

**DOWNRIVER UTILITY WASTEWATER AUTHORITY**  
**May 8, 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 11 communities: Wyandotte, Van Buren, Taylor, Riverview, River Rouge, Allen Park, Romulus, Southgate, Belleville, Brownstown, Dearborn Heights. 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), Greg Mayhew (Wyandotte), Roxie Fairchild, (Brownstown), Mayor Tim Wooley (Taylor), Melissa Collins (River Rouge), Melissa Frierson (Belleville), Mayor Bill Bazzi (Dearborn Heights).

**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), Mayor Robert DeSana (Wyandotte), Jason Tapp (Veolia O&M), Jason Nash (Veolia CPM), Travis Tuma (Veolia O&M), Souheil Sabak (CE Raines) Stephen Hitchcock (Romulus), Gerry Barr (Allen Park), Dan Alford (Fishbeck), Sarah Rutkowski (Fishbeck), Lauren Fath-Azam (Secretary), Jim Fausone (Fausone & Grysko), David Greco (Taylor), Kerry Morgan (Riverview), Angela Mannarino, and Julian Reno (Van Buren & Taylor).

**2. Approval of Agenda**

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

### **3. Approval of Minutes from April 10, 2025 Board Meeting**

Copies of the meeting minutes from the April 10, 2025 Board meeting were included in the pre-meeting Board packet. Motion by Riverview and supported by Romulus, 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 are included in the meeting packet. All steps necessary have been completed as it relates to DUWA's sewer use ordinance. Certification was executed by general counsel and accepted by EGLE. Fausone & Grysko has followed up on the adoption of the amended Articles of Incorporation with one final community, and their representative has indicated that they will attempt to advance it through the City Council. Fausone & Grysko has been attending to the dryer litigation matters in the normal course of events and are lining up a legal committee meeting to have further discussions on the topic.

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

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

Jason Tapp reported that there are currently two open operator positions at the facility. Veolia is currently in the process of screening and interviewing applicants.

DUWA's wastewater plant was in compliance for the month of March with no issues noted. Roughly 1.4 billion gallons are treated per month. One bypass occurred in April, which was the first the plant has had in over two years. The plant handled the large event very well. Jason Tapp reported that a permit violation for a seven day suspended solids average occurred in April. Mr. Tapp continued that the cause of the high solids was a second failed secondary RAS pump during the high flow event. This pump's repair request is on today's agenda for Board review and approval.

Travis Tuma reported that jobs completed in March included: installing a new drain valve on final Clarifier #6; installing a new gear box on the crusher; replacing the entire cake pump assembly in the #3 spot; and replacing an HVAC unit on the solid's handling building roof. Clarifier #6 work turned into a very large job as there was no quick, safe way to drain the tank. With the team's help they were able to utilize a 14" valve Veolia O&M had on hand so that they didn't have to wait the allotted 30 week lead time and spend the estimated \$30,000 to

replace the valve. As it relates to the crusher it was originally installed without oil in the gearbox by the manufacturer so this new gear box was a replacement from the contractor. The entire cake pump assembly in #3 was replaced due to an object which put a hole in the side of the pump. The damaged pump is headed to Seepex for repair. The control room of the solids handling building's HVAC unit was past it's useful life, so a replacement was installed.

In regard to solids handling the rotors and stators on cake pumps #1 & #2 were all replaced. Mr. Tuma added that 31% of the workload for the maintenance team in March went just to solids handling. Overtime is routinely being used to keep up with corrective maintenance.

Mr. Tapp added that there has been a lot of routine maintenance on the collection system with the biggest focus being on finishing the CCTV for the year. The work for 2025 is 90% percent completed. Root removal has been completed in which over 100 yards of material was pulled out with much of it being pulled out by hand due to the cutter not being able to. A directional drilling bore head was found stuck inside the pipe under a railroad track. This brick pipe may need to be lined to prevent future root intrusion.

A total of 25 emergency tickets were completed for MissDig. The plant was in full compliance with no exceedances for the month of March, but there will be a violation in April's report. Mr. Tapp noted the one anomaly on page 17 which shows a large water cost increase in March. The reason for this was the plant was undercharged for February, so together the costs balance out.

Mayor Tim Wooley inquired if issues with the crusher gear box were caused due to the lack of oil. Mr. Tuma noted that there was not any oil in the gearbox when it was shipped and put into operation, so the manufacturer did replace the gearbox at no charge.

Dan Alford inquired if pump protections were verified after the first RAS pump failed. Mr. Tapp described that the first pump failed due to detecting moisture in the motor housing. That motor tested fine. The second motor's cause of failure was similar in the detection of moisture in the motor housing but Veolia O&M has yet to receive the inspection report on what the manufacturer has found. Veolia will request a failure diagnosis for this pump.

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

Polymer and H2O2 costs were at \$0 for the month as there was no order put in for them. Costs for April will be comparable to February's.

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

In regard to the UV project the contractor is mobilized with trailers on site and most of the equipment at the facility. The contractor will be adding a spare channel and will move channel by channel so that the plant will stay at full capacity throughout the project. The existing UV system is working well now.

**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 18-33).

**a. System Manager Report**

Mr. Alford reported that there are no NPDES compliance issues. There has been no word from EGLE on the upcoming permit in well over a year. Capital projects will be covered later in the board meeting. Small capital projects including PCL 5 are largely complete. Some retainage is in the process of being approved. Veolia is obtaining quotes as it relates to a required control module replacement discovered during the project. Phase 2 of the HVAC improvements has been completed. The plant had better heating in the administration building this winter at the plant. We are currently waiting on the new gas meter from DTE. This is not crucial to the project.

As Veolia O&M noted previously, the Riverdrive interceptor root blockage is gone so the Interceptor has been restored to full capacity. Mr. Alford has invited the Hennessey Engineer who represents the City of River Rouge to a meeting so that they can discuss the best way to move forward to protect the DUWA sewer from future root intrusions. Orthophosphate dosing continues, and no increased usage has been noticed in regards to ferric/PACL as of yet. It stands to reason that they will see an increase at some time. 51 odor complaints were received in April. The largest amount of complaints came during late April when the dryer had been offline for weeks. This was discussed at length during the Technical Committee meeting. The odor SWAT team has shown to be a great approach to responding to odor complaints. Of the complaints received 20% resulted in site visits, 20% resulted in phone discussions and 60% resulted in providing a follow up phone call but not hearing back. A delay is expected for the odor study delivery. A replacement of the dryer odor control unit's granular activated carbon was authorized at last month's board meeting. It is currently in process and Veolia will have it replaced as quickly as possible. The other odor control unit at the Tunnel Pump Station that we're reusing for the recycle line is working fine. Mr. Alford spent many hours at the plant Tuesday before this month's board

meeting and noticed that the various rain events freshened up the plant. Natural gas sell back continues with monthly meetings set up to assist DUWA with managing our gas purchases with the recent variable dryer operation. Technical committee meetings have been going well with the prior one lasting 90 minutes. Mr. Alford and Sarah Rutkowski have varied the format to discuss less operational items and focused their efforts on other issues. Discussing As-Needed Engineering work, HRC is developing the Riverdrive inspection summary report and Wade Trim is working to provide an estimate as it relates to the generator controls study.

Jeff Dobek inquired if there is any consideration for any portable odor control systems around the plant perimeter yet. Dan Alford communicated that all options are still on the table. He anticipates the odor study will provide priority locations to focus odor mitigation efforts. Knowing the odor constituents will be helpful to guide our efforts. Mayor Joseph Kuspa inquired if we are tracking repeat complaints and as to why the odor study is taking longer than expected. Mr. Alford noted that they are tracking repeat complaints and about half of the odor reports come from residents that have made repeat odor reports. He believes that the study will come in in the next few weeks. Jason Nash added that initial odor sampling has been completed yet Brown and Caldwell is diving further into what is causing these odors and what the odors are made up of based on the characteristics of the odor that the panel identified. Mr. Nash said he's asking for odor location information to share at the May Technical Committee meeting. Jim Fausone relayed that additional analytical information was shared at the technical committee meeting and a deeper dive is being done as it relates to the odor study.

**b. EGLE Proposed Collection System Permits**

Mr. Alford continued to report that EGLE held a public hearing on April 8th to discuss proposed changes to the Part 41 rules. The proposed rule changes will require operator certification for collection systems and retention treatment basins. The rule changes are a step towards issuing collection system permits to communities that discharge into a regional wastewater system. Additional O&M, reporting, and operator certifications will be required under the proposed permits. A recording of the public hearing as well as a copy of the marked-up proposed rule changes can be viewed. This information was presented at the DUWA technical committee meeting on Thursday, April 24. There was concern that the proposed collection system permits will put additional financial pressure on the DUWA communities. A letter template was drafted and circulated to the technical committee and Board commissioners to submit a formal comment to EGLE

regarding this concern. We received notification that some of the DUWA communities submitted formal comments to EGLE for inclusion in the public record which closed on April 30, 2025 at 5 PM. The Technical Committee will continue to discuss this topic as required. Some Commissioners indicated they didn't realize these proposed collection system permits were for DUWA community members, and not just DUWA. The draft template letter and associated information will get recirculated to the Board members. The Board Chair suggested a template response letter could get circulated among the State representatives as well.

**c. UV Disinfection Replacement Project**

Mr. Alford continued to report that CCC, the contractor, has attempted multiple shutdowns to start the isolation process. With the weather that we have been having lately we have not been able to shut down the plant fully, which is what's needed before work can begin on any of the channels. CCC has also provided us with a most recent revised temporary disinfection plan which is being reviewed. Once reviewed they will be requesting a part 41 permit review meeting from the State.

**d. Biosolids Dryer Facility Project**

Jason Nash reported that the strainpress and rental conveyor has been installed which leads to a dumpster. The unit ran for about 6 hours on Monday and filled the 1 yard dumpster. Small fibrous material is coming out and is shown in a photo on page 29. Further use will determine how quickly that dumpster fills up. Page 29 showcases a pie chart of the available equipment as it relates to the dryer system. The strainpress will be operational moving forward as issues have been resolved. Centrifuges are back into service since the bearing on centrifuge 3 was replaced. Cake pumps 1 and 3 were rebuilt and installed on the North Dryer. Cake pumps 2, 4, have been sent to Seepex due to requiring larger mechanical repairs. Seepex has not provided an estimated time frame to rebuild the three pumps yet. The crusher will have a screen installed to evaluate its functionality with the operation of the new strainpress. Mr. Nash expects to have initial samples and maps showing where odors originate across the facility within the next two weeks from today to present at the Technical Committee meeting. EGLE approved the part 41 permit on April 15, 2025. Brown and Caldwell are finalizing the strainpress pilot performance sampling and testing plan. This will be provided to DUWA shortly. Page 32 showcases a graph for the operation of the dryers for January through April. The majority of total hours are related to pump repairs. In the month of April the dryer was less than 10% of operation time due to issues with the pumps. The North dryer will be operating until the South dryer

is operational again. Roberto Scappaticci inquired when we are going to consider changing the pump manufacturer as the dosing and cake pumps are a big issue. Mr. Alford communicated that they are currently utilizing two manufacturers now, which produce the same identical style of pumps. With the use of the strainpress, data will be collected to see if the pumps run more effectively. Mr. Scappaticci requested information as to why the dryer was not operating in April. Mr. Nash described initial dryer fan issues, then repair of the cake pumps also became a bigger issue than anticipated. Mr. Alford added that they can dive into the history and issues of the pumps in the next technical meeting. Jim Fausone communicated that the strainpress has had limited operation so there is limited data on any impact on the pumping performance. Mr. Fausone added that there has not been a deep comparison to see if Seepex or RotoPumps perform better than the other. Mr. Alford noted that having RotoPump as an alternative manufacture is a benefit for spare parts availability. Mayor Joseph Kuspa questioned why the pump runtime has been getting worse recently. Mr. Nash noted new issues that arose this spring (dryer fan failures and cake pump shaft seizing) have caused the pump capacity to decrease.

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

Sarah Rutkowski presented the following requests for approval on pg 34 of the meeting packet.

### **a. RAS Pump #3 Repair**

This request was reviewed by the Technical Committee during the April 24, 2025 meeting and was recommended for approval. This fee will be paid from DUWA's Capital Outlay line item of the budget

Motion by Dearborn Heights, supported by Romulus to approve RAS pump #3 repair from Detroit Pump for a not-to-exceed fee of \$46,014.88. The motion passed unanimously by all attending members.

### **b. BS&A Cloud Software Purchase**

This request was reviewed by the Finance Committee during the April 3, 2025 meeting and was recommended for approval. This fee will be paid from DUWA's Software Maintenance item of the budget.

Motion by Southgate, second by Wyandotte to approve the agreement with BS&A Software for the purchase of software and services for the BS&A cloud Upgrade in the total amount of \$29,070. 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 52.

### **a. Draft Rate Year 2025-26 Rate Package**

Doug Drysdale reports the draft 2025-2026 Rate Package has been developed and is attached for Board review. As this is the third year of implementation of the new rate methodology, the draft Rate Package includes the existing rate method package, which comprises 40% of the blended rate, as well as the new rate method package, which comprises 60% of the blended rate. The proposed rate package has an increase of 1.17% for the 2025-26 rate year.

The Finance Committee will complete a final review of the two rate packages between the May and June Board meetings. Comments shared by the Finance Committee will be reported to the Board. Pending recommendation from the Finance Committee, a final version of the rate packages and surcharge rates will be provided to the Board for approval at the June Board meeting.

### **b. Quarterly Financial Statement - 2025 Q1**

Page 79 starts the Balance Sheet and Revenue and Expenditure Report for the Period Ending 3/31/2025. These are not final numbers as they are being compared to the unaudited December 31st, 2024 numbers. Accounts receivable totals \$3.4 Million in March 31st compared to \$2.4 Million as of December 31st. Accounts payable totals \$6.2 Million compared to \$2.9 Million at the end of the year.

The Revenue and Expenditure Report is shown on page 81 as of March 31st. Operating revenues are at 22% of our budget. Plant operations are at 23% of the budget. Capital outlay is at 35%. Net revenues and expenditures through the first quarter is at a deficit of \$1 million, primarily due to the debt payments that we made in the first quarter.

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

Mr. Drysdale reported on the community self-reporting status log on page 83. All Communities are now up to date with River Rouge getting caught up.

### **d. Aging Accounts Receivable**

Mr. Drysdale continued to report on the aging Accounts Receivable report starting on page 84. 11% of the total amount in the Aging Accounts Receivable is over 60 days delinquent.



Dan Alford added that he and the System Attorney have asked the IPP team at Veolia to provide them with an active accounts payable person from each of the industrial users. They have just received that list and will verify it before sharing.

**e. Pending Invoices**

The total amount in this month's invoice register is \$741,521.32. The largest invoices include those to Wyandotte Municipal Services, Veolia, and A.W Schultz for the PLC-5 construction project.

Motion by Dearborn Heights, supported by Romulus to approve payment of the pending invoices in the amount of \$741,521.32. The motion passed unanimously by all attending members.

**9. Public Comment**

There was no further Public Comment.

**10. Other Business**

Rumzei Abdallah from Plante Moran updated DUWA on their work in regards to the audit. Preliminary field work has been completed. Mr. Abdallah requests that all findings of the audit be presented at an alternative date other than the regular scheduled June meeting as all partners and principals at that time will be attending an out-of-town meeting.

Motion by Southgate, supported Dearborn Heights to change the June's Board meeting to June 5<sup>th</sup> to accommodate Plante Moran's schedule. The motion passed unanimously by all attending members.

Jeff Dobek states that the existing system for providing solids to the dryer ideally should be modified to avoid using pumps.

Bill Bazzi added that we should do business with an entity in Nashville who makes coating for various applications. Mr. Bazzi added that although he will be the next ambassador to Tunisia, he will always be available to those at DUWA. There were no other items brought forth for consideration as "Other Business" items.

**11. Next Meeting Date: Thursday, June 5, 2025 (9:00 AM; In-Person)**

Chairperson McLeod reminded the Board that the next regular meeting would take place on Thursday, June 5, 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 11:00 AM.