

CITY OF LA JUNTA)
COUNTY OF OTERO) SS
STATE OF COLORADO)

A Regular Meeting of the Board of Utilities Commissioners of the City of La Junta, Colorado, was called to order by Chairman Frank McKenzie on Tuesday, March 14, 2023, at 4:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers of the Municipal Building.

Roll was called and the following Board Members were present:

Present Joe Ayala, Mayor
 Mike Bourget, Commissioner
 Gary Cranson, Vice-Chairman
 Frank McKenzie, Chairman
 Paul Velasquez, Council Member

Absent: none

Also present: Rick Klein, City Manager
 Bill Jackson, Asst. City Manager
 Phil Malouff Jr., City Attorney
 Melanie Scofield, City Clerk
 Paula Mahoney, Admin. Asst.
 Tom Seaba, Director of Water & Wastewater
 Martin Montoya, Director of Engineering
 Edward Vela, City Council
 Elaine McIntyre, City Council
 Meghan Yergert, City of La Junta
 Bret Coates, City of La Junta
 Betty McFarren, RF Gazette

MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

Chairman McKenzie asked if there were any corrections or additions to the minutes of the Regular Meeting of February 28, 2023. Hearing none, he declared the February 28, 2023 minutes approved as published.

CITIZEN PARTICIPATION

1. Dav Mikals: Takes care of his mom and aunt who are on Medicare and Medicaid. United Healthcare Advantage Plan provides a “healthy benefits” allowance. The City of La Junta was on the approved list but not any longer. Mr. Klein will have someone look into this matter.
2. Mr. Martinez: Had a water leak and was told to present information to the Board for a possible discount of his utilities. Mr. Klein will look into this matter as well.

REPORTS

A. ARPA Board. Gary Cranson gave the following report:

1. **Summary of January 2023 Financial and Operating Statements:** During the month of January, revenue from power sales was better than budget by \$33,979 (1.5%) and total revenues was better than budget by \$46,682. Total cost of goods sold was slightly over budget (0.7%). Purchased power costs are over budget by \$57,022 (6.3%). Transmission expenses are under budget by \$42,481. Net Revenue from Operations for the month was \$476,583. Debt Service Coverage YTD is 1.34X.

2. **Operating Report:** Member Energy sales for January is 2.5% better than budget and about 2.6% better than 2022. All in cost of power to members YTD is \$0.0989 per kWh; 1.4% lower than 2020.
3. **Annual Election of Officers:** The current slate of officers was reelected for another one-year term.
 - President – Lorenz Sutherland
 - Vice President – Ron Clodfelter (Las Animas)
 - Treasurer – Gary Cranson
 - Secretary – Arvenia Morris (ARPA)
4. **Colorado Energy Office Grid Resiliency Funding:** ARPA General Manager briefed the Board on federal and state funding that will become available in 2023. There is approximately \$8.5 million in funding from the Department of Energy (DOE) to Colorado with a portion of the funds directed toward rural communities, defined as cities of less than 25,000 population, and counties of less than 50,00 population. The City should investigate eligibility.
5. **Financial Modeling 2023-2028:** The Board reviewed ARPA's financial modeling for the time period of 2023 through 2028. Our two largest expense items, power supply and debt service, are fairly well known through this period. Debt service is fixed through the life of the bonds (2043), and 60%-65% of our power supply costs have a contracted rate through 2043. The model also includes renewables and wind generation for the self-supply option of our post-2024 contract. Modeling includes rate decreases beginning in 2025. In addition, the modeling incorporates the following:
 - Revenues based on:
 - Budgeted sales for 2023 and remaining flat throughout the modeling period.
 - Rate decreases in 2025, 2026, 2027 totaling about 8%.
 - Power Supply Costs based on:
 - Contracted rate for supplemental power purchases.
 - WAPA-LAP pricing that includes rate increase of 5% in 2025 and 2027.
 - WAPA-CRSP allocation based on a reduction in Lamar's annual allocation and a 6% rate increase in 2024.
 - Wind pricing based on projected Wind Turbine Generation costs.
 - Addition of renewables for self-supply option in our post-2024 contract.
 - Transmission costs based on an overall annual increase of 4%.
 - A&G expenses based on an average increase of 2.2%-2.4% including:
 - Annual increase of 5% for employee, insurance, travel, office, dues, and subscription expenses.
 - Outside legal counsel fixed at \$250,000 annually.
 - General counsel annual increase of 3%.
 - City of Lamar settlement, leases, etc., expenses in accordance with their contractual requirements.
 - Debt service per the bonding requirements and fixed through the time period.
6. **Next Meeting** –May 25, 2023 at Otero College in La Junta.

B. Water & Wastewater Treatment. Tom Seaba gave the following report:

1. R.O. Plant
 - Replaced stage 1 permeate flow controller on RO "C" which was fried after a power bump. The replacement quit working after a second power bump a few days later. These were "shelf stock" controllers, older ones that have been previously repaired/reconditioned. A tech from Winn-Marion is scheduled for an onsite visit to examine and inspect all connections, controllers, etc. The current controllers in use are outdated, as are the flow tubes. New controllers are \$3100. Controller, flow tube, cables are \$6105. There are thirteen of these controllers/flow tubes in the plant.

- Routine maintenance performed on air handling units, caustic injectors, emergency lights, chlorine lines, check balls, injectors, and vibration dampeners, pressure transducers, scale inhibitor injectors, and well static levels.
- New motor installed on Well #12. The well was put back into service after the bacteriological test came back clear.
- Changed out all cartridge filters.
- Checked all SCADA radios. The radio would not transmit to diagnostic computer, then failed transmitting to the plant. Replaced radio in South wellfield using last spare shelf-stock radio. This radio was two years old and out of warranty. Exploring radio repair/replacement options.
- Replaced mechanical seal and carbon bearing on RO “C”.
- Repaired leaks on finished water pumps. Replaced fitting on finish water pump #2 after it failed to close.
- Revised SOP's.
- Meter Reading, building maintenance.

2. Distribution

- Repaired a 2-inch water main on North Highway 109.
- Repaired a 4-inch water main on Cactus Drive.
- Replaced service that was leaking at the connection to the main in the 900 block of Raton.
- Replaced service that was leaking at the connection to the main in the 1400 block of Bellevue.
- After several breaks in succession in the same area, replaced a 12-foot section of pipe in the 1200 block of Grace. Used extended range couplings to allow for movement and settling.
- Installed twenty radio read meters.
- Meter reading and utility billing office generated work orders.

3. Wastewater

- Treated 23.092 million gallons. Removed 35.0 ft³ of screenings and 39.0 ft³ of grit.
- RO concentrate discharge to plant was 15.458 million gallons.
- Jetted 8,962 feet of line for emergency calls and monthly areas of concern. Sixteen emergency calls and eighteen manhole locate requests.
- Ice machine repaired/serviced. Ice is used to cool samples shipped to labs.
- Service and repair on lab box furnace. This box furnace is used to determine the amount of non-combustible and non-volatile material in a sample.
- RH Borden complete a demonstration of their acoustic sewer line and manhole inspection system. We are determining a portion of the older sections of the collection system to use this technology on, including the manholes on the main trunk line running between 1st and 2nd streets to the plant.
- The crews conducting the North La Junta bridge repair project will stage and house their office trailer and equipment on the east side of the WWTP grounds for the duration of that project.
- Placed rock for erosion control and grounds landscaping.
- Additional plant, collection system, and grounds maintenance.

4. Other Notables:

- Safety training concerning fire prevention and emergencies.
- Cyber-security training concerning social engineering red flags.
- Two employees presented at the Girls in the Middle Conference about water quality and treatment.
- The North La Junta Bridge project will begin one lane of traffic operations intermittently the week of March 13th. Once the project is fully underway this will become the standard

practice. We will be in continued communication with this team concerning our water and wastewater lines that hang on this bridge.

- Spoke as part of a panel at the 2nd Regional Colorado STAR event Rocky Ford hosted by Acres, USA. This event covered soil health and soil BMP's along with water quality, climatology, reservoir storage, and water availability.
- Continued work on an SRF funding package with CDM Smith.
- Working on a schedule for a pipe assessment on the 18-inch line on the North La Junta bridge.
- Working as a stakeholder on the new LCR Revisions and PFAS regulations. Completing a grant to pay for PFAS testing in our biosolids and a second grant concerning testing possible treatment options, if needed, for PFAS in drinking water and to establish base-line statistics.
- We are in a decade that has promised substantial changes to the federal Safe Drinking Water Act. I believe La Junta and Colorado is positioned well for these changes due to the approach to drinking water regulations and our system over a long period of time.
- A Water Department Master Plan proposed improvements summary is attached.

5. Arkansas Valley Conduit Update

- The SECWCD is still looking at the May-June timeframe to begin discussions on contracts. The biggest unknown is whether they will have finished the Reclamation repayment contract by that time.
- The first load of AVC pipe for the trunk line (federal project) has been ordered and will arrive by May 31. Construction will begin shortly thereafter.
- They are preparing materials for outreach meetings as they finalize reports submitted by their contractor, GMS. The SECWCD AVC committee and their Board will review these at their April meeting and then should be ready to begin scheduling the outreach meetings.
- They had a technical meeting with Avondale to help them align their AVC work program (upgrades in their water system to accept AVC water and to reduce system water loss) with Pueblo County funding. They also met with Otero County Commissioners in February to advise them of changes in the Fiscal Agent Agreement and to discuss funding strategies for the smaller water companies. I was not there and am not privy to what those changes are or what funding strategies were discussed.
- President Biden's budget for FY '24 was released on 03/09/2023 and includes \$10,059 million for ongoing work on the Arkansas Valley Conduit. While the SECWCD had hoped the line item request would be higher, please remember that a second disbursement of funds from the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) will be forthcoming this spring and they will be pushing for a large bucket of funding from that. Last year, the IIJA disbursement to the project was \$60 million. The SECWCD will continue to work with legislative delegations to ensure levels of funding are sufficient to accelerate and complete this project in far less time than the original 15-year schedule. Total federal funding to date totals more than \$111 million.

C. Electric Department. Bill Jackson gave the following report:

1. Line Crew

- Daily reads, disconnects and maintenance.
- Some older equipment failed at the light plant substation. The crew did some repairs to the load side of the LP52-4 breaker and we were able to get the breaker back online.
- A 1000 kVA pad mount transformer was installed at Lewis Bolt and Nut. When the electricians are finished with their side, we will put it online.
- We responded to a house fire at 208 Harriet Avenue. We had to disconnect the service to the house.
- There was a power outage on 02/11/23 at 2:30 a.m. Customers on the LP52-4 and the LP52-3 experienced the outage because at the time, the two circuits were tied together. The cause of the outage was a phase-to-phase fault by a tree branch.

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- We responded to the Fairway Restaurant as they had half power. We discovered a blown cutout; it was re-fused and the power was restored.
- There was a call that sparks were coming from the power line in front of the old Loma Vista Medical Center. There was a bad hotline clamp.
- Three solid cutout blades were replaced with a fused cutout on the G52-10 circuit, so that in the event of a fault it would be isolated.

2. SOLAR Accounts

- The total kWh returned to the system was 5,641, from 12 customers. A total of \$282.05 was rebated at the avoided costs. There are currently 22 solar customers.

3. System Update

- Upcoming big project: plant breakers and get away tower lines routed throughout the plant. The circuit will be rerouted to bypass the tower.

D. Sanitation. Martin Montoya gave the following report:

1. February 2023

Item	Year to Date Total				February			
	2022	2023	Diff	% Diff	2022	2023	Diff	% Diff
Special Pick-Ups (Quantity)	6	7	(13.00)	14.29	6	5	(1.00)	(16.67)
40-yd Boxes (Rental & Service)	1	4	(5.00)	75.00	1	2	1.00	50.00
20-yd Boxes (Rental & Service)	3	5	(8.00)	40.00	3	1	(2.00)	(66.67)
40-yd Box (Service)	11	35	(46.00)	68.57	10	18	8.00	44.44
20-yd Box (Service)	15	7	(22.00)	(53.33)	15	2	(13.00)	(86.67)
Overage on Boxes (Days and/or Weight)	13	19	(32.00)	31.58	13	6	(7.00)	(53.85)
Compactor Box (Service)	3	8	(11.00)	62.50	3	4	1.00	25.00
Transfer Station Open Top (tons)	20.17	53.89	(74.06)	62.57	20.17	23.05	2.88	12.49
Transfer Station Compactor (tons)	2.86	14.75	(17.61)	80.61	2.86	4.21	1.35	32.07
Replaced Tote	60	8	(68.00)	(86.67)	60	5	(55.00)	(91.67)
Replaced Lid	0	4	4.00	0.00	0	4	4.00	0.00
Additional Tote	0	3	3.00	0.00	0	3	3.00	0.00
Repaired/Replaced Dumpsters (Quantity)	0	0	0.00	0.00	0	0	0.00	0.00

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Item	Year To Date Total				January			
	2022	2023	Diff	Change	2022	2023	Diff	% Diff
Otero County Landfill (tons)	467.88	522.03	54.15	54.15	467.88	522.03	54.15	10.37
Southeast & East Central Recycling (tons)	20.76	9.7	(11.06)	(11.06)	20.76	9.7	(11.06)	(53.28)
Clean Valley Recycling Curbside (tons)	4.29	3.68	(0.61)	(0.61)	4.29	3.68	(0.61)	(14.22)
Clean Valley Recycling Trailer (tons)	1.47	1.88	0.41	0.41	1.47	1.88	0.41	21.81
Clean Valley Recycling E-Waste (tons)	0	0	0.00	0.00	0	0	N/A	0.00

NEW BUSINESS

A. Review of Rate Study. There was quite a lot of information provided in the rate study done by JK Engineering. It was decided to schedule a work session on Tuesday, March 28th at 4:00 p.m. Chairman McKenzie asked the Board to especially focus on the water fund.

B. City Manager's Comments.

1. There is a webinar tomorrow from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. on the Colorado River.

C. Governing Body's Comments.

1. Vice-Chairman Cranson: Asked for the report he requested in order to do some modeling. Would also like a digital copy of the revised submissions from John Krajewski.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 4:55 p.m.

ATTEST:

CITY OF LA JUNTA

Melanie R. Scofield, City Clerk

Frank McKenzie, Chairman