

**DOWNRIVER UTILITY WASTEWATER AUTHORITY  
FEBRUARY 13, 2025 MEETING MINUTES  
CITY OF TAYLOR COUNCIL CHAMBERS**

**1. Roll Call and Introductions**

Chairperson McLeod (Allen Park) called the meeting to order at 9:00 AM and asked for roll call to be taken. At the time of roll call, voting representatives were in attendance from 10 communities: Allen Park, Belleville, Dearborn Heights, Lincoln Park, River Rouge, Riverview, Romulus, Southgate, Van Buren and Wyandotte. A quorum (at least 7 members) were present.

**a. DUWA Commissioners**

The DUWA Board Commissioners present at the time of roll call introduced themselves as follows:

Bill Miner (Van Buren), Melissa Collins (River Rouge), Mayor Bill Bazzi (Dearborn Heights), Mayor Joseph Kuspa (Southgate), Mayor Gail McLeod (Allen Park), Roberto Scappaticci (Romulus), Jeff Dobek (Riverview), Lisa Griggs (Lincoln Park) and Greg Mayhew (Wyandotte), Melissa Frierson (Belleville)

**b. Other Meeting Attendees**

Board meeting attendees present in the audience at the time of roll call introduced themselves as follows: Jim Taylor (Van Buren), Doug Drysdale (Southgate & DNS Financial Services), Jason Couture (DUWA Treasurer), Jason Nash (Veolia OM), Travis Tuma (Veolia OM), Jason Tapp (Veolia OM) Stephen Hitchcock (Romulus), Kerry Morgan (Riverview), Dan Marsh (Southgate), Dan Alford (Fishbeck), Lauren Fath-Azam (Secretary), Sarah Rutkowski (Fishbeck), Rumzei Abdallah (Plante Moran) Souheil Sabak (C.E. Raines), Brandon Grysko (Fausone & Grysko)

**2. Approval of Agenda**

Motion by Dearborn Heights and supported by Southgate to approve the agenda. The motion passed unanimously by all attending members.

**3. Approval of Minutes from January 9, 2025 Board Meeting**

Copies of the meeting minutes from the January 9, 2025 Board meeting were included in the pre-meeting Board packet. Motion by Riverview and supported by Wyandotte, to approve the minutes. The motion passed unanimously by all attending members.

#### **4. Legal Update**

Attorney Brandon Grysko of Fausone & Grysko provided the Legal Update.

##### **a. General Counsel Monthly Report**

Mr. Grysko highlighted the various items from the legal update, which is included in the meeting packet. In regard to the amended articles of incorporation Mr. Grysko continues to work with the communities who have still not adopted resolutions. At this time they are working with Ecorse and Dearborn Heights.

#### **5. Contract Operator Update**

##### **a. Monthly Operating Report**

Travis Tuma and Jason Tapp presented the monthly operating report starting on page 16. Mr. Tuma reported that since the month of December there are three open positions available at the plant. The plant was in compliance through the month of December. 1.2 Billion gallons of wastewater were treated with a high flow of about 120 MGD.

Mr. Tapp reported on odor control. Veolia O&M is working with the State of Michigan on rerouting and repurposing odor control. In January activated carbon in the existing unit at the dryers was installed. Testing has been conducted showing almost zeroes on the discharge side when testing for H<sub>2</sub>S and VOCs. Also in January, Veolia O&M was able to reroute and create a vacuum on the recycle line which happens to be the most pungent line in the facility and redirect it through the tunnel pump station carbon tower. Testing will be done weekly on the carbon tower to measure its effectiveness and estimate its lifespan as it was installed in 2000. In February only three odor complaints were received. A full odor control study has begun at the facility and will be completed in April. It will show the odor type, where the odor is coming from and how it can be treated.

Mr. Tuma continued to report on large jobs which include the removal and replacement of all the rotors and stators on the North Dryer. The replacements went smoothly and were done in house. PM's on influent pumps one through four were completed and all pumps were in tolerance. Another large job is the RAS

pumps. Three out of four pumps were in good operating condition besides one which had water in it. A request has been made to repair that pump. Mr. Tapp is grateful to have found this before a failure happened. An update on the centrifuge 3 bearing failures is that Veolia O&M and Alfa Laval have gone back and forth to address this issue. Alfa Laval believes these recurring failures are not due to their machine design but relate to the construction design. Veolia fully believes these failures are due to the machine design and how grease goes into the bearing, limiting its full capability. Veolia is looking into solutions on how to retrofit the current Centrifuge to Alfa Laval's new design. Mr. Tuma continued to report that the demisters in the North and South condensing towers have been cleaned, which was the first time since the peroxide system was put in allowing for additional time in between cleanings. Peroxide will be adjusted to eliminate any bio growth. Screw conveyors were repaired and are working well.

The Collection System had routine monthly meter maintenance for this past month. The recent safety issue, where an employee received a burn while removing the nozzle when cleaning the dryer depositors, was included in the MOR a month ago. The employee is back to work and has made a full recovery. A new protocol was established to safely clean the dryer depositors and all staff have been trained.

**b. Chemical and Sludge Price - Monthly Updates**

Mr. Tuma reported that for reconciliation everything is about normal. December was the first month that H<sub>2</sub>O<sub>2</sub> was utilized. Costs may increase slightly as around 80% was utilized. Mr. Tapp added that himself and his team are working with chemical providers to plan and budget for price increases and potential tariffs as many chemicals come from Canada. Mayor Kuspa inquired if we are investigating domestic providers for PACL. Mr. Tapp replied that they will continue to look for other companies who can provide PACL and all treatment chemicals.

**c. Existing UV System - Remaining Life Update**

Mr. Tuma reported that the UV System is in great condition after Piedmont Services replaced almost 100 bulbs, quartz sleeves, and ballasts. Mr. Tapp added that spare parts were not depleted.

In regard to the granulated activated carbon, Jeff Dobek inquired if Veolia O&M has a supplier, a schedule and a plan if there is a breakthrough. Mr. Tapp added that they are well prepared in that situation. They have a manufacturer set up and pricing has been received. Veolia O&M will have to discuss pricing with the

board as the initial price was \$65,000 in just material. Mr. Dobek adds that with the carbon treatment unit at the landfill, they have set up a replacement schedule.

Roberto Scappaticci inquired if Alfa Laval provided the bearing that failed on the centrifuge and if it is being warranted. Mr. Tuma noted that it was warranted and has been replaced five times since the original was installed. Alfa Laval extended the warranty. Mr. Tuma adds his team believe that the venting issue is not the issue. As Alfa Laval moves forward with redesign Veolia will push for a dedicated greaser per bearing so they can get an individualized flow rate. Mr. Nash says since the bearings were replaced in 2024, Alfa Laval provided an additional 2-year warranty until 2026.

Dan Alford inquired what was the cause of the cracked primary gearbox in the secondary clarifier. Mr. Tuma and Veolia are not aware of the cause but believe it to be due to years of wear and tear. The gearbox has since been repaired.

## **6. System Manager Update**

Dan Alford provided a verbal summary of activities since the last meeting. A written summary was provided in the pre-meeting Board packet for the System Manager Report (Pages 21-31).

### **a. System Manager Report**

There were no NPDES compliance issues for the month of December. Mr. Alford has yet to hear from the State of Michigan as it relates to the permit out for renewal. Last month Mr. Alford spoke with Phil Argiroff, the interim Chief for the EGLE water section for the State of Michigan. Mr. Argiroff brought up that DUWA's bypass treatment doesn't go through secondary treatment and just gets disinfected before dispersing into the river. We meet all our permit parameters, but the State argues we may not meet the language of the Clean Water Act. Mr. Alford plans to continue that discussion with the State as it has long been a topic of concern for EGLE. We will wait and see what EGLE's approach is.

In regard to Capital projects the Biosolids Dryer project is ongoing with the continuation of bi-weekly meetings. An option was discussed to condition the sludge, which will prevent fibrous material coming into our sludge enroute to the centrifuge and then the dryers. This is something that is being looked at. As it relates to small capital projects PLC-5 replacements should begin next week. Mr. Alford believes the contractors to be professional and understand the task at

hand. Demolition continues on the HVAC improvements phase 2 project, in addition to some new heating system installations. Mr. Alford noted that a decision was made to keep the design costs low by DUWA. With this there have been and will be a few hiccups. Any additional work will be evaluated and made sure it is fair. Currently Veolia is working through electrical switch gear replacements. There are corrosive gases in some of the buildings which corrode the switch gear. Mr. Alford added that Veolia is on top of handling the repairs and replacements. A decision will need to be made in the future after the contract is over with if more expensive repairs or replacements will be needed. As it relates to Generator tune-up and load bank testing, Veolia has received a few sizable quotes. Mr. Alford proposes to bring an as-needed engineer to help and will have a recommendation to the board after going through that information at the Technical Committee meeting. The HV unit replacement for solids handling in the VFD room has been ordered and will be swapped out once received. Hubbell Roth and Clark have completed their Emergency Response Plan. Veolia has made comments and Mr. Alford will now review it before giving final approval.

In terms of flow metering and the collection system Mr. Alford spoke with ASI and will speak with Tim Minor to go through data for the upcoming rates cycle. Mr. Alford is pleased to have Sarah Rutkowski on board to assist in this matter. Mr. Alford noted that GLWA increased the orthophosphate dosing in drinking water again in February in order to assist communities with meeting the new Lead and Copper Rule limits. Veolia is still reviewing the ferric/PACL dosing data to see what type of cost implications will be felt by DUWA.

Mr. Tapp mentioned that we've only had three odor complaints thus far in February. Mr. Alford spent time looking through odor data and noticed that many of the complaints come from repeat residents who may be more sensitive to odors. Mr. Tapp has been using carbon in both systems and peroxide to treat odors in the sludge going to the mixing tank. Once a complaint is received Veolia staff will go out within the same day to approach the customer to investigate their concerns. The odor study which started in November will be complete in a few months. The study being conducted is thorough, which will contain odor location and parameter data and recommendations moving forward. Natural gas sell-back items will continue as long as our contract is with Constellation. Mr. Alford plans to bring DTE back into the competition with Constellation this summer.

Mr. Scappaticci added that the orthophosphate dosing problem will continue to increase. By 2027, there will be another threshold that communities and GLWA

will need to meet. The 2.4 ppm dose could possibly increase. Mr. Alford added that this will always be something wastewater utilities will need to balance.

**b. 2025 Technical Committee Meeting Schedule**

Mr. Alford reported that the Technical Committee meeting schedule is provided on page 25 of the board packet. Mr. Alford hopes that a member of each community will be able to attend the hybrid style meeting at 9:30am each month.

**c. UV Disinfection Replacement Project**

Mobilization has begun onsite in regard to trailers for the UV Disinfection Project. Monthly construction meetings should begin soon. Before we proceed with the project Mr. Alford made note that the State requires us to have an alternative disinfection method when we take our disinfection process offline. This would require the use of bleach or something equivalent.

**d. Biosolids Dryer Facility Project**

Jason Nash reported that at the beginning of January, the South Dryer was offline due to swelling of the dosing pumps' urethane stators. On January 6th, the North Dryer was shut down for the installation of carbon media and to replace the rotors and stators on the South Dryer. The contractor then installed the larger crusher. On January 22nd, both Dryers started back up. The North Dryer only ran for three days before it had to shut down due to issues with cake pumps and not being able to keep up with capacity. The same thing happened with the South Dryer, which only ran for one day due to issues with the cake pumps. On January 28th, rebuilding of cake pumps 3 and 4 began to allow the South Dryer to go back online. After completion the South Dryer was put back online on the 30th running at 60% dosing speed. On the 31st, the new crusher was started up with minor issues. Smaller screen sizes will be utilized henceforth to get the material to be smaller for the trailer. Currently only the South Dryer is running with the North Dryer offline waiting on parts for cake pumps 1 and 2.

Walsh has provided an update on the deficiency letter that Mr. Alford had originally sent, which discusses the pipe supports for the cake pumps for the cake lines on the dosing deck. Walsh has provided a full plan to implement additional pipe supports. The plan has been approved with fabrication for those parts and a schedule to be on site. This will not shut down the Dryers. This is classified as a deficiency in the design and not classified as a warranty. Mr. Alford previously spoke about measures that are being looked into to help with the run time of the Dryers. Damage is being done on the pumps due to debris that is clogging the nozzles. Mr. Nash and others are looking at testing a

strainpress to remove debris from the sludge. Veolia is also looking at grit removal to help decrease the wear on the system.

Mr. Nash continued to report that in two weeks sampling for the odor study will be conducted, which will be sent out for testing. On page 30 is the table that shows run times, which are not good for December or January. Kerry Morgan inquired if the dryer is still beneficial for use and what the break-even point is. Mr. Nash added that due to the cost to landfill biosolids, the dryer is still beneficial at 50% operational uptime and pump replacement every 2 months per Veolia's last pro-forma. Rumsei Abdallah noted that one of the complexities is the fact that the system is funded through WIFIA funding through the EPA, so it raises the question that if the asset or the system is disposed of what does that mean for the loan.

## **7. Requests for Authorization and Approval**

Sarah Rutkowski presented the following request for approval. Pertaining to the return activated sludge Pump #4 at the plant. During routine maintenance last month it was discovered that one of the seals had broken and water was leaking into the motor. Veolia reached out to two different local reputable pump supply maintenance providers including Kennedy Industries, and Detroit Pump for quotes. It is recommended by the Technical Committee to approve the repair contract with Kennedy Industries to assist DUWA with the repair of RAS Pump #4. Kennedy Industries provided a proposal for a fee of \$35,631.48 not including Veolia's markup of \$3,563.15 for a total cost of \$39,194.63.

### **a. DWTF RAS Pump Number 4 Repair**

Motion by Dearborn Heights, supported by Romulus to approve RAS pump repair services from Kennedy Industries, Inc. for a not-to-exceed fee of \$39,194.63. The motion passed unanimously by all attending members.

## **8. Treasurer's Report**

Doug Drysdale (DNS Financial Services, DUWA Accountant) presented the various items below to the board.

### **a. Quarterly Financial Statement - Q4 2024**

Starting on page 38 is the balance sheet. These quarterly statements are as of December 31st 2024. These statements are calculated pre-audit and are presented on a cash basis as much as possible. Cash is at \$39.6 Million dollars,

compared to \$35.3 Million from last year's balance as of December 31, 2023. Accounts receivable was at \$2.4 Million compared to \$3.4 Million as of last year end. Fixed assets and accumulated depreciation have not been updated yet, which will be done with the audit when expenditures are capitalized and the depreciation expense is reported. The prepaid insurance assets show zero since the premiums are for one year. Line of credit is a little below at \$1.7 Million compared to \$1.9 Million last year. For the short-term and long-term liabilities, primarily the bonds, being that we're reporting on a cash basis the principal has been expensed and is still sitting in the Revenue and Expense Report. It'll be re-classed against the bond payable amounts at year-end when the audit is conducted.

On page 40 begins the Revenue and Expenditure Report. The budget column is included for comparison. Actual balance as of year-end is \$5.6 Million compared to what was budgeted at \$24.9 Million. The budget included \$10 Million of State grants. Grants were also included for the UV project as well as \$10 Million of SRF bonding. So far this year through the State we have been reimbursed \$730,000. The SRF billings to Communities is for the invoices that are sent to the SRF bonds, which is close to the budgeted amount. Under Operating Revenue we are at 102% of what was budgeted at \$28.9 Million compared to \$28.3 Million budgeted. The Sewage and Excess Flow combined is \$27.9 Million compared to \$27.6 Million budgeted.

Interest earnings came in at 112% or about \$1.5 Million with the debt service coming in at about \$10.3 Million compared to \$10.5 Million budgeted. Sewer system, other services and charges came in at about \$1.5 Million compared to about \$1.8 Million budgeted. Variances primarily were in banking fees. Attorney fees came in at \$234,000 versus \$424,000 budgeted. Plant operations came in at about 91.5% of the budget. The big number that is different compared to what we budgeted is utilities and natural gas. Capital outlay was budgeted at about \$1.8 million with costs coming in significantly below that. Overall the Authority came in with a surplus of \$3.3 Million.

**b. Plante Moran Pre-Audit Letter**

Jason Couture presented the Pre-Audit Letter to the board to review. If there are any questions regarding the letter or the process, please contact Rumzei Abdallah.

**c. Community Self-Reporting Status Log**



Mr. Couture noted that there are a few communities that have not filled their November items for self-reporting. The delinquency date is coming up. Please check with billing personnel so they are in by the end of the month. Mr. Drysdale added that next month they will start working on the rate package for 2025-2026 and it does help having the actual allocation of costs.

**d. Aging Accounts Receivable**

Mr. Couture presented the Aging Accounts Receivable report on page 47. The total receivable balance is approximately \$665,000. About 83% is less than 60 days delinquent. Chairperson McLeod asks if any of the late payers have received letters from DUWA yet. Mr. Drysdale says the System Attorney has sent out letters asking for payment.

**e. Pending Invoices**

The total amount in this month's invoice register is \$2,137,023.02. The largest invoices include those to Veolia for O&M services and unit cost reconciliations, and Wyandotte Municipal Services for utility services. The pending invoice report is attached herein.

Motion by Riverview, supported by Wyandotte to approve payment of the pending invoices in the amount of \$2,137,023.02. The motion passed unanimously by all attending members.

**9. Public Comment**

Mayor Kuspa inquired if there is still time to implement bylaws this year. Rumzei Abdullah of Plante Moran noted that there will still be enough time. Mr. Grysko says there's still time before the June 30<sup>th</sup> deadline.

There was no further Public Comment.

**10. Other Business**

There were no other items brought forth for consideration as "Other Business" items.

**11. Next Meeting Date: Thursday, March 13, 2025 (9:00 AM; In-Person)**

Chairperson McLeod reminded the Board that the next regular meeting would take place on Thursday, March 13, 2025 at 9:00 AM in-person at Taylor City Hall.

## **12. Adjournment**

There being no other business, Chairperson McLeod announced that a motion to adjourn would be in order. Motion by Southgate and supported by Dearborn Heights to adjourn the meeting. The motion passed unanimously at 10:07 AM.