



**September 5, 2023
Regular Board Meeting**

The Regular Meeting of Madison Utilities convened at the Madison Utilities' Office located at 101 Ray Sanderson Drive with Chairman Terris Tatum presiding. Vice Chairman Kerry Straub, Director Connie Spears, Director Al Sullivan, and Director Larry Miles were in attendance. Also present were Secretary/Treasurer/General Manager Emory DeBord and Recording Clerk Jodie Parker.

Others present were Wastewater Manager Mark Bland, Water Manager Jason Leggett, Finance Manager Gary Sparks, Customer Service Manager Misty Leftwich, Assistant Finance Manager Drew Greene, and Attorney Karen Lynn.

Chairman Terris Tatum called the Regular Board meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

Registered public in attendance: None

1. PUBLIC COMMENTS

None

2. CURRENT AGENDA/MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

a. September 5, 2023 Current Agenda

The agenda for the September 5, 2023, Regular Meeting was presented to the Board. Director Spears moved to approve the September 5, 2023, Regular Meeting Agenda; Vice Chairman Straub seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

b. August 21, 2023 Regular Meeting Minutes

The minutes for the August 21, 2023, Regular Meeting were presented to the Board. Director Miles moved to approve the August 21, 2023, Regular Meeting Minutes; Director Spears seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

3. PLATS/BONDS

a. Preliminary Project Approval
None

b. Dedication and Improvements
None

4. OLD BUSINESS

None

5. NEW BUSINESS

Chairman Tatum acknowledged that one of the Board members needed to leave early so he would be changing the order of the agenda slightly.

e. FY2024 Blue Cross Blue Shield and Gulf Guaranty Renewal

Finance Manager Sparks stated that MU wanted to improve the medical benefits, not only for the current employees, but also as a recruitment/retention measure. He further explained that the suggested improvements included increasing one level in the Blue Cross Blue Shield coverage to the Blue Saver 3000 plan, as well as changing the supplemental insurance coverage. Finance Manager Sparks continued that, in addition to the changes to the coverage, MU is also planning on an agent/broker change. He concluded by saying that even though it will cost more, it is a small price to pay to give employees better benefits.

Director Miles moved to approve the FY2024 Blue Cross Blue Shield and Gulf Guaranty Renewal; Director Sullivan seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

f. FY2024 Principal Insurance Renewal

Finance Manager Sparks mentioned that there was a slight increase to the cost of life insurance but the dental and vision remained at the same rate. He added that dental is provided at no cost to employees, with vision being the responsibility of the employee if they elect to have it. Each employee also receives \$50,000 in Group Term Life Insurance at no cost to the employee.

Vice Chairman Straub moved to approve the FY2024 Principal Insurance Renewal; Director Sullivan seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

a. CDG – Keene Booster Station Design – Contract Amendment

Water Manager Leggett explained that due to the complexity of the project, there have been some significant, but necessary, changes to the scope of the project. Now that the project is nearing completion, the additional cost for the changes has been submitted as an amendment to the original contract. Water Manager Leggett recommended approval of the changes so that the project can move to the next phase.

Director Miles moved to approve the CDG Keene Booster Station Design Contract Amendment; Director Spears seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

b. Mid-South Cedar Acres Inspections Contract Amendment

Water Manager Leggett stated that when a tank inspection agreement is being written, it is difficult to know how many inspections will be needed throughout the process. Water Manager Leggett said that they had reached a compromise on how many inspections were required though it was slightly higher than the original amount in the agreement. He added that the Cedar Acres Tank is complete with one last touch up remaining.

Director Spears moved to approve the Mid-South Cedar Acres Inspections Contract Amendment; Vice Chairman Straub seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

c. FOG Program

Wastewater Manager Bland reminded the Board that it had been presented at the last Board meeting for a first read and that no changes have been made. He added that the Post Development Coordinator had begun some pre-inspections of grease traps and it appears that approximately 50% are not in compliance and this will provide valuable information for developers. Wastewater Manager Bland also commented that MU's GIS program would be instrumental in managing most of the data.

Vice Chairman Straub moved to approve the FOG Program; Director Spears seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

d. FY2024 Preliminary Budget Review

Finance Manager Sparks began by noting that this was a preliminary budget review, and no action would be required since some information was still needed. He explained that if there were no significant issues, the preliminary budget would be sent to Raftelis Financial Consultants so they could finalize the rate study which has been ongoing for some time. Finance Manager Sparks proceeded to outline the projected Operations and Capital budgets for FY2024 while also comparing them to the previous year.

Finance Manager Sparks also presented a suggested change to the pay plan based on previous feedback from the Board. After a brief discussion, Director Sullivan suggested approving the pay plan to begin using right away as a means to attract a larger pool of qualified applicants for open positions.

Director Sullivan, at the suggestion of Attorney Lynn, moved to amend the agenda to add the pay plan as presented; Director Miles seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

Director Sullivan moved to approve the pay plan, as presented, to be effective October 1, 2023; Director Miles seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

6. LEGAL

Attorney Lynn briefly updated the Board about an ongoing court case which should be completed by a late October deadline. She also mentioned an agreement that was sent to the City of Madison that MU is waiting on it to be completed.

7. WATER REPORT

Water Manager Leggett said the Quarry Water Treatment Plant expansion is continuing as they are filling the hole where the clear well used to be. He added that once it gets to ground level they can move to the next phase. Water Manager Leggett also stated that the Cedar Acres tank should be back in service within the next 1-2 weeks.

8. WASTEWATER REPORT

Wastewater Manager Bland informed the Board that 3,024 ERTS were received late last week and that next week the focus will be getting those installed. Once they are in, he continued, that will be over 50% of the system complete for the transition to radio read.

9. FINANCE REPORT

None

10. CUSTOMER SERVICE

Customer Service Manager Leftwich mentioned that an interview has been scheduled for next week to try to fill the AMR/AMI position. She mentioned that it would be better if someone could be brought on who has experience and can hit the ground running.

11. GENERAL MANAGER REPORT

General Manager DeBord reminded the Board that he is available whenever the three newest Board members would like to schedule time to tour the various facilities and ongoing projects to become more familiar with MU's infrastructure and vision for the future.

12. VICE CHAIRMAN STRAUB

None

13. DIRECTOR SULLIVAN

None

14. DIRECTOR MILES

None

15. DIRECTOR SPEARS

Director Spears complimented MU Staff on their hard work and perseverance with the budget and retention measures.


16. CHAIRMAN TATUM

None

17. ADJOURNMENT


At 6:30 p.m. the Board agreed to adjourn.

Approved,


Terris Tatum, Chairman


Kerry Straub, Vice Chairman


Al Sullivan, Director


Larry Miles, Director


Connie Spears, Director

ATTEST:



Emory DeBord, Secretary/Treasurer