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3/29/24

HARRISON COUNTY UTILITY AUTHORITY
BOARD MEETING
March 21, 2024

Be it remembered that a meeting of the Harrison County Utility Authority Board of Directors was held on March 21, 2024 at 9:00 a.m. at the Harrison County Utility Authority Board Room, at 10271 Express Drive in Gulfport, Mississippi. In attendance were:

BOARD AND STAFF:

- Mayor Billy Hewes, City of Gulfport, Director
- Mayor Jimmy Rafferty, City of Pass Christian, Director
- Mayor Andrew "Fofu" Gilich, City of Biloxi, Director
- Mayor George Bass, City of Long Beach, Director
- Mr. Al Gombos, representing the City of D'Iberville
- Supervisor Marlin Ladner, Harrison County (1), Director
- Supervisor Dan Cuevas, Harrison County (2), Director
- Mr. James Simpson, Wise Carter, Attorneys and Esquire
- Mr. John Wilson, Executive Director, HCUA
- Ms. Cindy Breaux, Chief Financial Officer, HCUA,
- Mr. Alan Lane, Solid Waste Manager, HCUA
- Mr. Sam Broom, Engineering Construction Manager, HCUA
- Ms. Marie Ostrander, Office Manager, HCUA
- Ms. Bridgett Payton-Boone, Assistant, HCUA

ABSENT:

AUDIENCE:

- Tammi Blackwell, The Focus Group
- Jenna Case, The Focus Group
- Kevin McCumby, H2O Innovation
- Shawn Wozencraft, Garver
- Nick Quave, SafeWater Technologies
- Makayla Roberts, Pelican Waste
- Jaclyn Turner, Harrison County

Letters of Designations are attached hereto as exhibit "A".

There being a quorum sufficient to transact business of the Authority, Mayor James "Jimmy" Rafferty, representing The City of Pass Christian, called the meeting to order. The following proceedings were had and done.

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A. Opening Prayer and Pledge of Allegiance

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B. Public Comments

Mayor James "Jimmy" Rafferty opened the floor for public comments.

There were no public comments.

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C. Approval of the Claims Docket dated March 21, 2024

Mr. Al Gombos made a motion to approve the Claims Docket dated March 21, 2024, seconded by Mayor Andrew "Fofu" Gilich. A vote resulted in the following:

Biloxi	voted	aye
Gulfport	voted	aye
D'Iberville	voted	aye
Long Beach	voted	aye
Harrison County (1)	voted	aye
Harrison County (2)	voted	aye
Pass Christian	voted	aye

The motion passed. A copy of the Claims Docket is attached hereto as exhibit "B".

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D. Approval of Board Meeting Minutes dated March 7, 2024

Mr. Al Gombos made a motion to approve the Board Meeting Minutes dated February 1, 2024, seconded by Mayor Andrew "Fofu" Gilich. A vote resulted in the following:

Biloxi	voted	aye
Gulfport	voted	aye
D'Iberville	voted	aye
Long Beach	voted	aye
Harrison County (1)	voted	aye
Harrison County (2)	voted	aye
Pass Christian	voted	aye

Supervisor Marlin Ladner asked for clarification on the vote regarding Item E1a to table discussion and approval of the Emergency and minor Services Contract. In the vote "nay" should have been listed as "aye" and "nay" listed as "aye". Changes will be made to Board Meeting Minutes Dated March 7, 2024 and brought before the Board at the next meeting.

The motion passed. A copy of Board Meeting Minutes dated March 7, 2024, is attached hereto as exhibit "C".

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E. Financial Report

Ms. Cindy Breaux reported that she is currently working on completing the Audit and beginning work on the 2025 Budget.

No action required. A copy of the Financial Report for February 29, 2024 is attached hereto as exhibit "D".

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F. Marketing Report

Ms. Tami Blackwell with The Focus Group reported that we continue to increase traffic on the HCUA website and Facebook pages. We had another record month for the recycling rate at 43.1%. Our Facebook ads have reached 43,000 people with 2,560 clicks on those ads and drove over 2,500 users to our website. There are three videos that follow the recycling process from curbside to facility, the first of which has been posted.

Mayor Jimmy Rafferty asked about the comments that we see on the Facebook page from people asking about getting a larger recycling cart and what we are doing about that. Mr. John Wilson explained that when we started this Solid Waste contract we committed to the recycling process and using the existing 36 gallon carts out to the residents. The next size up is 65 gallons but there is a cost in upgrading and we have looked into grants and funding to cover this cost but have not found anything yet that would help us cover that cost. Residents are able to get additional recycling carts (second cart) at a cost of \$63.00 a year if need be. Mayor George Bass inquired as to what grants we had looed into and Mr. Alan Lane explained that there are grants through DEQ that are geared towards communities that are starting their Recycling programs, not for existing ones looking to get larger carts. The cost to upgrade the 36 gallon recycling carts to a 65 gallon cart would be around 3 million dollars.

No action taken. The Board accepted the Marketing Report as submitted by The Focus Group. A copy of the Marketing Report is attached hereto as exhibit "E".

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G. Action Items

1. Old Business

G1a. Emergency & Minor Construction Services Contract - Approval

Mr. Al Gombos made a motion to approve the Emergency & Minor Construction Services Contract - Approval; this was seconded by Mayor George Bass. A vote resulted in the following:

Biloxi	voted	aye
Gulfport	voted	aye
D'Iberville	voted	aye
Long Beach	voted	aye
Harrison County (1)	voted	aye
Harrison County (2)	voted	aye
Pass Christian	voted	aye

The motion passed. A copy of the Marketing Report is attached hereto as exhibit "F".

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G1b. PFAS (Forever Chemicals)

Mr. Jim Simpson reported back that there are no deadlines facing the Board regarding involvement in the Class Action Lawsuit discussed in the March 7, 2024 Board Meeting. There are two Classes of people involved in this lawsuit, the first ones being those who have tested and have found contamination, and the second is basically everyone else, which is where we fall. The deadline for testing and filing claims for the second class is mid-2026. Mr. Jim Simpson has all of the necessary documents to register HCUA in the second class.

Mr. John Wilson reported that SafeWater Technologies have collected water samples at East and West side wells and we are awaiting results. We have also contacted a lab that also performs testing for PFAS chemicals and they are sending us a sample kit so we can also test those same sites as a redundancy check and to ensure we are documenting every part of this process. A copy of the EPA's preliminary report for PFAS is included in this Board package and based on what Mr. John Wilson has read and looked into there are no set limits for these chemicals, there are not direct links to any illnesses or effects, and there are no set Baselines for what is the "normal" amount of these PFAS found in the environment and what is an abnormal or dangerous level. But without a definitive link to health issues, it's hard to determine what is acceptable. Mr. John Wilson has spoken with the local Health Department representative who share that they have already done testing around certain high-risk facilities and locations (airports, Keesler Air Force Base, Navy Sea Bee Base, etc) and they have not

found anything yet that concerns them. The Mississippi Rural Water Association are of the same view as us, that this is still in process and something to be monitored.

Mr. John Wilson also wanted to reiterate that there seem to be more issues with PFAS contamination in Surface Water water systems and sources, such as reservoirs and the shallow wells most common among private residences. Contamination of any form is more likely in these type systems. HUCA wells are far deeper and pull from far deeper sources, surface contamination doesn't make it to deep source wells. The EPA reports and the Sun Herald Article that has been discussed before has not specified or differentiated between surface/shallow water sources and deep water sources when talking about PFAS contamination in the water system, and that's a problem. Another potential problem for everyone to keep in mind is that EPA isn't just talking about potential PFAS contamination in water, but also in wastewater treatment systems and in solid waste; those two areas are far more likely to affect HCUA.

No action required. A copy of the referenced PFAS documentation is attached hereto as exhibit "G".

2. New Business

G2a. New Waste Tire Grant

Mr. Al Gombos made a motion to approve the New Waste Tire Grant; this was seconded by Supervisor Marlin Ladner. A vote resulted in the following:

Biloxi	voted	aye
Gulfport	voted	aye
D'Iberville	voted	aye
Long Beach	voted	aye
Harrison County (1)	voted	aye
Harrison County (2)	voted	aye
Pass Christian	voted	aye

Supervisor Marlin Ladner only asked for clarification that the "personnel" funding listed in the Grant was in fact coming back to HIUCA to cover our administrative involvement, which it is.

The motion passed. A copy of the New Waste Tire Grant is attached hereto as exhibit "H".

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G2b. Mississippi Sound Coalition Resolution

Supervisor Marlin Ladner made a motion to discuss the Mississippi Sound Coalition Resolution; this was seconded by Mayor Billy Hewes. A vote resulted in the following:

Biloxi	voted	aye
Gulfport	voted	aye
D'Iberville	voted	aye
Long Beach	voted	aye
Harrison County (1)	voted	aye
Harrison County (2)	voted	aye
Pass Christian	voted	aye

Mayor Billy Hewes asked Mr. Jim Simpson to please explain the two resolutions that were in front of the Board. Mr. Jim Simpson explained that the first resolution, asked that HCUA join the Mississippi Sound Coalition (MSC), sign the included MOU showing that we support the cause and express concern over what has been happening with the spillway operations. Then, it asks that we add a line item to our budget in 2025 to appropriate money to help the cause, over a half million dollars. The second resolution says all of the same things, but it removes any financial obligation.

Mayor Billy Hewes then added his concerns regarding HCUA's financial obligation to the MSC; that HCUA has a very specific responsibility in respect to wastewater and solid waste and any financial contribution or involvement with a non-profit or organization which falls out side of that particular responsibility is inappropriate. That being said he would recommend we sign the second resolution which outlines our support for the cause, but does not make any financial requests of HCUA and our Members.

Mr. Marlin Ladner wanted to remind the Board and audience that any funds appropriated thru the HCUA are finds that have come from the Member Agencies; that there is no separate HCUA pot of money

Mayor Billy Hewes made a motion to approve the Second Mississippi Sound Coalition Resolution; this was seconded by Mayor George Bass. A vote resulted in the following:

Biloxi	voted	aye
Gulfport	voted	aye
D'Iberville	voted	aye
Long Beach	voted	aye
Harrison County (1)	voted	aye
Harrison County (2)	voted	aye
Pass Christian	voted	aye

The motion passed. A copy of the Mississippi Sound Coalition Resolution is attached hereto as exhibit "I".



H. Solid Waste Report

Mr. Alan Lane explained that the recycling participation rate is at 43.5%.

No action taken. A copy of the Solid Waste Report is attached hereto as exhibit "J".



I. Executive Director's Report

Mr. John Wilson reported that the UV System at the North Gulfport WWTF is back online and fully functional.



J. Executive Session

There was no need for Executive Session.



K. Adjourn – At this time Supervisor Dan Cuevas made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Mayor Andrew "Fofu" Gilich. A vote resulted in the following:

Biloxi	voted	aye
Gulfport	voted	aye
D'Iberville	voted	aye
Long Beach	voted	aye
Harrison County (1)	voted	aye
Harrison County (2)	voted	aye
Pass Christian	voted	aye

The motion to adjourn passed.





Harrison County Utility Authority



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