

Clear Lake/Clearwater Sewer Authority  
Regular Meeting Minutes  
August 21, 2025

**CALL TO ORDER**

Chair Goenner called the meeting to order at 5:34 p.m. at the Clear Lake City Hall.

**ROLL CALL**

Present: Chair Geonner, Members Nelson and Everett.

Absent: Vice Chair Lawrence.

Staff Present: Director Smythe, Chief Operator Forsell, Treasurer Hill.

Staff Absent: Operator Kirchenbauer.

Guest Present: None.

A quorum was declared present.

**1. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

**MOTION** by Nelson to approve Agenda as presented, seconded by Everett, all voted aye. **MOTION CARRIED 3-0.**

**2. APPOINT NEW AT-LARGE MEMBER**

**MOTION** by Nelson to appoint Tom Plaggerman to the Board as the At-Large Member, seconded by Everett, all voted aye. **MOTION CARRIED 3-0.**

*Member Plaggerman joined the meeting in progress at 5:36 p.m.*

**3. PUBLIC FORUM**

None.

**4. CONSENT AGENDA**

a. Approval of Minutes from May 22, 2025 Regular Meeting

b. Approval of Claims/Accounts Payable for April 2025

c. Approval of Claims/Accounts Payable for May 2025

d. Approval of Claims/Accounts Payable for June 2025

e. Approval of Claims/Accounts Payable for July 2025

f. Q1-2025 Quarterly Budget Report

g. Q2-2025 Quarterly Budget Report

- **MOTION** by Everett to approve the Consent Agenda as presented, seconded by Nelson, all voted aye. **MOTION CARRIED 4-0.**

**5. OLD BUSINESS**

a. Consider On-call Pay Policy

- Smythe and Forsell gave an overview of the proposed policy, following the direction of the Board at the last meeting. Chair Goenner asked if this item was in the budget and if the costs could be covered. Staff noted it was not in the budget for 2025 but could be covered by shifting the timing of planned purchases. Expenses overall are below budget year-to-date.

- **MOTION** by Everett to approve the on-call pay policy as proposed, seconded by Plaggerman, all voted aye. **MOTION CARRIED 4-0.**

## 6. NEW BUSINESS

### a. Consider Amendment to Joint Powers Agreement

- Smythe gave an overview of the amendment requested by Chair Goenner to extend the At-Large term to two years and the update to reflect current recruitment practices. She also noted that the two cities will also need to approve this item.
- **MOTION** by Goenner to approve, seconded by Nelson, all voted aye. **MOTION CARRIED 4-0.**

### b. Review 2026 Draft Budget Proposal

- Smythe gave an overview of the draft budget proposal and asked Members to share feedback prior to the next meeting.

### c. Review Draft Director Contract Renewal

- Smythe explained the proposed rates for the Director Contract Renewal and asked Members to share feedback prior to the next meeting. She noted that the Clearwater City Council has not yet seen this proposal.

### d. Consider Quotes for Security Gate

- Forsell explained the quotes for a new security gate at the entrance to the plant. Staff noted the increasing security concerns related to hackers and to the attacks on lawmakers earlier this year. These factors, along with the remote location of the plant, explained staff's concerns that more security would be prudent. Members asked if there are cameras at the plant, staff confirmed that there are some but none at the gate.
- **MOTION** by Nelson to accept the low quote from GDS for a security gate, seconded by Everett, all voted aye. **MOTION CARRIED 4-0.**

### e. Consider Invoice for Correction of Flow Shortfalls

- Forsell explained the flow shortfalls reported to the Sewer Authority by the City of Clear Lake, resulting in a billing shortfall owed to Sewer Authority of around \$28,000 for 2025, and approximately another \$150,000 since 2022 when the shortfalls began. He detailed the methodology used to detect the errors and how it was found and explained why it was not identified sooner. He also outlined steps taken to prevent recurrence. He stated that because of the small flow amounts coming from Clear Lake compared to Clearwater, the percentages that were off were very small, but grew over time with housing growth in Clear Lake. If Clearwater had been off, the amounts would have shown up much sooner because Clearwater's flows are such a large percentage of the total. He noted that both cities were newly calibrated by MRWA to confirm where the error occurred.
- Members spent time discussing the issue and asking further questions about internal practices. Staff noted that Clear Lake should have a surplus in their sewer fund, as utilities are normally billed based on water pumped. So, residents would have been charged for the flows, the amounts were just not reported/submitted to the Sewer Authority. Staff explained what practices could have helped detect the issues sooner, such as the DNR reconciliation report that shows water pumped versus billed, along with regular calibration of the pump system. Clear Lake Members expressed concern that their auditors did not seem to identify this issue and also seemed confused about why calibration wasn't occurring. Staff explained that both cities are members of MRWA, and that MRWA provides this service.
- Clear Lake Members would like to discuss this issue with their city council before the Sewer Authority Board makes a decision on how to address. Members agreed to revisit this issue at the November meeting.

## 7. REPORTS

### a. Board Reports

None.

**b. Staff Reports**

Forsell reported that the root cleaning and slip-lining of the line to the river is starting soon.

**c. FYI – Flow Report, Surcharge Report, Building Permit Reports**

- Smythe noted that a new building permit report was received from Clear Lake.
- There were no questions on the reports.

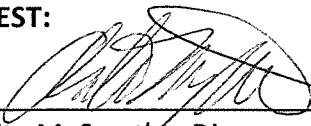
**8. NEXT MEETING DATE**

Next meeting will be November 20, 2025 at the Wastewater Facility.

**9. ADJOURN**

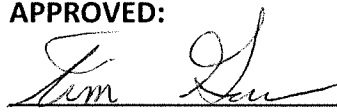
**MOTION** to adjourn by Everett, seconded by Nelson, all voted aye. **MOTION CARRIED 4-0.** Meeting adjourned at 6:51 p.m.

**ATTEST:**



Annita M. Smythe, Director

**APPROVED:**



Tim Goenner, Chair