summary was presented to the Commissioners. A copy of the summary can be found in the Commissioner Board Packet.

As of May 31, 2025, LCWSC had a total of \$8,694,066 in cash for operating and reserve funds as compared to \$7,708,620 this time in FY24. As of May 31, 2025, LCWSC was awaiting a FEMA reimbursement of \$205,575 which was obligated for our debris clearing related to Hurricane Helene. In addition, this May balance was elevated by \$901,320 due to receiving EDA funds for the Metric Road project which will be spent on the next pay applications. This means the total cash balance would be \$7,998,321 without these additional funds.

Mr. Field discussed the highlights for Water Distribution and Treatment, Wastewater Treatment, Wastewater Collection, and Lake Rabon. He also supplied the percentage breakdown for operating revenue, operating expenses, capital revenue, and capital expenses by department and the overall combined percentage for each. Mr. Field also noted that the wastewater treatment operating expenses are elevated due to the disaster recovery expenses related to Hurricane Helene.

Mr. Field noted that as of May 2025, LCWSC has received \$76,221 in contributed capital grants for Administration, \$1,736,983 for Wastewater Treatment, \$50,000 for Wastewater Collection, and \$4,108,945 for Water Distribution. Thus far, in FY25, a total of \$5,972,149 has been received in contributed capital grants. Future grant funds that are committed are for the following projects: Water and Sewer Infrastructure Master Plan RIA project, WWTP Sludge CDBG project, Metric Road Elevated Water Tank EDA project, SCIIP Hospital Area Water System Improvements project, and RIA Milam Road Booster Pump Supply Line Improvements project.

As of May 2025, there was \$166,726 in customer paid line extensions.

LCWSC MONTHLY OPERATIONS SUMMARY

The monthly operations summary was presented to the Commissioners. A copy of the summary can be found in the Commissioner Board Packet.

Mr. Field noted that the average gallons per day (GPD) per active residential tap for May 2025 was 135 GPD. On average, each customer uses 134 GPD over a 12-month period.

Mr. Field shared the precipitation graph, noting that in May FY25, the rainfall was 6.13 inches which is 0.72 inches above that of May FY24, 3.85 inches above that of May FY23, and 2.89 inches above the norm for May. This data is a county average derived from rain gauges at Brighton Meadows, Bush River Wastewater Treatment Plant, Clinton Pump Station, and Lake Rabon.

Mr. Field reported that forty-three new water taps, and fifty-six new sewer taps were installed in May 2025. Mr. Field presented a map indicating the distribution of all new taps installed throughout the county.

Mr. Mattison discussed water purchase and shared the water audit report. The report captures the Rolling Average Water Audit in gallons for the system including the revenue (sold), the non-revenue (unaccounted), and the non-revenue authorized consumption (audited) versus the purchased. The rolling 12-month average for non-revenue (unaccounted) water is 15,172,008 gallons, which is a decrease of 748,651 gallons over the previous 12-month average. The target for unaccounted water is less than 19,500,000 gallons.

In May 2025, there were sixteen main line leak work orders; twelve were repaired within two weeks, one repaired within two to four weeks, and three repaired later than four weeks. There were eleven lateral line leak work orders: eight were repaired within two weeks and three later than four weeks. As of May 2025, there were three active service line leaks over two weeks old and four active main line leaks over two weeks old.

Mr. Price provided an update on the Lake Greenwood Water Treatment Facility (LGWTF), reporting that in May 2025, the facility pumped 68.826 MG of raw water and treated 61.271 MG. Mr. Price reported that the Ozone still occasionally faults out when power flickers or when the High Service Pump turns on; however, Garver is conducting an electrical study to determine root cause and their findings are expected within the next sixty days.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Public Hearing for Proposed FY 2026 Budget

Chairman Davenport opened the meeting to the public at 8:56 a.m. and asked if there were any comments. There were no public comments brought forward.

Chairman Davenport closed the public hearing at 8:57 a.m.

2. Approval of Proposed FY 2026 Budget

Mrs. Medlock discussed in detail the budgets for Administration, Wastewater Treatment, Wastewater Collection, Lake Rabon, Water Distribution, and Water Treatment.

The budget was approved by the Budget Committee, comprised of Ted Davenport, Susan Curry, and Dime Hollingsworth, on May 22, 2025.

Budget Summary:

- Total Budget is \$21,369,223
 - Operating Income increased \$1,207,543 or 8.26%
 - Operating Expenses increased \$861,285 or 7.98%
 - Capital Income and Expenses increased \$986,619 or 11,31%
 - Net Capital Reserve Fund increased \$581,563 or 57.04%
- Administration Fee Allocation Change:
 - Decreased Wastewater Treatment System Administration fee from 19.5% to 19%
 - Increased Wastewater Collection System Administration fee from 19.5% to 20%
- Payroll and Benefits increased \$416,942 or 8.08%:
 - Increase in uniform expense
 - 4.6% increase for the State Health Insurance Plan starting in January 2026
 - Load factor change from 1.005 to 1.016 for the State Health Insurance Plan starting in January 2026 due to claim history
 - Four (4) additional employees, and
 - Pre-apprentices – two (2)
 - Water Maintenance Technician
 - Field Service Technician for half of the fiscal year
 - Various merit increases for employees.
- Water Purchase increased by \$80,475 or 3.03%:
 - Increase of \$35,481 in water purchase from other providers
 - Slight adjustment in City of Clinton water purchase to reflect increased monthly averages
 - Increase in monthly average purchased from Greenville Water
 - Increase of \$44,994 in the water provided from the Lake Greenwood Water Treatment Facility
 - Increase of \$195,550 in total operating expenses
 - Decrease of \$126,556 in short-term assets
 - Decrease of \$24,000 in long-term assets
- Overall, O&M expenses increased \$248,178 or 11.39% mainly due to the increases in the Water Treatment Operation and Maintenance budget
- Net Capital Reserve Fund usage was \$1,601,112 for an increase of \$581,563
 - Wastewater Treatment System: \$203,860 used
 - To cover sludge handling phase III project expenses
 - To cover Clinton Area Sewer Improvements project expenses
 - Wastewater Collection System: \$115,769 net reserve funds saved
 - Lake Rabon: \$17,000 used
 - To cover expenses not included in CPW rate

- Water Distribution System: \$1,496,021 used
 - To cover SCIP grant match for the Hospital Area Water System Improvement project
 - To cover RIA grant match for the Hospital Area Supply Line
- Overall, Debt Service decreased \$1,435 or 0.05%:
 - Slight increase in debt service payment for 2016 Bonds
 - Slight decrease in debt service payment for 2017 Bonds
- First year of proposed 2-year Wastewater Treatment Rate Plan
 - Wastewater Treatment Volume Rate
 - Average annual rate increase is 2.3%
 - Average increase in the customer bill is \$0.38 per month
- First year of proposed 2-year Wastewater Collection Rate Plan
 - Wastewater Collection Volume Rate
 - Average annual rate increase is 1.5%
 - Average increase in the customer bill is \$0.31 per month
- Wastewater Base Charge Increase
 - Proposed Wastewater Base Charge increase for Industrial users (2" and up meters) and for manual read industrial meters
 - From \$9 per month to \$25 per month
- Third year of 5-year Water Rate Plan
 - Residential/Small Non-Residential Volume Rate and Base Charge (Water Tier 1)
 - Average annual rate increase is 2.8%
 - Average increase in the customer bill is \$1.20 per month
 - Large Non-Residential/Fire Line Volume Rate and Base Charge (Water Tier 2)
 - Average annual rate increase is 2.3%
 - Average increase in the customer bill is \$20.42 per month
- Water Capacity Fees Increase
 - Proposed Water Distribution Capacity Fee Increase from \$800 to \$1,000
 - Proposed Water Treatment Capacity Fee Increase from \$600 to \$800
- Water Tap Fees Increase
 - Proposed Water Tap Fee Increase from \$1,000 to \$1,100

Commissioner L. Byrd, Jr. **MOVED** that the Board of Commissioners *Approve the Proposed FY 2026 Budget*. **MOTION SECONDED** by Commissioner Young. **MOTION CARRIED**. AYES, 6; NAYS, 0.

3. Approval of Proposed two-year Wastewater Treatment Rate Plan

Commissioner L. Byrd, Jr. **MOVED** that the Board of Commissioners *Approve the Proposed Two-Year Wastewater Treatment Rate Plan*. **MOTION SECONDED** by Commissioner Young. **MOTION CARRIED**. AYES, 6; NAYS, 0.

4. Approval of Proposed two-year Wastewater Collection Rate Plan

Commissioner O'Dell **MOVED** that the Board of Commissioners *Approve the Proposed Two-Year Wastewater Collection Rate Plan*. **MOTION SECONDED** by Commissioner Hollingsworth. **MOTION CARRIED**. AYES, 6; NAYS, 0.

5. Approval of Proposed Wastewater Base Charge Increase (Industrial / Manual Accounts)

Commissioner Hollingsworth **MOVED** that the Board of Commissioners *Approve the Proposed Wastewater Base Charge Increase (Industrial / Manual Accounts)*. **MOTION SECONDED** by Commissioner L. Byrd, Jr. **MOTION CARRIED**. AYES, 6; NAYS, 0.

6. Approval of Proposed Water Distribution Capacity Fee Increase

Commissioner Hollingsworth **MOVED** that the Board of Commissioners *Approve the Proposed Water Distribution Capacity Fee Increase*. **MOTION SECONDED** by Commissioner L. Byrd, Jr. **MOTION CARRIED**. AYES, 6; NAYS, 0.

7. Approval of Proposed Water Treatment Capacity Fee Increase

Commissioner L. Byrd, Jr. **MOVED** that the Board of Commissioners *Approve the Proposed Water Treatment Capacity Fee Increase*. **MOTION SECONDED** by Commissioner Young. **MOTION CARRIED**. AYES, 6; NAYS, 0.

8. Approval of Proposed Water Tap Fee Increase

Commissioner O'Dell **MOVED** that the Board of Commissioners *Approve the Proposed Water Tap Fee Increase*. **MOTION SECONDED** by Commissioner L. Byrd, Jr. **MOTION CARRIED**. AYES, 6; NAYS, 0.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

None

OTHER BUSINESS

1. Discussion and possible action to reschedule the July Commission Meeting from July 22, 2025, to July 29, 2025.

Mr. Field explained that the Rural Infrastructure Authority (RIA) was presenting a webinar about future funding opportunities on July 22, 2025. Due to this webinar and the scheduled summer vacations of several Commissioners and staff members, a change in the meeting date was requested.

Commissioner L. Byrd, Jr. **MOVED** that the Board of Commissioners *Approve the Request to reschedule the July Commission Meeting from July 22, 2025, to July 29, 2025*. **MOTION SECONDED** by Commissioner Young **MOTION CARRIED**. AYES, 6; NAYS, 0.

ADJOURN

Commissioner J. Byrd, Jr. MOVED *to adjourn the Board of Commissioners meeting* at 11:10 a.m.

MOTION SECONDED by Commissioner L. Byrd, Jr. **MOTION CARRIED**. AYES,6; NAYS, 0.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

I certify that the above Minutes accurately reflect the business conducted at the Commission meeting on June 24, 2025, and that the minutes were approved at the July 29, 2025, meeting.


Jurell Byrd, Jr., Secretary