

**DOWNRIVER UTILITY WASTEWATER AUTHORITY
MARCH 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: Belleville, Brownstown, Dearborn Heights, Ecorse, Southgate, Allen Park, Romulus, Riverview, Van Buren, and Wyandotte, A quorum (at least 7 members) were present. The representative from Taylor arrived at 9:08am.

a. DUWA Commissioners

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

Melissa Frierson (Belleville) Roxie Fairchild (Brownstown), Mayor Bill Bazzi (Dearborn Heights), David Hall (Ecorse), Mayor Joseph Kuspa (Southgate), Mayor Gail McLeod (Allen Park), Roberto Scappaticci (Romulus), Jeff Dobek (Riverview), Bill Miner (Van Buren), and Greg Mayhew (Wyandotte), Mayor Tim Wooley (Taylor) arrived at 9:08am.

b. Other Meeting Attendees

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

2. Approval of Agenda

Motion by Riverview and supported by Romulus to approve the agenda. The motion passed unanimously by all attending members.

3. Approval of Minutes from February 13, 2025 Board Meeting

Copies of the meeting minutes from the February 13, 2025 Board meeting were included in the pre-meeting Board packet. Motion by Southgate and supported by

Dearborn Heights, to approve the minutes. The motion passed unanimously by all attending members.

4. Legal Update

Attorney Jim Fausone of Fausone & Grysko provided the legal update.

a. General Counsel Monthly Report

Mr. Fausone highlighted the various items from the legal update, which is included in the meeting packet. His team is still currently waiting on one community to get the second amendment to the Articles of Incorporation approved by their council. Fausone & Grysko is working with that community. Once received they will bring the changes to the bylaws that match up with the changes in the articles back to the Board. Lastly; in regards to the dryer lawsuit, responses from all parties are due March 14th. The hearing on the various motions for summary disposition is currently set for late April.

5. Contract Operator Update

a. Monthly Operating Report

Jason Tapp reported that warmer weather was received resulting in snow melt that increased flow to the DWTF. January 31st was the highest daily flow to date with 83 million gallons coming in. This month 1.2 billion gallons were treated through the facility. The plant is in full compliance for January. All rotors and stators on the south dryer dosing pumps were removed and replaced. The cake pumps which feed those pumps had to be replaced as well. Temporary scaffolding was installed to rebuild the top section of the bio air tower in order to install 7,000 pounds of activated carbon to not only scrub odors for sulfide removal but also pull out volatile organic compounds to help with odor control. The effectiveness of the activated carbon will be visible in the odor control study once completed.

Veolia staff replaced failed PVC piping with PEX for ferric and PACL dosing. A new dosing pump on the PACL system was installed as well. With these improvements Veolia hopes for better control with cost savings.

Alfa Laval was brought in to replace the failed centrifuge bearing. Veolia's team learned at that time how to replace it in the future. Since the bearing cost is high, it is good that Alfa Laval is still covering that bearing under warranty. Alfa Laval has admitted that there's an oil lubrication issue that's causing the bearing to fail. They are researching and developing a solution for the future. Veolia's team replaced one of the cake hoses that are bulging. The operators are improving the

process to reduce hose wear over time. An access hatch on the North Dryer rotary valve cover was fabricated to allow Veolia's team to perform inspections and access the area where jams occur so that the System isn't shut down for long periods. Rotors and stators on the BLIS pumps were replaced. The Bliss pumps enable the cake and dosing pumps to pump sludge more easily and should increase their life span. Currently there are four pumps on the system but there are dozens of injection points downstream. Mr. Tapp and his team are pushing back on Kruger to see if there is a better solution.

Veolia will be replacing an air conditioner in the control room as it needs to be temperature controlled. Currently they are waiting on getting that installed. In the meantime the plant will rely on individual air conditioners and fans to not overheat the room. An overhead crane is utilized in the solids handling building which allows Veolia staff to access condensing towers, centrifuges, conveyors, dryers, pumps, and everything that needs to be pulled and worked on. Quotes are being obtained to fix internal faulty wires. Power feed rails on the perimeter of the building will need to be replaced and safety rails will need to be installed beforehand as the rails are 40-50 ft in the air.

Regarding the Collection system, CCTV began at the end of January. Some coordination will need to be done to lower the interceptor water level as the inspection team nears the plant. Safety training continues with Veolia working on spill prevention and control measures as it is an EPA requirement. A final review is ongoing. Last month an employee was injured working on repairs to the dryer system. A plexi glass screen was built so work can be done with gloves inside of the chamber as steam can build up due to pressure. MISS DIG tickets totaled 231. Tickets have increased due to warmer weather. Unit cost reconciliation controls are within the normal range. The plant is in full compliance but not so in the month of February as the plant had one violation and did not meet the required 85% removal of TSS due to higher than usual flows. Removal of TSS increased towards the end of the month but averaged 83% for the month. The violation will be noted in the next EGLE inspection letter. In addition to high flows Veolia believes the malfunctioning of the final affluent sampler could have impacted the percentage removal of TSS. A new sampler was installed at a new location with a shorter hose which resulted in an immediate difference in the sample water quality.

b. Chemical and Sludge Price - Monthly Updates

Mr. Tapp continued to report that page 18 shows unit price changes. Supplemental oxygen fee was impacted and incurred a 5% surcharge. Mr.

Tapp's team has reached out to the supplemental oxygen provider to inquire about the additional charge as they did not receive a notification about that charge. The PACL provider informed Veolia that due to tariff impacts there will be a 3% markup. Mr. Tapp is unaware if this markup is permanent or temporary.

c. Existing UV System - Remaining Life Update

The UV system is running exceptionally well, even when the plant hits high solids. The plant is seeing extremely good numbers with UV disinfection. With a surplus of ballasts, bulbs and sleeves Mr. Tapp's team feels that they are in good shape to continue dosing effectively until the completion of the UV construction project.

After last month's inquiry about hours spent maintaining the dryer equipment Veolia pulled a search query and found out of the 1,500 hours spent in February on maintenance in the facility, 800 of those hours were specifically assigned to the dryer project. The staff have been dedicated and diligent to make sure that we're running to the fullest ability. Mayor Joseph Kuspa inquired what the average suspended solids removal rate is. Mr. Tapp noted that historically the plant has been at 99% removal. Since EGLE requested the plant to change the effluent sampler location it's been harder to hit 99%, but numbers have always remained in the 90s. No one expected to see numbers drop in the 80s but with the new sampler location, they shouldn't have this issue again.

With the dryer cake and dosing pumps being rebuilt, Roberto Scappaticci inquired if DUWA purchased the rotors and stators or if Seepex was still honoring a warranty of those parts. Mr. Tapp informed everyone that Veolia was purchasing those and a master list has been made to keep track of purchases and expenses. Seepex had stopped warranting the parts so Veolia tried purchasing parts from a different supplier to save on costs but ultimately found that those parts did not last as long.

6. System Manager Update

Dan Alford provided a verbal summary of activities since the last meeting.

a. System Manager Report

There were no NPDES compliance issues for the month of January. Following up on the 85% average suspended solids removal rate violation, in previous years under Wayne County, the sampler location was greatly influenced by plant recycle so it wasn't a true representative sample, which is why the plant always maintained 99% removal. The influent sample has historically been a struggle for

wastewater plants to collect as it's typically put in front of screening where rags and etc. are present. As it relates to small Capital Projects; one PLC for the PLC-5 replacements has been removed and replaced successfully. The contractor, A.W. Schultz is performing well and is scheduling the time for the last two PLC-5 replacements. In regard to HVAC replacement phase two; new piping and the new boiler have been installed. An unofficial start up test was done but are still waiting on DTE to come and upsize the gas meter as this new demand has created a need to increase it. Other small Capital Projects include the maintenance of the electrical switchgear, which is still in progress. The replacement Solids handling building HVAC unit has yet to come in. The Emergency Response plan is under review with Mr. Alford and he will complete his review so DUWA can meet regulatory requirements. As it relates to flow metering and the collection system, an as-needed engineering firm will review the last year's inspection results to validate and verify that there are not any issues. If there are sections of pipe that need to be reprioritized due to problematic areas inspection rates will be adjusted as necessary. With the asset management system that Veolia has in place, their software does the same as our GIS licenses so it has been decided to let those four GIS licenses lapse. The data will still be accessible and licenses can be purchased in the future, if required. The GIS license savings is \$1,400 a year. At the beginning of February GLWA increased their orthophosphorus concentration in the drinking water to 2.4 ppm. Mr. Tapp commented that they have not seen any effects of the increase as of yet. Mr. Alford continued to report that five odor complaints have been received for the month of March thus far. The odor complaints were made from new and prior residents who have issued a complaint. Carbon has been installed in two locations: the dryer odor control unit and the Veolia team has rerouted the recycle pipe air to pull through the existing odor control unit at the tunnel pump station. Quotes have been received totaling \$33,000 for GAC in the dryer unit, and \$50,000 for the pump station. Mr. Alford advised that as long as the odor complaint numbers stay low we should wait on Veolia's recommendation and see what the odor study reports once completed in April/May. Jeff Dobek inquired how often the carbon would need to be replaced. At this time Mr. Alford is unsure and it depends on the amount of usage of the Dryer. He notes that the dryer carbon was installed in January. Some breakthroughs have been seen on the VOCs from the dryer carbon but Mr. Tapp has not seen any breakthroughs of VOC's or H2S from the recycled air carbon which he feels is more concentrated. Mr. Alford continued to report that the Veolia team and the City of Wyandotte went out and spoke to residents who reported odors. Their visit was well received speaking to residents. The residents have noticed that there has been some improvements and mentioned that the odor intensity has declined. Mr. Alford

hopes that this “Odor Swat Team” approach can temper the residents' built up frustration from the odor emitting from the plant. When the odor study was conducted baseline testing was performed when the dryers were offline and then testing was conducted when the dryers were online. In regard to selling back of natural gas, in 2023 the natural gas sellback totaled about \$150,000. For 2024 unit costs have yet to be received but we have compared volumes to estimate about \$100,000. This year DUWA’s contract comes to an end with Constellation. Mr. Alford plans to open the competition to other natural gas providers as well as Constellation. Public notices are going on currently as it relates to the sewer use ordinance modification. DUWA is waiting on EGLE for results of public comments. Technical committee meetings have had a great turnout. Mr. Alford will continue to do his best to compact the meeting to 90 minutes and encourage all municipalities to attend. One of the results of the last technical committee meeting was the decision to conduct a generator controls study. Mr. Alford plans to request an as-needed engineer to help assist with scoping the study out as it is in our interest to have someone review the controls and look for ways to improve it.

In regard to DWTF facility management, Veolia had a discussion with himself and Sarah Rutkowski. There are over 60 structures at the plant, pavements, HVAC, buildings, roofs, etc.; which take a lot of work to maintain. Additional help is needed to scope out these various structures and we may need to bring in a specialist. A lot of the original piping is still being utilized and with the plant being built in 1938 things are nearing 85 years old. A proactive approach will save DUWA in the long run instead of waiting for failures to happen. A project plan will be developed to determine and implement improvement projects over time. The annual audit has begun with Plante Moran. Consideration is being taken to if required to include the UV project.

b. UV Disinfection Replacement Project

Contractor trailers are on site for the UV replacement project. The contractor is coordinating a shutdown with Veolia to complete an inspection and field verification. A laser scan of the existing UV chambers will be done.

c. Biosolids Dryer Facility Project

Mr. Alford noted that Jason Nash was not present for his presentation. Mr. Alford continued to report that they had their typical struggles with the dryers. January was not a great month for production, but Veolia had proposed a strainpress to pilot that should remove sludge debris. It’s at no cost to DUWA and is ready to mobilize. This is a fairly large effort to bring out a portable unit and connect it to

pipes, power, and SCADA. Data collection will be available for review in addition. This new device will not affect operations negatively and will take a minimum of six months to collect data. DUWA doesn't object to the strainpress pilot study.

Mayor Bazzi inquired if it would be feasible to include a grinder to break down rags and wipes in the system to reduce the impact of that issue. He suggested that it may be a good idea to attend various conferences where this technology may be present. Mr. Alford noted that many licensed wastewater professionals are a part of the Michigan Water Environmental Association (MWEA). The MWEA offers conferences across the year in various specialties to attend and investigate new technologies, equipment and ideas. From Mr. Alford's previous experience working with rags, we can make things more difficult for the screens downstream to do their job if we try to somehow push these rags/wipes through various technologies upstream of the plant. Chairperson McLeod added that ideally we'd like to not see rags/flushable wipes at all going through the system and it should not be the wastewater treatment plant's responsibility to absorb additional costs related to rags/wipes. She advocated that we reach out to our politicians to lobby against these companies from marketing them as flushable. Mr. Alford agreed that communicating the proper disposal methods of these products is key.

Mr. Kuspa inquired what the diameter of the yard piping is and is relining something that is being considered. Mr. Alford noted that they are of various sizes but can be as small as 6" and they are considering all types of technology.

Mr. Morgan inquired what effect orthophosphate may have on our compliance with our permit and what will that require. Mr. Alford made note that since GLWA is increasing the orthophosphate to protect the pipes which protects the Communities from lead, we will have to remove it with chemicals and we will see an increased use of chemicals. Additionally, the plant will continue to see seasonal spikes based on rain events, fertilizer applications and such.

7. Requests for Authorization and Approval

Mr. Alford presented the following request for approval that was brought to and approved at the Technical Committee meeting. This is a method to select an As-Needed Engineering firm. Every task will still come through for Board approval. This includes: any task under \$10,000 where the System Manager team can recommend the task, any task between \$10,000-\$20,000 where a discussion will need to take place with the Board Chair to validate; and any task over \$20,000 where the System Manager will provide a scope of work for all As-Needed engineers to propose on.

Mr. Alford added that all three of these Engineering firms have been previously vetted on their capabilities and have been deemed capable. All three will be utilized at various times and have already committed to hourly costs.

a. Award Process for As-Needed Engineering Tasks

Motion by Dearborn Heights, supported by Wyandotte to approve the Award Process for As-Needed Engineering Tasks. The motion passed unanimously by all attending members.

8. Treasurer's Report

Jason Couture presented the various items below to the Board which start on page 31.

a. Community Self-Reporting Status Log

Mr. Couture reported that currently Dearborn Heights and Wyandotte are behind schedule but are in the process of getting caught up.

b. Aging Accounts Receivable

Mr. Couture presented the Aging Accounts Receivable which total \$6.2 Million. This is a big receivable due to the fact that there is a one-time billing for the annual debt service that gets billed to the communities this period. Chairperson McLeod inquired if we have charged anyone a late fee as of yet. Doug Drysdale noted that for the communities that have not paid, a late fee is on their account to be paid.

c. Pending Invoices

These invoices include \$1.3 to Veolia for monthly operations and management and cost reconciliation, \$6.7 Million for debt related to bonds that we write to the U.S. Bank.

Motion by Dearborn Heights, supported by Southgate to approve payment of the pending invoices in the amount of \$8,509,930.17. The motion passed unanimously by all attending members.

9. Public Comment

Mayor Wooley congratulated Mayor Bazzi on the announcement of his appointment to be an Ambassador.

10. Other Business

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

11. Next Meeting Date: Thursday, April 10, 2025 (9:00 AM; In-Person)

Chairperson McLeod reminded the Board that the next regular meeting would take place on Thursday, April 10, 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 Dearborn Heights and supported by Romulus to adjourn the meeting. The motion passed unanimously at 10:16 AM.