



GreenvilleWater

MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING  
 COMMISSIONERS OF PUBLIC WORKS  
 Greenville Water  
 407 W. Broad Street, Level 2,  
 Greenville, South Carolina  
 September 9, 2025  
 8:30 a.m.

Commissioners of Public Works in attendance:

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

Greenville Water Senior Staff in attendance:

Chief Executive Officer Jeff Boss, Chief Operations Officer Jeff Phillips, Chief Administrative Officer Dr. Bob Schmidt, Director of Operational Technical Services Dr. Jane Arrington, Director of Operations and Maintenance Mark Hattendorf, Director of Water Resources Elizabeth Pierczynski, Director of Business Services Steve Miller, Director of Information Technology Brad Treas, Director of Human Resources Lisa Bryant, Director of Engineering David Niesse, Director of Finance Jacob Polson, Accounting Manager Brandi Cawthorn 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 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 August 5, 2025, the Water Resources Report, New Development, and New Annexations. Commissioner Sofield moved, seconded by Mayor White, 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 on legislative activity. Mr. Knight stated there was no activity until legislators return for the fall. There is hope that the bill regarding utility reimbursements for infrastructure changes by SC Department of Transportation will be picked back up. There was a question about fluoride in the water and Mr. Knight expects it to continue to come up.

There are predictions that there will be earmarks next year. Now would be the time to present projects to the legislative delegation. Mr. Knight encouraged the Commission to think about legislative luncheon or breakfast event every year or two. The last event was in December 2024. Chairman Kilgore and Commissioner Sofield agreed to discuss ideas for an event.

## **5. HUMAN RESOURCES UPDATE**

Chairman Kilgore called on Director of Human Resources Lisa Bryant for an update. Commissioner Sofield complimented Ms. Bryant on a wonderful team member event at the Greenville Drive Fluor Field. Ms. Bryant said she had been contacted by the Greenville Drive staff to share that Greenville Water has a great culture. Her contact throughout the event made his way around the Furman 500 area several times. He explained the culture of a company can be sensed by spending time in that area seeing how people interact with each other. He was quite pleased with what he saw with Greenville Water. Ms. Bryant conveyed kudos to everyone in the Commission room who daily help reinforce that culture.

Greenville Water participated in the 2025 “Best Places to Work” employee engagement survey in May of 2025. The results were tabulated and recently provided. There was a 70% participation rate (176 team members), which was slightly higher than last year. A “good” response is 50-60%, so this was better than good.

Strengths are the areas where there is clear, positive momentum. These are experiences team members deem true and reliable about Greenville Water. These areas are workplace safety, the overall healthcare and benefits package, and job satisfaction. These results reflect a well-supported workforce with robust core offerings.

Challenges are areas that can improve and might require a long-term strategy to bring about improvements. The challenges were not surprising. No matter the location, a core theme is people want more pay and need more staff. Communication continues to be on the radar to work on and expressing honest opinions without fear.

The moveable middles are the parts team members are on the fence about, which means they could go either way. Focus on these areas can help improve team member experience. These areas included communication (specifically impacting individual jobs or departments before they happen) and recognition. New communication strategies have been implemented over the past six months to improve internal communications. Also, a new recognition program has been created called Crystal Clear on the spot recognition. Department heads and managers can recognize an employee in their department or in another department with a lunch gift card as a means of saying thank you on the spot when they see someone going above and beyond.

Ms. Bryant shared the action plan focus areas as the following:

- **Continue Rebuilding Confidence in Pay, Rewards, and Recognition Systems:** Fair pay, recognition, and reward clarity are central to engagement. Addressing dissatisfaction and uncertainty ensures employees feel equitably valued, reducing turnover and strengthening long-term organizational trust.
- **Continue enhancing Communication with a focus on change that impacts departments/jobs:** Clear communication and safe dialogue reduce resistance to change and build trust. Strengthening these areas ensures employees feel respected, valued, and aligned with organizational decisions.

## **6. OPERATIONS BUDGET FOR 2026**

Mayor White joined the meeting via telephone at 8:55 am. Chairman Kilgore called on Director of Finance Jacob Polson to present the proposed operations budget for 2026. Mr. Polson explained that in previous years the operating budget had been prepared every two years. Going forward staff would prefer to prepare the budget annually, providing two benefits. The first benefit is the increase in accuracy of pricing for goods and services. The second benefit is the flexibility to make sure all costs necessary for operations are included within the budget.

The budget preparation process began a few months back. The first draft was prepared by the accounting staff, department managers and directors. This version was reviewed by the chief executives and then by Chief Executive Officer Jeff Boss. The final version was then presented to the Commission. The financial models, maintained by First Tyron and Raftelis, are utilized within the budget. The methodology is conservative. The budget does adhere to the existing Greenville Water financial policies.

Mr. Polson presented an overview of the entire budget and then broke it down in detail by revenue, expenditures, and capital outlay. Chairman Kilgore asked if the plan was to stay with an annual budget. Mr. Boss said yes, explaining he preferred not to make midyear corrections and with a two-year budget it is hard to predict market fluctuation in the cost of goods and such. An annual budget gives managers and directors the ability to see what the budget is every year and to stay within the budget.

Chairman Kilgore stated there was a request for approval of the 2026 operating budget by staff. Commissioner Sofield moved, seconded by Mayor White, to approve the 2026 operating budget. The motion passed unanimously.

## **7. BATESVILLE ROAD MAIN REPAIR**

Chairman Kilgore called on Director of Operations and Maintenance Mark Hattendorf to present on the Batesville Road main repair. Mr. Hattendorf explained main repairs are normally not brought before the Commission, but this main repair is a special repair.

In 1993 the South Carolina Department of Transportation (DOT) decided to redo the Batesville Road bridge over Brushy Creek. The old wooden piers were removed and replaced with new steel piles which pierced the side of the existing 12-inch water main. A repair clamp was installed at that time. Sometimes the repair clamps work for decades and sometimes they do not last long. In this case the pipe began cracking and a larger repair clamp was installed. The pipe continued to separate which caused it to leak. In a normal situation, the damaged section of pipe would be cut out and two solid sleeves would be installed but once the DOT installed concrete around the steel piles, the piles were touching up against the water main. A sewer force main just a few feet away prevented machine access to dig on the pipe. Then there was the issue of the pipe being underwater. The permanent fix was determined to be an aerial crossing.

Two new valves were installed to isolate the damaged section so as not to impact customers during the repair. Greenville County donated steel piles on which to place the main. An experienced Greenville Water crew was selected, the piles were placed, pipe was installed and free rock from a local developer was used to armor the creek bank. The total cost for the project was \$49,336 saving \$73,164 and a skill set was acquired to perform similar repairs in the future.

Chairman Kilgore asked if this was the first such project completed in house. Mr. Hattendorf confirmed it was. Chairman Kilgore asked what were some of the lessons learned. Mr. Hattendorf stated if this were to be done on a bigger scale it would be necessary to rent/purchase equipment for installing the piles.

## **8. CHIEF EXECUTIVE REPORT**

Chairman Kilgore welcomed Mr. Boss to present the executive report. Mr. Boss referenced the tragic death of Greenville Water Damage Prevention Technician Cesar Humberto Pena Franco. Chairman Kilgore read a resolution dedicated in loving memory of Mr. Pena. Renewable Water Resources donated all greens fees from their recent golf tournament to the Pena family. Commissioners agreed that Greenville Water would match the donation.

In August Greenville Water had a record number of 447 attendees at the Family Picnic. The 2026 Family Picnic is planning to be held at Fluor Field as well.

The new 8X8 phone system went into service on 8/8/2025. It was a very successful implementation. Mr. Boss thanked the I.T. and Customer Service groups for all their preparation beforehand.

Staff expressed confidence that the Environmental Protection Agency is not expected to get to fluoride in the next two years, nor will the South Carolina legislature. Chairman Kilgore asked what the lead South Carolina state agency on matters concerning fluoride is. Mr. Boss stated the Department of Environmental Services, but they are taking a hands-off approach at this time. The South Carolina Department of Health, the South Carolina Dental Association and some of the more astute water utilities would like to

Minutes – Commissioners of Public Works  
September 9, 2025  
Page 5

keep fluoride. Commissioner Sofield asked that the record show how little fluoride is actually put into the water. Mr. Boss gave the example of an Olympic-size pool filled with pennies, then trying to find one penny representing fluoride. Chairman Kilgore requested staff share Greenville Water's position on fluoride with legislators.

#### **9. COMMISSION COMMENTS**

No comments were presented.

#### **10. ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned 9:30 a.m.



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Phillip A. Kilgore, Chairman



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Kimberly Haulter, Executive Assistant

**In Loving Memory of Cesar Humberto Peña Franco**

*August 8, 1985 – August 21, 2025*

**WHEREAS**, Greenville Water has lost a valued colleague, teammate, and friend in the passing of Cesar Humberto Peña Franco on August 21, 2025; and

**WHEREAS**, Cesar faithfully served Greenville Water for four years as a talented and trusted locator, bringing with him more than seven years of prior experience, skill, and knowledge that earned the respect and admiration of his peers and leadership alike; and

**WHEREAS**, Cesar was known not only for his dedication to his work, but for the warmth, kindness, and encouragement he freely shared with those around him, leaving a lasting impact on his coworkers and community; and

**WHEREAS**, beyond his professional contributions, Cesar was a devoted husband, a proud and loving father of three, a cherished son and brother, and a true friend, whose greatest legacy is the love and care he poured into his family and all who knew him; and

**WHEREAS**, his life, though tragically cut short, remains a shining example of love, integrity, and service to others, and his memory will continue to inspire those he leaves behind;

**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that Greenville Water does hereby honor and celebrate the life of Cesar Humberto Peña Franco; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that we extend our deepest sympathy and heartfelt condolences to Cesar's family, praying they find comfort in knowing his impact and memory will live on in the hearts of his Greenville Water family; and

**BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED**, that a copy of this resolution be presented to his family as a lasting expression of our respect, gratitude, and love for Cesar.

**Respectfully submitted on this ninth day of September, 2025**

The Commissioners of Greenville Water

