

Augusta County Service Authority  
Regular Board Meeting, Thursday, June 17, 2021, at 1:30 p.m.  
Board Meeting Room

PRESENT: Andrew C. Middleton, Chairman, North River District  
Garry R. Gordon, Vice Chairman, Middle River District, *via Zoom from Ocean Isle, NC - Vacation*  
Harvey Almarode, South River District  
Allen Dahl, Beverley Manor District  
Matthew Egeli, Wayne District  
Phil Martin, Executive Director  
Brent Canterbury, Board Treasurer  
Jean Marshall, Board Secretary

ABSENT: Michael L. Shull, Riverheads District  
Timothy Simmons, Pastures District

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CALL TO ORDER

The Chairman called the meeting to order at 1:33 p.m.

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PUBLIC RATE HEARING

Dr. Middleton opened the Public Hearing at 1:34 p.m. The purpose of this hearing is to consider an increase in water and sewer user rates that will become effective July 1, 2021.

This hearing and the proposed rate changes were properly advertised in the Daily News Leader and in the News Virginian on Thursday, May 27, 2021 and Wednesday, June 2, 2021.

Staff reminded the Board they are tasked with setting and maintaining rates and fees that are high enough to comply with bond requirements and all state laws, as well as being fairly structured for rate payers, and sufficient to meet the Authority’s future capital needs. The proposed budget for FY-2022 follows a four-year plan set forth in the Service Authority’s rate model. The budget proposes an increase in water variable rates of 3% and an increase in sewer variable rate of 3%. The increase for the average residential user will be \$3.60 bi-monthly. The average combined public water and sewer residential bill will be \$162.18 bi-monthly. An unmetered residential sewer bill will be \$97.95 bi-monthly.

With no members of the public present to comment, the Public Hearing was declared closed at 1:43 p.m.

After discussion, Mr. Dahl moved, seconded by Mr. Almarode to adopt the proposed user rates as advertised, effective for all bills created after July 1, 2021.

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Vote was as follows:

Yeas: Middleton, Gordon, Almarode, Dahl, and Egeli,  
Nays: None

Motion approved.

There being no further business, Mr. Almarode moved, seconded by Mr. Egeli to adjourn the Public Hearing at 1:44 p.m.

Vote was as follows:

Yeas: Middleton, Gordon, Almarode, Dahl, and Egeli,  
Nays: None

Motion approved.

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## ADOPTION OF AGENDA

Staff requested the Agenda be revised to add Small Scale Solar Facility as Item #14 and Gregory Thomasson Resolution as Item #15, with remaining items following subsequently.

Mr. Almarode moved, seconded by Mr. Dahl to adopt the revised Agenda.

Vote was as follows:

Yeas: Middleton, Gordon, Almarode, Dahl, and Egeli,  
Nays: None

Motion approved.

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## APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Almarode moved, seconded by Mr. Egeli, to approve the Minutes of the Regular Board Meeting of May 20, 2021, and the Minutes of the Called Meeting of June 8, 2021, which have been mailed to the members.

Vote was as follows:

Yeas: Middleton, Gordon, Almarode, Dahl, and Egeli,  
Nays: None

Motion approved.

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## MATTERS PRESENTED BY THE PUBLIC

No members of the public were in attendance to make comments and no public comments were brought forth by Staff.

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EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR’S HIGHLIGHTS

Mr. Dahl asked how readings from the new cellular meters are received by the Service Authority.

Staff stated readings are automatically sent each day from the meters to our meter reading website using cell phone towers. Staff can access this website from the office to generate bills and answer customer questions. Customers also have access to the usage information for their account through the EyeOnWater website or mobile app.

Mr. Dahl asked if the new meters are equipped with a flow indicator.

Staff stated the new meters are equipped with a flow indicator, allowing the customer to identify unexpected usage such as a potential leak. The meters also include a display showing the current meter reading. There are some conditions which may prevent the meter reading from being transmitted to the reading website, such as a car being parked over the meter.

Mr. Dahl asked if the new meters can be remotely turned off.

Staff stated the new meters cannot be turned off remotely.

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PROGRESS REPORT

The Progress Report for May is on file in the Secretary’s office and was reviewed with the Board.

Dr. Middleton asked if the Service Authority has an exclusive easement for the Wilco sewer line project.

Staff stated there is an exclusive 10’ easement for the Wilco project.

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COMMITTEE REPORTS

No reports were given by the committees.

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BOARD ELECTIONS

The Nominating Committee presented the following slate of officers for Board approval to take effect July 1, 2021:

- |               |                      |
|---------------|----------------------|
| Chairman      | Dr. Andrew Middleton |
| Vice Chairman | Mr. Garry Gordon     |

Treasurer Mr. Brent Canterbury  
Secretary Mrs. Jean Marshall

There being no nominations from the floor the Board unanimously approved Dr. Middleton as Chairman, Mr. Gordon as Vice Chairman, Mr. Canterbury as Treasurer, and Mrs. Marshall as Secretary.

Mr. Dahl moved, seconded by Mr. Almarode to recommend appointments be filled as presented.

Vote was as follows:

Yeas: Middleton, Gordon, Almarode, Dahl, and Egeli,  
Nays: None

Motion approved.

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ADOPTION OF THE FY-22 BUDGET

Mr. Egeli moved, seconded by Mr. Almarode to accept the budget as submitted.

Vote was as follows:

Yeas: Middleton, Gordon, Almarode, Dahl, and Egeli,  
Nays: None

Motion approved.

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UPDATE ON CYBER SECURITY PREPAREDNESS

Staff reminded the Board at the May 20<sup>th</sup> ACSA Board Meeting, the question was asked about the progress Staff has made toward making the Service Authority’s computer and operating systems more secure. Staff has been working on several fronts to enhance the Authority’s cybersecurity position. Without disclosing any Critical Infrastructure Information, the following updates were given on the progress:

1. General protection
  - A. Service Authority users and devices continue to follow the principle of “least privilege”. Under “least privilege”, users only receive the minimum permissions needed for their jobs. This helps prevent the installation of potentially malicious software and contain the risk of ransomware.
  - B. The rollout of Windows 10 has been completed. The existing patching software has been updated to deploy new versions of Windows 10 once they are tested. These updates ensure Service Authority computers remain on current and supported software.

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- C. The firewalls at the remote sites have been replaced with models that include additional threat detection and prevention capabilities.
  - D. A third replication site for encrypted backups has been created in the cloud, ensuring availability of backups in the event of a disaster.
2. Protection from remote access
- A. Directly connected USB air-cards have been eliminated.
  - B. Remote Desktop access has been restricted to a specific set of users and devices.
  - C. Mobile access of GIS maps has been migrated to use the same user credentials as the computers. This ensures a stronger password that is changed regularly.
3. User account protection
- A. Cybersecurity end user training continues.
  - B. Two-Factor authentication has been enabled for all user and administrator accounts when attempting to login.
  - C. User passwords have increased length and complexity requirements.
4. Next Steps
- A. Continue to implement the recommendations from the AWWA cybersecurity assessment tool. Top priorities include updating the IT policies and procedures and reviewing the current user and device inventories.
  - B. Deploy a mobile device management (MDM) system to ensure Service Authority owned cell phones and tablets are patched and have basic security requirements met.

Mr. Egeli asked if a timeline could be given for the completion of implementing the recommendations made by the AWWA assessment tool and when the MDM system would be complete.

Staff stated the Service Authority is partnering with Augusta County on the MDM system. Augusta County has already purchased the license for the system. The system will be ready for implementation within the next couple months. The AWWA cybersecurity tool is broken down into different priorities. Currently, the Service Authority is working on the items included in the highest priority group.

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#### SMALL SCALE SOLAR FACILITY

Staff stated Wayne Avenue Solar 1, LLC has submitted a request to Augusta County for a Special Use Permit to install solar panels at 157 Wayne Avenue in Stuarts Draft. The total parcel acreage is approximately 170 acres and the proposed area to be developed with photovoltaic panels is approximately 45.6 acres. The property is in the Urban Service Area and is designated as Industrial Use in Augusta County's Comprehensive Plan. There is a 6" water

main and a 24” sanitary sewer main running through the property. The Stuarts Draft WWTP is located adjacent to the property.

Staff explained if the Special Use Permit is approved, the potential loss of revenue for the Service Authority would be approximately \$500,000 - \$600,000, assuming an industry comparable to the size of Nibco could not locate to this property because it was approved for a solar facility.

Mr. Dahl expressed concern on the process used to calculate the affect a solar project would have on Service Authority revenue. The current process is speculative and does not consider the overall amount of land available for development in a general area. Mr. Dahl did not feel the Service Authority could guarantee a given property would be developed in the future. The Service Authority needs to give the County an accurate estimation of its potential revenue loss, which could be zero.

Staff stated it would be helpful if the County designated a certain percentage of available land in the Urban Service Area to be used for solar facilities. Once the designated percentage has been used, no other solar facilities would be allowed.

Board members agreed the calculation system should be improved, but also felt decisions regarding solar facilities should not be placed upon the Service Authority. The Board directed Staff to submit to the County a potential loss of revenue in the amount of \$0 - \$600,000 for this solar project.

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GREGORY THOMASSON RECOGNITION AND RESOLUTION

Staff presented Gregory Thomasson with a plaque in recognition of his 12 years of dedicated service with the Service Authority.

Dr. Middleton presented Mr. Thomasson with the following Resolution:

**WHEREAS**, Gregory Thomasson has faithfully served as a loyal and dedicated employee of the Augusta County Service Authority from March 2009 through June 2021;

**WHEREAS**, Gregory Thomasson began his career in 2009 as Director of Solid Waste Management;

**WHEREAS**, Gregory Thomasson has performed his duties and responsibilities in an exemplary manner striving to enhance the Augusta County Service Authority and the Augusta Regional Landfill, thereby benefiting the citizens of Augusta County, the City of Staunton, and the City of Waynesboro;

**WHEREAS**, Gregory Thomasson has earned the respect and admiration of his co-workers; and

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**WHEREAS**, the Augusta County Service Authority has greatly benefited from the loyalty and devotion of Gregory Thomasson and desires to give due recognition to him for his dedicated service;

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, by the Board of Directors of the Augusta County Service Authority, Gregory Thomasson be recognized and commended for his 12 years of service; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the Secretary of the Board be instructed to incorporate this Resolution into the official minutes of this Board and a copy of this Resolution be presented to Gregory Thomasson and incorporated in the official minutes of this Board.

Signed:

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Dr. Andrew Middleton, Chairman  
Augusta County Service Authority

Signed this 17<sup>th</sup> day of June, 2021

BOARD COMMENTS

Board members thanked Mr. Thomasson for his years of service with the Service Authority and commended him on his superior management of the Augusta Regional Landfill.

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There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 2:41 p.m.

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Board Secretary

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Chairman