

BUSINESS OFFICE, 4725 MOFFETT ROAD, MOBILE, ALABAMA
April 7, 2025

The Board of Water and Sewer Commissioners of the City of Mobile met this Monday in their regular session at 1:30 p.m. at MAWSS' Park Forest Plaza.

PRESENT:

Ms. Barbara Drummond, Chair
Ms. Linda St. John, Vice Chair
Mr. Jay W. Weber, Secretary-Treasurer
Mr. Thomas Zoghby, Commissioner
Mr. Raymond L. Bell, Jr., Commissioner
Ms. Maria Gonzalez, Commissioner

Mr. Bud McCrory, Jr., Director
Mr. Bradley Dean, Attorney
Mr. Douglas L. Cote
Mr. Daryl Russell
Ms. Calressia Clark
Ms. Fatima Washington

ABSENT:

Mr. John C. Williams, Commissioner

Chair Drummond called the meeting to order and Commissioner Bell gave the invocation.

Committee Reports were next; Commissioner Zoghby stated that the **External Affairs Committee** met on March 19, 2025 at 11:00 a.m. and reviewed information to engage an outside *public relations firm* on a short term basis.

The **Growth and Development / Infrastructure / Property Committee Meeting** met on March 26, 2025 at 9:00 a.m. Commissioner St. John summarized items discussed as follows: *South Alabama Utilities (SAU) Wastewater Contract*, which is on the agenda for review and approval today to provide wholesale treated sanitary sewer service to SAU. *Springhill Reservoir Property Sale* will take place via auction once an appraisal has been completed, with proceeds divided evenly between the City of Mobile and MAWSS. *Langan Park Property Sale* will move forward via auction as well, once staff has received a completed property survey and appraisal.

Staff provided the committee with updates in regards to *City of Mobile Cooperative Projects with MAWSS*. Supporting information for the third project, PH IV of the Tiger Grant (Martin Luther King Avenue Rehabilitation), is included in today's agenda for review and approval.

Visitors present were acknowledged and welcomed. They did not request an audience with the Board.

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Mr. McCrory extended warm wishes and congratulations to **MR. REGINALD B. GRIFFIN**, Public Service Worker I, on his retirement after 26 years of service to the Board and **MR. SAMUEL C. MILLER**, Treatment Plant Operator II, on his retirement after 36 years of service to the Board. The Board wishes them both a happy retirement.

Chair Drummond presented the **Consent Agenda Items** for approval, and they are as follows:

Item 4 Consent Agenda

Bids and Purchasing

- A. IFB 25-013 Annual Contract for Corrosion Control Chemicals
- B. Sole Source Annual Contract for Sensus Water Meters
- C. M5712-2811 2025 Annual Contract for Sewer Replacement at Various Locations
- D. M5712-2818 2025 Annual Bypass Pumping Contract
- E. HDR Project No. 10199152 Stickney WTP Building Replacements & Electrical Upgrades CO# 18

Chair Drummond questioned the considerable number of change orders listed for *Consent Agenda Item 4E*. Mr. Cote responded that the reasons behind the change orders for *Item 4E Stickney WTP Building Replacements/Electrical Upgrades Change Order No. 18* are that this project entails replacing nearly all of the electrical components within the Stickney Plant. As construction began and continues, it should be noted that not only is the facility aged, it has doubled in size over the last few decades and unseen issues have been discovered. Also included are items that were missed during the design phases and material delays. Staff anticipates completion of the project within the next few months and have budgeted accordingly for the change orders.

Commissioner Zoghby moved for approval of the **Consent Agenda**. Commissioner St. John seconded; Commissioner Bell abstained and the motion then carried with the majority vote of the Board present.

Mr. Barbour approached the Board with a detailed **presentation** of the *2024 Municipal Water Pollution Prevention Program (MWPP) Annual Reports for the Clifton C. Williams and Wright Smith, Jr. Wastewater Treatment Plants*.

The report is a self-evaluation of MAWSS' wastewater assets to identify system needs and determine actions for the prevention of permit violations in the future. It is structured on a point accrual system that is separated into eight categories, intended to communicate actions necessary to prevent effluent violations. The completed reports are due to ADEM each year on May 31st. Scores for 2024 are:

- Clifton C. Williams Wastewater Treatment Plant scored 100 points (*best score since 2020*)
- Wright Smith Jr. Wastewater Treatment Plant scored 14 points (*best score since 2020*)*

The combined resolution moving forward is as demonstrated below:

- Continue Sanitary Sewer Evaluation Surveys (SSES) to identify sources of I/I into the sewer system
- Make priority repairs and CIPP sewer rehabilitations to reduce wet weather SSOs
- Continue sewer cleaning program to prevent dry weather SSOs
- Continue the private property lateral restoration program
- Continue to fund a Capital Improvement Plan based on the findings in the System Master Plan

*The installation of the SWAT/SWAB tanks were a significant factor in the vast reduction of wet weather (I/I) SSOs.

The **Minutes of March 10, 2025** were presented for approval. Commissioner Bell moved for approval and Commissioner St. John seconded. The motion then carried with the unanimous vote of the Board present.

Bid Openings were next, Mr. Cote read the bid tabs as follows:

Item 6A Jacobs D3788300 – Halls Mill Lift Station Surge Tank

The engineers estimate for this project is \$610,000; there was one bidder, the apparent low bidder is CLS General Contractors in the amount of \$1,290,000. Staff will bring this item back to the Board at a later date.

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Item 6B McCrory Williams M5712-2650 PH IV – Eslava Creek Phase IV Sliplining

The engineers estimate for this project is \$10,050,000; there was one bidder, the apparent low bidder is Hemphill Construction Company, Inc. in the amount of \$10,397,150 which is the base bid plus the additive alternate. Staff requests approval of an Directors Award after review has been completed by the engineer and DBE Department.

Commissioner Zoghby moved for approval, Commissioner Bell seconded. The motion then carried with the unanimous vote of the Board present.

Legal was next and Attorney Dean stated there are two litigation matters that are appropriate for discussion in an Executive Session.

There were no items of **Unfinished Business**.

New Business was next and they are as follows:

Item 9A City of Mobile – Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Avenue Street Revitalization Agreement

Mr. Russell requested approval of the cooperative agreement as discussed with the Growth and Development / Infrastructure / Property Committee during their meeting on March 26, 2025.

Commissioner Bell moved for approval; Commissioner St. John seconded and the motion then carried with the unanimous vote of the Board present.

Item 9B Proposed Wholesale Treated Sanitary Sewer Service Contract for Wholesale Service to South Alabama Utilities

Also reviewed with the Growth and Development / Infrastructure / Property Committee on March 26, staff requests approval of the referenced contract.

Commissioner Bell moved for approval; Commissioner Zoghby seconded and the motion then carried with the unanimous vote of the Board present.

Item 9C Facilities for Acceptance:

i. Greer's Fowl River (*Sewer Facilities*)

Staff requests approval of the sewer force main extension facilities located in the right of way at Dauphin Island Parkway which will serve the Greer's Grocery Store and potential future development. The main lies on the east side of Dauphin Island Parkway and runs from Fowl River Road to River Road. Staff has reviewed the project and the close-out documentation and recommends acceptance of the sewer facilities as noted above, total valued at \$95,680.

Commissioner Bell moved for approval; Commissioner Zoghby seconded and the motion then carried with the unanimous vote of the Board present.

ii. The Pines at Colleton (*Sewer Facilities*)

The subdivision lies south of Howells Ferry Road and west of Schillinger Road. The development contains 59 residential lots. Staff has reviewed the project and the close-out documentation and recommends acceptance of the sewer facilities as noted above, total valued at \$247,291.

Commissioner Bell moved for approval; Commissioner St. John seconded and the motion then carried with the unanimous vote of the Board present.

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Item 9D Big Creek Lake Updates and Next Steps

Mr. McCrory approached the Board and read the following statement into record:

“MAWSS’s priority is to ensure a safe and abundant source of drinking water for the 350,000 residents we serve throughout Mobile, Spanish Fort, Chickasaw, Prichard, and Semmes. As a man-made reservoir, Big Creek Lake is the only source of water for these residents, their fire departments, hospitals, industrial base, and other essential services. Protecting this water source is crucial to our mission and the long-term growth of our communities and economy.

In 2021, Giant Salvinia, an invasive plant that doubles in size every three to five days, was detected in the reservoir. Following this discovery, MAWSS closed the lake and brought in outside experts to test water quality, treat the invasion, and reopen the lake to recreational use.

In 2022, MAWSS conducted two additional studies of Big Creek Lake and determined six invasive species are present and five more are pressing threats. The most dangerous of these is the Russian zebra mussel, which has spread rapidly from the Great Lakes to as close as Tuscaloosa. These mussels attach to boats and trailers at a microscopic level and multiply rapidly. In water systems across the country, these mussels have blocked pumps, pipes, and filters, resulting in increased costs for rate-payers that amount to billions.

Zebra Mussels Video: <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1LprmPL0z3oqGZgGsFhWYr2CtjJhVT7xq/view?ts=67f0377f>

We don't want that to happen here. Preventative measures are necessary to ensure that our community's sole water supply remains safe and that our residents, fire departments, and industries have access to safe, abundant, and affordable water.

According to the US Army Corps of Engineers, *to adequately clean a boat after leaving zebra mussel infested waters, power washing – either at home or at a self-service car wash, and preferably with hot water – is required after draining. Additionally, any equipment that has touched water (such as buckets, tie-downs, anchors, etc.) should be cleaned with a diluted bleach solution. Further, one to two weeks of dry quarantine are generally recommended.* This is also backed by other agencies, such as NOAA.

MAWSS cannot guarantee that private boats will be cleaned effectively.

In 2025, MAWSS determined the only effective way to prevent this danger was to close the lake to boating and other uses. Simply put, water is life. Providing safe, dependable, and affordable water isn't just a high priority – it's why MAWSS exists.

As MAWSS continues to work with local stakeholders, we recognize the desire of some recreational anglers to use the lake for fishing. While we have consistently sought ways to allow recreational options on the reservoir and will continue to do so, MAWSS cannot permit outside boats to enter the lake, as this could potentially introduce invasive species that could cause millions of dollars in damage to our pumps, pipes, and treatment plants across the region.

We will continue to collaborate with stakeholders and local officials to develop a path forward that enables recreational use while preserving this critical resource. Through that collaboration, we believe there is a path forward that will allow for increased recreational opportunities while still protecting the lake.

MAWSS will today begin the process of securing a private entity that will operate a recreational facility on the lake. This will include boat rental options including fishing boats and kayaks, shore fishing, and areas for picnics and leisure.

With this plan, MAWSS will open up to an additional 1,100 of acres of the lake for fishing. This would bring the total area available for fishing up to 1,800 acres, more than double the 700 acres currently available.

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We will also intend to increase the number of days that the lake is open for recreational use from 3 days per week to 5 days per week. The other two days will be used for treatment of the water and the existing invasive species. Because we can't guarantee effective sanitation of private boats under government guidelines, the reservoir will remain closed to outside boats.

This path forward is similar to a similar reservoir in Birmingham, Lake Purdy. Lake Purdy is the secondary water source for the Birmingham Water Works, and like Big Creek Lake, is wholly owned by the utility. Because of this, that reservoir is closed to outside boating but through their smart use of rental options, it is a popular place for fishing, picnics, and recreation.

Video highlighting Lake Purdy:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/12x0KgALPg1umewELMN7sfGp0tzQOvFvK/view?ts=67f0377f>

In short, this path forward will increase recreational options for those who wish to use the lake. Boat rentals are a much more affordable choice for the overwhelming majority of Mobile County residents who don't own bass boats. And by locating and partnering with a private entity who can manage this facility, there will be incentive to make it successful. We envision fishing tournaments, sunset picnics, and kayaking in the pristine waters – all the recreation options that Mobile County residents love.

This process will still take time to become operational, but by increasing the days the lake is open, increasing the area of the lake that can be fished, and increasing the ability of local residents to access the water, we can move forward with a plan that allows for increased recreational activity while protecting the water supply for 350,000 residents of Mobile and Baldwin County.

I believe there is a path forward that protects this drinking water while still allowing for recreational use, Madam Chair and I would like to offer the following resolution for the Board's consideration."

Resolution

"The MAWSS Board of Directors is supportive of the efforts thus far to protect the water at Big Creek Lake from damaging invasive species, which would increase costs for our ratepayers and decrease our water quality and supply. We are also supportive of MAWSS' leadership's desire to pursue an option that would allow for enhanced recreational use of the reservoir while still taking necessary steps to protect water quality from invasive species."

Commissioner Bell moved for approval of the resolution as stated for the path forward of Big Creek Lake; Commissioner Zoghby seconded and the motion then carried with the unanimous vote of the Board present.

Chair Drummond clarified that the resolution is approved with the allowance of a third party concessionaire, along with the other options as stated by Mr. McCrory.

Item 10 Information Only Items:

- A. IFB 25-011 Annual Contract – One Gallon Grease Containers
- B. IFB 25-012 Annual Contract – Tapping Saddles, Clamps & Couplings
- C. Annual Service Agreement for Microsoft Enterprise Select 2025 (Y2)
- D. Annual Service Agreement for Flow Monitoring Devices
- E. Ext 1 Annual Contract – Forest Management Services (Y2)
- F. Painting of the Pools and Perimeter Railings at Myers WTP
- G. Professional Services Agreement – Sewer Cleaning Training
- H. Purchase of Two (2) Electric Actuators for C.C.Williams WWTP

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- I. Removal of Fifty-One (51) Holly Bushes for Myers WTP
- J. Repair of Motor No. 8 at S. Palmer Gaillard Pumping Station
- K. Sole Source Purchase of Parts for ADS Flow Monitors
- L. Sole Source Repair Parts for Flygt Pump at Virginia Street LS154
- M. Sole Source Purchase of a Flygt Pump for Spring Grove LS198
- N. Testing Services for Nanobubble Pilot Project at C. C. Williams WWTP
- O. VT Scada Support Renewal
- P. Jacobs D3532200 Consent Settlement Assistance – Progress Report April 2025
- Q. V1201846.002 C. C. Williams S1 Digester Repairs – OAA #1
- R. V1201846.002 C. C. Williams S1 Digester Repairs – OAA #2
- S. V1201846.002 C. C. Williams S1 Digester Repairs – OAA #3
- T. V1201846.002 C. C. Williams S1 Digester Repairs – OAA #4
- U. V1201846.002 C. C. Williams S1 Digester Repairs – OAA #5
- V. 2024 Municipal Water Pollution Prevention Annual Reports (MWPP)
- W. Consultant Project Status Reports – *February 2025*

There being no further business to come before the Board at 2:07 p.m., Commissioner Bell motioned to move into Executive Session; Commissioner Zoghby seconded and the motion then carried with the unanimous vote of the Board present.

The next regular meeting is scheduled for **May 5, 2025** at 1:30 p.m.



Jay W. Weber, Secretary-Treasurer