

**BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS MEETING
WATERWORKS DISTRICT #1
OF DESOTO PARISH
GRAND CANE, LOUISIANA
AUGUST 25th, 2025**

Call to order

K.E. "Ed" Campbell called the meeting to order. Present for the meeting were: President K.E. "Ed" Campbell, Vice President Randy Rodgers, Secretary Donnie Fisher, Ronnie Land, Rusty Morris, Joe Etheredge, Alvin "Bubba" Lum. Absent were Gabriel Whitaker, And Michael Jeter.

Prayer/Pledge

Randy Rodgers led the prayer, and K.E. "Ed" Campbell led the pledge of allegiance.

Approval of minutes from July 28th meeting

Donnie Fisher made the motion to accept the minutes of the July 28th meeting. Rusty Morris Made the 2nd, all approved.

Financials and approval of Financials

Debra Chatman (Administrative Assistant) gave financial report for June 2025. Financial report included, payroll report, cost of operation for the water plant and the field, contractor leak repairs, chemical cost to treat the water, etc. Donnie Fisher inquired about the cost of using contractors to help fix leaks on the system. Chemical costs were talked about with Tim Bryson (Water Plant Manager) he explained the use of new chemicals for the new water plant, stating that it takes more chemicals to treat the water with the improvements at the plant costing approximately 45% more than in the past. We are also treating and producing more water. Ronnie Land asked about the quality of the water being produced, Tim Bryson replied that we are well within state requirements, the health department is very satisfied with our water quality. Debra Chatman also spoke about the meter registers that had to be replaced due to age and not reading, which was a substantial expense to the district with over 300 that had to be replaced. We also have registers that will be reimbursed by our supplier that were under warranty. David Ryals (Administrator) said that the registers must be replaced periodically and are not readily available, sometimes in backorder for long periods of time. An overview of the plant expansion costs were also discussed. Delinquent accounts are also an issue as we had over 200 that were past due in April, over \$80,000.00 in June, we got it down to 79 accounts at \$14,000.00, we

expect to have that under control in the future. Randy Rodgers asked if we were offering payment plans to assist our customers in getting their accounts current and yes, we are willing to assist anyone that wants to enroll in a payment plan, Donnie Fisher asked, and if they don't want to cooperate with us, what happens, and Debra Chatman said we pull their meter.

The Cpa that is doing our audit went over some things that the state requires to be in the minutes that have previously been neglected, such as naming each board member that is present or absent. Some of the wording in the minutes to the public are incorrect, all of which will be corrected going forward. We recently gave city of Mansfield, and the village of Grand Cane their water lines back that we were servicing and the state requires documentation of the agreement between these utilities. The board responded with the solution to this issue with CEAs from the utilities in question.

Randy Rodgers made the motion to accept the financial reports, Donie Fisher 2nd the motion. All board members approved.

Fire Department Discussion

K.E. "Ed" Campbell brought up the fire departments that are not paying for their fire plugs. Alvin (Bubba) Lum brought up the fact that some of the larger fire departments are not paying but the smaller departments are paying and it's not equal throughout the system. Donnie Fisher proposed that the fire departments don't want to pay the small maintenance fee monthly, be charged the full amount for repairs if needed, at the time of repair. It was discussed to meet with the fire departments and work out this situation.

Administrator's Report

David Ryals (Administrator), spoke about substantial completion of the plant expansion and the problems we are having in signing off on the job that is not completed until everything is working properly, which is not now. There are still some issues that need to be corrected before we can sign off on this job. Our warranty on the things they have done and the machinery we have been sold starts as soon as we sign the significant completion, which we do not feel comfortable signing until everything is running properly. Tim Bryson said it would be completed in approximately 2 months.

David Ryals said we are going to have to adjust the budget before the year is completed due to the extra cost of the chemicals at the new plant.

David Ryals brought up the discussion of the holidays for the system being updated, as we are updating our by-laws, K.E. "Ed" Campbell said he had only received one suggestion which was to add Good Friday. This will be voted on in the future, it is difficult because we have the water plant that has to be manned 24/7/365 days a year, additional holidays would cost the district additional money.

David Ryals has brought in Susan Robbins from LRWA to do a rate study, she is coming into the office in August to get the necessary information and will possibly have it completed by next August Board on the 25th. The district needs a 1.15 sustainability to operate.

Susan Robbins suggested updating our maps of the system as they have not been updated since January 2012, and the district system has grown since then. The maps are very expensive, Susan Robbins said there is a company called Communities Unlimited that could come in and possibly get a grant to update our maps and not cost us anything. David Ryals is going to pursue that to get our maps done and up to date.

David Ryals discussed a bill that was adjusted for a customer that had a large leak. The board questioned the decision that David made to adjust the bill without their approval. Randy Rogers asked for further explanation of what the cause of the leak was and why we were responsible for the monetary adjustment to his bill. David's response was there was never a clear understanding of who was responsible as this was a problem that was created in the past. Donnie Fisher suggested having this customer, who buys large amounts of water every month, sign an exclusive contract to only buy water from us for the next 2 years. Donnie Fisher made the motion to accept this solution, Randy Rodgers 2nd the motion, all board members approved.

Board And Chair Comments

Randy Rodgers questioned the recent retirement of Patrick Taylor, our Field Supervisor. David Ryals stated that Patrick came to him about a week ago on a leak that we had on a Saturday and said he needed to talk to David, he told him then that he was ready to retire. Randy Rodgers inquired was there something going on the district or in Patrick's life that caused this unexpected retirement and David stated that things were changing but did not think this caused his early retirement. We here at the district wish Patrick well!

Joe Etheredge said he had called the office after hours and there was no emergency number listed on the answering service, Debra Chatman stated that it was supposed to be on there and would get with our IT guy to get this fixed so that the water Plant number be added to the after-hours message. K.E. "Ed" Campbell brought up cellular usage rules that's in the by-laws also needs to be updated. Vehicle use policy, personal use of company vehicles is strictly prohibited. This will be discussed at the August meeting.

Adjournment

President K.E. "Ed" Campbell asked for motion to adjourn, Randy Rodgers made the motion, Rusty Morris 2nd the motion, this meeting was adjourned.