



GreenvilleWater

**MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING  
COMMISSIONERS OF PUBLIC WORKS  
Greenville Water  
407 W. Broad Street, Level 2,  
Greenville, South Carolina  
February 4, 2025  
8:30 a.m.**

Commissioners of Public Works in attendance:

Chairman Phillip A. Kilgore, Vice-Chairman James W. Bannister, Debra M. Sofield, Mayor Knox H. White, and John DeWorken. A quorum was present.

Greenville Water Senior Staff in attendance:

Chief Executive Officer Jeff Boss, Chief Administrative Officer Dr. Bob Schmidt, Chief Technology Officer Kenneth Frazier, Director of Operations and Maintenance Mark Hattendorf, Director of Operational Technical Services Jane Arrington, Director of Water Resources Elizabeth Pierczynski, Director of Business Services Steve Miller, Director of Human Resources Lisa Bryant, Director of Communications Pam Flasch, Director of Engineering David Niese, Director of Finance Jacob Polson, Director of Procurement & Contracts Will Bettis, and Attorney Adam Bach.

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The Regular Meeting of the Commissioners of Public Works of the City of Greenville, SC was called to order at 8:30 a.m. by Chairman Kilgore.

**1. WELCOME**

**2. PUBLIC COMMENT**

No comments were presented.

**3. CONSENT AGENDA**

Chairman Kilgore pointed out the minutes presented for approval in the consent agenda included the presence of our friend and Assistant Director of Maintenance Allen White at the last meeting. Since then, we have lost Allen. We grieve for the loss of our friend, and we remember him. His smile and good spirit will be missed. The Commission was mindful of what a loss his passing is to the Greenville Water family.

Chairman Kilgore asked for questions pertaining to the consent agenda items. There being none, he called for approval of the items of the Consent Agenda which were the meeting minutes of the Regular Commission Meeting December 3, 2024, the Water Resources Report, New Development, and New Annexations. Vice-Chairman Bannister moved, seconded by Commissioner Sofield, to approve the items of the consent agenda. The motion passed unanimously.

**4. LEGISLATIVE UPDATE**

Chairman Kilgore welcomed Legislative Liaison Bob Knight to provide an update. Mr. Knight recognized the date as being the fourth week of the General Assembly, adding most of the four weeks had been spent on the accounting error in the financial statements and the energy bill.

Pre-file bills to take note of included one from Representative Joe Bustos from Isle of Palms who entered a bill regarding forever chemicals, stating the Department of Environmental Services (SC DES) would promulgate regulations that forever chemicals can not be discharged into any drinking water source. Representative Gil Gatch of Summerville filed a bill dealing with broadband service which would allow the Department of Transportation to reimburse the relocation of broad band as they reimburse the relocation of water and sewer lines. Representative Brewer refiled the bill to allow the sunset to be extended for water and sewer line relocations on highway projects. The expiration is currently set for June 30, 2026. This bill would extend the reimbursement out five more years. Mr. Knight speculated that it may not get approved this year, but he is hopeful that it will be passed. Senator Ross Turner has filed a bill on behalf of Greenville Water and Spartanburg Water which proposes to allow for some of the employee portion of the pension plan to be paid by the employer. This would be important in recruiting and retention of employees.

#### **5. 2024 YEAREND RECAP AND ENCUMBRANCE CARRYFORWARD**

Chairman Kilgore called on Director of Finance Jacob Polson to present the yearend recap. Mr. Polson pointed out this is the beginning of the work performed by the accounting team as part of yearend. The revenue and expenditures final tally are being worked on, but adjustments are expected during the audit.

Mr. Polson reminded Commissioners that the Chief Executive Officer has the authority to carryforward unspent budget amounts from one year to the next. This presentation was to inform the Commission on what would be carried forward. To be carried forward an item must be in the previous years budget and an order must have been placed, or work must be in progress at yearend. Mr. Polson presented a list of items and amounts to be carried forward.

#### **6. SUMMARY OF BEST PLACES TO WORK IN SOUTH CAROLINA**

Chairman Kilgore invited Director of Human Resources Lisa Bryant to give a report on one of the best places in South Carolina to work. Ms. Bryant began by presenting the Commission with a couple of awards that Greenville Water had recently received. These awards were focused on safety. Both awards were from the National Safety Council. They demonstrated Greenville Water's efforts towards having a safe workplace. The first award was for 1 million hours worked without a preventable lost workday. The second award was the 2024 Occupational Excellence Award. This award was representative of the reportable injury rate. Even though Greenville Water does not have lost workdays, there are certain injuries that the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) requires be recorded and reported. There were only 4 recordable injuries in 2024 which resulted in an injury rate of 1.6. The national average for the water industry is a 5.4 injury rate. Ms. Bryant explained that these awards are due to a demonstrated effort of the leadership team, Safety Manager Steve Lee, and all other team members making safety a priority.

Under the Best Companies Group there is a product that Greenville Water participated in called The Best Places to Work (BPTW) Employee Engagement Survey. Team members were encouraged to complete the survey honestly, without fear of retribution. Chief Executive Officer Jeff Boss made sure everyone understood it was not about winning but about making Greenville Water better. This encouragement resulted in a 69% participation rate. BPTW required at least 40% to move forward in the process. A good response rate is considered 50-60%.

Ms. Bryant presented the strengths, challenges, and movable middle focus areas determined by the survey. An action plan was developed with a goal and implementation for each of the challenges.

## **7. 2024 BUSINESS SERVICES ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

Chairman Kilgore asked Director of Business Services Steve Miller to provide an update on the 2024 Business Services accomplishments and how the team improved customer service. During the 2024/25 budget process, with leadership support, 11 new career ladder opportunities were created for team members. Previously, the department was very flat. There were customer service representatives (CSR), field service representatives (FSR), an assistant supervisor and a supervisor. The new career ladder resulted in the addition of a specialist career path which requires higher skills, improved retention and the ultimate goal is that it will improve the service level to customers.

The concentration over the past year was improved processes with the same resources all while experiencing growth. A Business Process Review (BPR) was conducted. All business processes were reviewed, made more efficient, and documentation was updated. Leak process enhancements were also implemented. Previously Field Operations were the first responders for all business hour leaks. Now Field Services are the first responders. Response is quicker with more FSRs. A new subdivision meter set process was developed. Builders and Developers will be setting the meter boxes. FSRs will then set the meters. This will begin March 1, 2025. The current Cisco phone system is out of date, end of life. The IT department is helping to upgrade the system to the 8X8 Platform.

Mr. Miller provided data to support accomplishments achieved by the improved business processes that have already been implemented. Results included:

### **Field Services Accomplishments**

1. Reduced Miss Reads by **10.23%**
  - 2024: 0.79%
  - 2023: 0.88%
2. Reduced Estimated Reads by **63.42%**
  - 2024: 0.015% (32/mo.)
  - 2023: 0.041%
3. Reduced Transmitter Failures by **13.64%**
  - 2024: 0.76%
  - 2023: 0.88%
4. Reduced Truck Rolls by **3.33%**
  - 2024: 163,819 (13,651/mo.)
  - 2023: 169,456
5. Conducted **158** Large Meter Tests




### **Billing Services Accomplishments**



1. 2,333,191 bills delivered
  - With the highest level of accuracy possible.
2. Set up and tested all new rates in the CIS
  - Assisted with customer communication via bill inserts and website updates.
3. Developed new 2025 billing calendar
  - State of the art for water utilities.

**Customer Service Accomplishments**

1. In-bound Calls Reduced by **10.10%**:
  - 2024: 230,555 (14,275/mo.)
  - 2023: 256,451
2. Walk-in Customers Reduced by **6.24%**
  - 2024: 17,849 (1,487/mo.)
  - 2023: 19,245
3. Drive-thru Customers Reduced by **12.03%**
  - 2024: 23,449 (1,954/mo.)
  - 2023: 26,656
4. Non-pay Accounts Reduced by **10.64%**
  - 2024: 23,449 (1,954/mo.)
  - 2023: 26,656



Mr. Miller summarized the accomplishments resulted in improved opportunities for team members, improved operational efficiencies, maintained and/or improved service levels, all while experiencing high growth in the Greenville area.

## **8. CHIEF EXECUTIVE REPORT**

Chairman Kilgore called on Mr. Boss to present the executive report. Mr. Boss added to Mr. Miller's previous report stating the new meter program will free up the Field Operations team members to work on leaks and repairs. A goal established in 2024 was for Field Operations to respond to reported leaks within two hours. Not repair the leak but respond to the leak determining what is happening and schedule workorders. Mr. Miller added that a sign is now placed at leaks. The sign states Greenville Water has responded to the leak, and it is pending repair.

The South Carolina Department of Transportation (SCDOT) road replacement in the watershed is ongoing. Silt fencing has been placed to help with silt going into the lake. The turbidity is coming down but is not yet back to pre-hurricane levels. There is still a lot of work to be done in the watersheds. Chairman Kilgore asked if any impact has been seen in treatment of the water. Mr. Boss stated treating the turbidity has increased the cost of chemicals. The turbidity spiked up to level 10 but has come down to level 2. Typical turbidity prior to Hurricane Helene was around level 0.2. The turbidity changes are impacting North Saluda. The Table Rock watershed is back to normal.

Mr. Boss thanked Chairman Kilgore for recognizing the passing of team member Allen White. Mr. Boss shared a quick story about the Simpsonville Water Tank that has been out of service for eight years. Allen's number one project that he continuously brought to management's attention was to get the tank torn down because it was an eyesore when he left church every Sunday. Mr. Boss said the project is included in the capital improvement program for 2025 and the tank will be taken down in memory of Allen.

## **9. EXECUTIVE SESSION**

Vice-Chairman Bannister moved, seconded by Commissioner Sofield, to enter executive session to take up litigation and contractual matters. The motion passed unanimously.

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(Executive Session)


Vice-Chairman Bannister moved, seconded by Commissioner Sofield, to go out of Executive Session. The motion passed unanimously. No action was taken.

**10. COMMISSION COMMENTS**

No comments were presented.

**11. ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned 9:50 a.m.

  
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Phillip A. Kilgore, Chairman

  
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Kimberly Haulter, Executive Assistant