

DOWNRIVER UTILITY WASTEWATER AUTHORITY
April 10, 2025 MEETING MINUTES
CITY OF TAYLOR COUNCIL CHAMBERS

1. Roll Call and Introductions

Chairperson McLeod (Allen Park) called the meeting to order at 9:02 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, Brownstown Township, Ecorse, Lincoln Park, Riverview, Romulus, Southgate, Taylor, Van Buren Township, 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), Mayor Joseph Kuspa (Southgate), Mayor Gail McLeod (Allen Park), Roberto Scappaticci (Romulus), Jeff Dobek (Riverview), David Hall (Ecorse), Greg Mayhew (Wyandotte), Roxie Fairchild, (Brownstown), Mayor Tim Wooley (Taylor), and Lisa Griggs (Lincoln Park).

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), Dan Marsh (Southgate), Doug Drysdale (Southgate & DNS Financial Services), Rumzei Abdallah (Plante Moran), Jason Couture (DUWA Treasurer), Jason Tapp (Veolia OM), Jason Nash (Veolia CPM), Stephen Hitchcock (Romulus), Dan Alford (Fishbeck), Lauren Fath-Azam (Secretary), Brandon Grysko (Fausone & Grysko), David Greco (Taylor), and Kerry Morgan (Riverview).

2. Approval of Agenda

Copies of the Agenda were made available prior to the meeting. Motion by Riverview and supported by Southgate to approve the agenda. The motion passed unanimously by all attending members.

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

Copies of the meeting minutes from the March 13, 2025 Board meeting were included in the pre-meeting Board packet. Motion by Southgate 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. Recently his team attended the Finance Committee quarterly meeting, continues to engage with Stantec about various dryer issues, and discusses litigation activities with the Board.

5. Contract Operator Update

a. Monthly Operating Report

Jason Tapp reported that February was a dry month up until the end. High flows were received starting on February 25th. Veolia recently became aware of an issue at the final effluent sampler. There was a crack in the pipe, which created artificial turbidity in the final samples, and caused a percent removal permit exceedance. The monthly TSS average for the plant was 83.1% versus the limit of 85%. Mr. Tapp contacted the regulator at EGLE, who said a compliance letter will be issued. This violation did not impact the water quality as it is a solids ratio issue, however it isn't something EGLE likes to see. Veolia's staff addressed the issue by installing a new final sampler in a better location. This new location is easily accessible for sampling. The new final samples look immensely better, and the plant is now back in compliance.

Large jobs for the month included replacing the belt tensioner on the rag belt in the aerated grit building and replacement of all hanger bearings for screw conveyor #1. The hydraulic line on the IPS gripper (used to remove screenings from the course bar racks) was also replaced.

In regard to solids handling the drive belts and screen were replaced on the crusher. No screen is being used now, and they are still waiting for a solution from the manufacturer. Continued work on the collection system included work on the sensors and meters, as well as making sure the connections are sending data. Veolia continues with CCTV efforts and are almost at 90% for the year as of February.

A total of 155 tickets for MissDig were completed with 34 of them being Emergency related. Monthly reconciliation for sludge hauling/disposal totaled \$39,337.90. In February only around 20% was sent through the dryers due to issues that kept the dryers offline.

Mr. Tapp said last week there was a bypass event in which the system was over 200 million gallons per day. This year there was one discharge event and the new staff handled the high flows extremely well. All permit requirements were met. A few days were needed to get back to a normal treatment process due to stress on the system.

Dan Alford inquired what percentage the dryers produced. Jason Nash reported that February's production was 33.48%. Mr. Alford inquired about how many NPDES violations occurred in 2024. Mr. Tapp added that there was one violation in 2024.

b. Chemical and Sludge Price - Monthly Updates

No further chemical price increases as of now since last month's 3% increase. Mr. Tapp will continue to update the board on any further changes.

c. System - Remaining Life Update

Mr. Tapp noted the UV system is running well.

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 19-31).

a. System Manager Report

Mr. Alford reported that there was one NPDES compliance issue, which Mr. Tapp spoke previously on.

Mr. Alford continued to report that the dryer has been operating with the usual difficulties. Typical start up issues have been seen with the strainpress which Jason Nash will elaborate on later. The UV project update will be covered later.

In regard to Small Capital Projects PLC 5 replacements have been completed. The contractor did well with HRC overseeing their work. Some expected failures were found including some switches that went bad. Veolia is gathering quotes to fix this issue. For the HVAC Improvements phase 2 project the HVAC system is up and running. The contractor is currently being held up on punch list items by DTE who needs to upsize one of the building's gas meters. Mr. Alford anticipates traction as the issue has been escalated to DTE's local rep.

A blockage due to roots was found in River Rouge, near the upstream end of the Riverdrive interceptor. Veolia notified the System Manager who approved an emergency cleaning to remove the root intrusion as it had limited flow capacity in the sewer. 150 plus yards of grit were removed in the pipe including the roots. The biggest blockage has been removed but there is more to be removed farther down the pipe. The contractor is waiting on dry weather to remove the remaining amount as the City's pump station pumps will need to be turned off.

GLWA has been gradually increasing the dosage of orthophosphate in drinking water from 1.2 ppm to 2.4 ppm by February 2025 as part of their corrosion control program for the water system. Veolia is closely monitoring phosphorus concentrations at the DWTF, and any associated increases to Ferric/PACL dosing. So far, no increased ferric/PACL usage has been detected.

32 odor complaints have been received in the month of March. We are studying the complaints as they don't seem to be tied to wind direction, weather, or dryer operation. The times complaints are created are grouped, however. This leads Mr. Alford to believe some portion of these complaints may be associated with social media. DUWA and Veolia have been looking into several technologies and modifications to mitigate odor issues at the DWTF over the last several months. Mr. Tapp and himself have discussed the possibility of putting wind direction devices at the plant for another source of data. A recent trend has been when Veolia calls to follow-up on the business hour odor reports, some residents have not been responsive.

The odor study is due at the end of April/early May. The carbon odor control unit at the tunnel pump station is not showing breakthrough but the dryer's odor control unit is. After discussing this with the Technical Committee Mr. Alford will be bringing a carbon replacement request to the Board for approval later on in the meeting.

Natural gas sell back is going well. Constellation, Veolia, and MEA are currently assisting DUWA to predict natural gas usage in order to sell back the appropriate gas volumes. Based on prior history, the sell back should total over \$100,000 of cost avoidance for the year. Evaluations of natural gas contract options with our natural gas consultant MEA will be conducted this year to determine the best strategy and options moving forward.

Final approval from EGLE has not yet been received as it relates to the sewer use ordinance.

Technical meetings continue to go well. The next meeting will be held on Thursday, April 24, 2025, at 9:30 am.

The as-needed engineering priorities are the development of an updated CIP and completing a study to determine the best way forward to restore the emergency generator controls.

A Finance meeting took place on April 3rd to review the preliminary operating expenditures as part of the 2025-2026 rates. So far there is not anything unusual in regard to the rate numbers. Mr. Alford will let the System Attorney and Treasurer elaborate more on that later in the meeting.

b. UV Disinfection Replacement Project

Some physical work has been done in the field to isolate the spare UV channel. Three out of the five new UV units are on site but we are currently waiting for the part 41 permit from EGLE. Black and Veatch seems to require more prodding than Mr. Alford would like.

James Taylor inquired when the part 41 permit will come in and if that is delaying us in any way. Mr. Alford added that he is unclear as to why EGLE is taking their time. He will reach out to them if not approved soon. Kerry Morgan inquired who the issue lies with on slow pace of work that is being done. Mr. Alford noted that Black and Veatch will be held responsible as DUWA's project managers.

c. Biosolids Dryer Facility Project

Mr. Nash reported that March was the best month for the dryers to operate since November at 42% though multiple issues arose. The live bottom screw 3 had an issue with the VFD which has been replaced. Cake pumps are being replaced so that parts line up with the corresponding manufacturer as issues arose after being replaced with different manufacturers parts. Veolia was previously told by this manufacturer that their components were identical. On March 21, a discharge screw bracket for centrifuge 2 broke and entered the cake bin and damaged cake pump 3. On March 24, the solids building was offline for the PLC upgrades. The south dryer was restarted on March 27.

The dryers continue to produce long Cheetos, causing clogging issues in the extraction screws and pressure. Veolia believes this to be related to fibers in the solids. This issue will be solved once the strainpress is in full operation.

Two bearings on centrifuge 3 are having issues. These parts will be fixed and are currently waiting on a manufacturer's technician to assist with the installation. Parts are still under warranty.

Cake line supports were fixed by Walsh as the original supports provided did not support the pipe, the weight of the material, and the manifolds that come off the end. Testing will be completed when the four dosing pumps are removed simultaneously and no sag is present.

The temporary strainpress piping is complete and integration issues into the existing SCADA system are being worked through. Phase two of the strainpress installation includes de-gritting. Veolia is finalizing their decision on which manufacturer to move forward with. There is a 20-week lead time to get all of the custom components in. Roberto Scappaticci inquired about the strainpress generated solids handling process. Mr. Nash said Veolia is currently looking into a conveyor to help assist in moving the new solids to a larger container. Greg Mayhew asked if the new solids add to the plant odor. Mr. Nash did not believe it would.

Mayor Kuspa inquired as to what changed to create the longer cheetos. Mr. Nash noted that this is a seasonal fiber issue and stated that the strainpress will help remove these longer fibers and decrease the size of the cheetos. Dan Alford believes that there should be some sort of testing available that would validate the seasonal longer cheetos theory.

Mr. Nash added that when the dryer itself works other things keep popping up that are causing significant issues, specifically the pumps. Two pump issues include the damage caused by debris and abrasives, but the strainpress and future grit pilots should alleviate both. Mr. Nash expects to increase the life of the pumps since this is the first time they are adding a new technology instead of just repairing broken materials. Mr. Scapaticci and Mayor Kuspa note that since pumping has been a prominent issue, has Veolia considered comparing different pump manufacturers. Mr. Nash said that Veolia and Stantec have spoken to multiple manufacturers; all of which don't provide any more reassurance that the currently in use Seepex and Rotopump pumps, which use similar materials of construction, will provide better service. Mr. Nash added the dryer troubleshooting team will discuss the possibility of using different pump manufacturers further during the bi-weekly dryer call. Mr. Dobek and Mayor Wolley both stress the importance of grit testing and compatibility for any pumps used to pump sludge.

7. Requests for Authorization and Approval

Mr. Alford presented the following requests for approval.

a. Replacement Carbon for Biosolids Dryer Odor Control Unit

This request was reviewed and approved by the technical committee during the March 27th, 2025 meeting. Veolia has provided a cost sheet for the replacement of the activated carbon in the BioAir unit. The replacement carbon and associated costs would be funded through DUWA's Plant Operations – dryer repairs and maintenance line item.

Motion by Wyandotte, supported by Romulus to approve the purchase and installation of replacement carbon for the biosolids dryer odor control unit for a total cost of \$50,371.20. The motion passed unanimously by all attending members.

b. Request for Extension of James T. Taylor Engagement for Dryer Project Support

Mr. Alford notes that Mr. Taylor has been providing technical services to DUWA for the dryer project and participates in the Joint Technical Committee as well. This extension would allow for an additional not-to-exceed fee of \$14,400 for Mr. Taylor's services for approximately another year. The additional fee for Mr. Taylor's professional services will be paid from DUWA's Engineering Services line item of the budget.

Motion by Wyandotte, supported by Van Buren to approve the increase in the not-to-exceed fee of James T. Taylor's Professional Services Engagement contract to \$29,600. The fee will be paid from DUWA's Engineering Services line item of the budget. 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 37.

a. Community Self-Reporting Status Log

Mr. Couture reported that currently Belleville and Wyandotte are up to date even though they show as delinquent. A check from Dearborn Heights has not yet been received. The last communication from them was at the end of March.

b. Aging Accounts Receivable

Page 45 shows the amount outstanding of approximately \$1.9 Million. Of that, approximately 90% is less than 60 days delinquent.

c. Pending Invoices

The total amount in this month's invoice register is \$3,411,056.87. The invoice register includes the first two invoices for the UV disinfection project contractor CCC which total \$1,553,458.41. Other large invoices include those to Veolia for O&M services and unit cost reconciliations, and Wyandotte Municipal Services for utility services.

Motion by Southgate, supported by Taylor to approve payment of the pending invoices in the amount of \$3,411,056.87. The motion passed unanimously by all attending members.

9. Public Comment

There was no further Public Comment.

10. Other Business

Mayor Kuspa asked if the System Manager could provide the plant schematics again. Dan Alford replied that he would start distributing the packets and displaying the poster boards again. There were no other items brought forth for consideration as "Other Business" items.

11. Next Meeting Date: Thursday, May 8, 2025 (9:00 AM; In-Person)

Chairperson McLeod reminded the Board that the next regular meeting would take place on Thursday May 8, 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 Romulus to adjourn the meeting. The motion passed unanimously at 10:17 AM.