

The Utility Service Board met Thursday, February 19, 2026, at 11:30 a.m. at 1111 McClure Road chaired by Patrick Andrews. Other board members present were: Cheryl McAvoy, Barry Turner, Nicholas Browning, and Melissa Lin. Also present were: Roger Kelso, Executive Director; Ashley Getz, Associate Director of Engineering; Travis Calhoun, Associate Director of Treatment Operations; Heather Holzem, Business Office Supervisor; Robyn Ingram, Executive Administrative Assistant; Nichole Young, Water Program Manager; Stan Gamso, counsel; and Elaine Hilber, City Council Liaison.

VISITORS

Visitors attending were: Brad Davis, The Republic; Matt Wirth, Commonwealth; Tony Akles, Strand Associates; Mark Cvetkovich, Bowen Engineering, and Ted Piehl, County Resident.

ADJUSTMENTS/ ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA

Standby On-Call Policy packet information provided to board members.

REGULAR MINUTES

Cheryl McAvoy made the motion to approve the minutes from the regular meeting on January 15, 2026, as prepared. Nicholas Browning seconded the motion and the vote was unanimous.

APPROVAL OF RESOLUTION 5-2026 TO AUTHORIZE THE TRANSFER OF FUNDS BETWEEN ACCOUNTS FOR JANUARY 2026

Heather Holzem presented a resolution prepared by Stan Gamso to authorize transfers made in January 2026 between various accounts. A copy of the transfers was attached. Transfers were made within the bounds of standard routine accounting practices for the purpose of satisfying ongoing obligations. Heather confirmed the transfer information presented was a true and accurate summary of the actual transfers as made by the Columbus Utilities staff and management, and all were within the normal course of Utility business.

Cheryl McAvoy made the motion to approve Resolution 5-2026 authorizing account transfers as presented. Nicholas Browning seconded the motion and the vote was unanimous.

PROFESSIONAL SERVICES AGREEMENT, SOURCE WATER DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Ashley Getz recommended the board approve contract with Arcadis U.S., Inc. for Source Water Development Plan. The contract is to help plan and identify sites for wells in the future.

Some of the PFAS money will go to paying for this and possibly a grant. The grant does not pay for the studies but can incorporate it into the plan for other costs.

Barry Turner made the motion to approve the Source Water Development Plan contract

with Arcadis for an amount not to exceed \$84,900. Nicholas Browning seconded the motion and the vote was unanimous.

PUBLIC HEARING – RECOMMENDATION OF A PUBLIC-PRIVATE AGREEMENT

Ashley Getz announced the pause of the regular meeting at 11:38 am. The public hearing for the public-private agreement with Bowen Engineering began and was opened for public comment. No comments were received; the public hearing closed at 11:39 am, at which time the regular meeting resumed.

WATER TREATMENT PLANT 1 GMAX PROPOSAL, BOWEN ENGINEERING

Ashley Getz recommended the board approve the Water Treatment Plant 1 GMAX proposal for \$2,706,670 from Bowen Engineering. The proposal includes upgrades to Water Treatment Plant 1, including the change in backwash improvements and disinfection process.

Nicholas Browning made the motion to accept the GMAX proposal for the Water Treatment Plant 1 from Bowen Engineering for \$2,706,670 and enter into a public-private agreement for the project as presented. Cheryl McAvoy seconded the motion and the vote was unanimous.

PROFESSIONAL SERVICES AGREEMENT, BEATTY LANE LIFT STATION REPLACEMENT MODIFICATION NO 1

Ashley Getz recommended the board approve the contract modification with Commonwealth for the Beatty Lane Lift Station Replacement engineering services for a fee of \$180,400. Ashley stated that the original contract that was approved was to review alternatives for the lift station replacement. This contract modification includes the design and other construction-related services. The project is included in our 2026 capital budget.

Nicholas Browning made the motion to approve Contract Modification No. 1 for Beatty Lane Lift Station Replacement with Commonwealth Engineers for an amount not-to-exceed \$180,400 as presented. Patrick Andrews seconded the motion and the vote was unanimous.

ISSUANCE OF SEWAGE WORKS REVENUE BONDS, RESOLUTION 6-2026

Stan Gamso stated that back in August 2024 the board approved a resolution and ordinance for the bond. SRF has recommendations to help us get more money and a lower interest rate than we have and part of the loan is forgivable.

Barry Turner made the motion to approve issuance of Sewage Works Revenue Bonds, Resolution 6-2026 amending resolution No. 10-2024, adopted on August 20, 2024. Nicholas Browning seconded the motion and the vote was unanimous.

Elaine Hilber exited the meeting at 12:01 pm.

ON-CALL POLICY UPDATE, ADOPTING STANDBY POLICY, RESOLUTION NO.7

Stan Gamso recommended the board approve Resolution No.7 Adopting Standby Policy. The current City policy and Columbus City Utilities (CCU) policy disconnect. The presented policy captures more of what we do. The recent snow days brought to light that we needed to make sure our employees are compensated for their overtime, while working in less-than-ideal conditions.

Patrick Andrews made the motion to approve Resolution No.7 Adopting Standby Policy. Nicholas Browning seconded the motion and the vote was unanimous.

UPDATED WAGE & CLASSIFICATION SCHEDULE

Roger Kelso explained that we needed amendment to our schedule as we have an individual planning to retire in three to four months. The individual has accrued PTO time that makes it necessary to hire someone now to cover the position, therefore changing the number from one to two on the Wage & Classification Schedule.

Nicholas Browning made the motion to approve the updated Wage & Classification Schedule as presented. Cheryl McAvoy seconded the motion and the vote was unanimous.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Meeting paused by Patrick Andrews to address the guest, Ted Piehl, at the meeting and give him time to share as to why he was attending. He stated he was a Bartholomew County resident. He wanted to discuss biosolids and their use. Roger said he would be happy to discuss this matter with him outside the Utility Service Board meeting.

CLAIMS

The January water claims were presented by Heather Holzem for approval.

Barry Turner made the motion to approve the water summary of claims as presented by the Columbus Utilities management as being a true and accurate summary of the actual claims as received, invoiced, and docketed and all supported by either contract or receipts received by the Columbus Utilities staff and management. Cheryl McAvoy seconded the motion and the vote was unanimous.

The January wastewater claims were presented by Heather Holzem for approval.

Barry Turner made the motion to approve the wastewater summary of claims as presented by the Columbus Utilities management as being a true and accurate summary of the actual claims as received, invoiced, and docketed and all supported by either contract or receipts received by the Columbus Utilities staff and management. Patrick Andrews seconded the motion and the vote was unanimous.

The January SRF claims were presented by Heather Holzem for approval.

Cheryl McAvoy made the motion to approve the SRF summary of claims as presented by the Columbus Utilities management as being a true and accurate summary of the actual claims as received, invoiced, and docketed and all supported by either contract or receipts received by the Columbus Utilities staff and management. Nicholas Browning seconded the motion and the vote was unanimous.

The City of Columbus wastewater claims were presented by Heather Holzem for approval.

Patrick Andrews made the motion to approve the City of Columbus summary of wastewater claims as presented by the Columbus Utilities management as being a true and accurate summary of the actual claims as received, invoiced, and docketed and all supported by either contract or receipts received by the Columbus Utilities staff and management. Cheryl McAvoy seconded the motion and the vote was unanimous.

The City of Columbus water claims were presented by Heather Holzem for approval.

Nicholas Browning made the motion to approve the City of Columbus summary of water claims as presented by the Columbus Utilities management as being a true and accurate summary of the actual claims as received, invoiced, and docketed and all supported by either contract or receipts received by the Columbus Utilities staff and management. Cheryl McAvoy seconded the motion and the vote was unanimous

FINANCE REPORT

The written finance report was presented by Heather Holzem. Heather reported that water revenue from our water utility finished ahead of last January's YTD revenue by 0.5% and was 5.9% behind budgeted revenue.

Miscellaneous revenue was down compared to both budget and prior year. The negative variances were due to SRF reimbursement being posted to its own fund starting back in early 2025.

Water utility total operating expenses are down 7.5% compared to operating expenses last year.

Heather stated that wastewater revenue finished ahead of last January's YTD by 1.3% and behind budgeted revenue by 3.0%.

Wastewater revenue showed a 4.3% increase in operating expenses compared to YTD of January 2025. Expenses were 22.5% less than what was budgeted.

Internal Audit report was prepared by Charlie Pride. Roger Kelso reported no significant findings. Roger stated that he and Charlie will be rolling out some recommendations in the next 60 days or so on cybersecurity from the internal audits that they have been doing. Roger also

shared that State Board of Accounts (SBOA) typically conducts annual audits around April, but no specific date has been set.

ENGINEERING REPORT

The written engineering report was presented by Ashley Getz. Ashley provided project and design updates for ongoing water and wastewater capital projects.

Ashley shared House Bill 1459 which is a requirement for all utilities to submit their asset management plans every 4 years to the IURC. We already have an asset management plan in place but will most likely look at hiring someone to review to make sure we are meeting regulations for this new bill.

Ashley shared about the four water main breaks that occurred during the week of January 25 - 31. Water main breaks are more typical during extreme cold. Ashley praised our staff, and how well all our departments worked together. She was very appreciative of our staff and contractors for getting these repairs made. The Bartholomew County Emergency Management has submitted our costs for potential reimbursement from FEMA or the State Disaster Fund. Roger stated that the execution of the emergency response plan was done very well. The coordination of other departments, contractors and our staff was excellent. Ashley demonstrated the ability to have a good plan in place.

TREATMENT OPERATIONS REPORT

The written treatment operations report was presented by Travis Calhoun. Travis reported no permit violations in 2026.

Travis stated that the industrial surcharges were down \$7,500 from previous month and this was mostly from Ninth Avenue Foods being down \$9,000.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

The written director's report was presented by Roger Kelso. Roger provided an update on the PFAS settlement. As part of settlement Dupont will pay over an extended time. Claims Administrator will begin the process of releasing Adjusted Base Scores for TYCO and BASF claims.

Roger presented an update on cybersecurity assessment efforts, staffing updates, and public outreach. Ashley Getz gave a presentation at a recent conference in regard to our 2025 public outreach.

MARCH MEETING QUORUM DISCUSSION

Discussion about the next meeting being during spring break so we will not have quorum. Decision was made to push the meeting back a week as all agreed.

ADJOURNMENT


Cheryl McAvoy made the motion to adjourn the meeting. Nicholas Browning seconded the motion and the vote was unanimous. The meeting adjourned at 12:58 pm.

MARCH MEETING

The next regular meeting will be Thursday, March 26, 2026, at 11:30 a.m.



Patrick Andrews, Chairman
UTILITY SERVICE BOARD



Cheryl McAvoy, Secretary
UTILITY SERVICE BOARD