

## **BOARD OF SANITARY DISTRICT COMMISSIONERS REGULAR MEETING**

**WENDESDAY, DECEMBER 17, 2025, 4:00 P.M. 1100 E. EIGHTH STREET**

### Michigan City Board of Sanitary District Commissioners

Andrew Sperling	(Mayoral appointment 6/20/2024 – 6/21/2028)
Tina Mahone	(Mayoral appointment 7/1/2025 – 7/1/2029)
Don Babcock	(Mayoral appointment 4/23/2024 – 1/1/2027)
Tance Falls	(Mayoral appointment 11/8/2024 – 11/9/2028)
Timothy Werner	City Engineer – virtue of position

The Meeting was called to order at 4:08 P.M. by President Don Babcock.

Commissioners present were Don Babcock, Andrew Sperling, Tim Werner, Tance Falls and Tina Mahone.

Staff present at the meeting were:

Rhonda Anderson, Superintendent of Water Reclamation  
Al Walus, Operations & Inspections Manager  
Rachel McCline, Administrative Assistant/Board Secretary  
Christopher Yagelski, Business & Facilities Manager  
Wendy Vachet, Director of Public Works  
Jewell Harris, Legal Counsel

Also present for the meeting were:

Mary-Lynn Wall, City Controller  
Tom Nagle, Robinson Engineering  
Don Przybylinski, Michigan City Common Council  
Shante, Ivy, Michigan City Human Resources  
Melisha Henderson, Michigan City Human Resources  
John Kremke, Schneider Geomatics  
Scott Meland, Michigan City Resident

### **Minutes**

Mr. Babcock certified that an executive session was held before this meeting and that there was nothing discussed outside of the information posted in the advertisement for the session.

Mr. Sperling made a motion to approve the minutes for the November 19, 2025, Executive Session and Regular Meeting as presented – seconded by Mr. Werner. There being no question or comment on the matter, the motion carried 5 – 0 in favor.

### **Public Comment**

Councilman Przybylinski addressed the Board regarding a meeting with Sanitary District officials to discuss the status of the inoperable scale located on the former Seneca property.

Mr. Yagelski mentioned a proposal to add a weight measurement to the bucket of a front-end loader. This mechanism would allow Refuse staff to obtain special pick-up items and weigh them on site to determine the cost of the pick-up service at that time.

Mr. Meland addressed the Board, stating that the mentioned proposal for Refuse is a good idea. Mr. Meland added that there have been multiple complaints from residents regarding refuse services. Mr. Meland advised that the City of Michigan City should consider privatizing trash pick-up services.

### **Human Resources Report**

Director of Human Resources, Mrs. Henderson, addressed the Board regarding new policies and procedures that were approved by the Board of Works. Mrs. Henderson advised that the administration would like to have one (1) handbook for the entire City to ensure that each employee is receiving the same benefits. The Board received updated policies for the following: Employee Benefits, Personal Time, Holidays, Sick Leave, Birth and Placement Leave, and Health and Welfare Benefits. Mrs. Henderson advised that the updated policies will be submitted to all department heads to share with their staff. It was noted that the policies will take effect January 1, 2026. Mrs. Anderson then recommended approval of the same.

Mr. Werner made such a motion seconded by Mrs. Mahone. There being no further question or comment on the matter, the motion carried 5 – 0 in favor.

### **Financial Report**

As of October 31, 2025:  
Refuse Fund: \$1,700,161.30  
Grant Fund: (\$10,303.40)  
SRF Debt Reserve Fund: \$576,092.38  
SRF Bond and Interest Fund: \$307,852.92  
Storm Water Fund: \$747,231.60  
Special Fund: \$10,686.01  
Karwick Remediation Fund: \$208,386.63  
Levy Excess Fund: \$8,522.14

Operating Fund: \$629,732.02  
Improvement Fund: \$790,276.62  
Vehicle Replacement Fund: \$267,677.07  
Equipment Replacement Fund: \$529,396.70

Ms. Vachet submitted an invoice from Krohn & Associates CPAs and Consultants for professional services in the amount of \$14,065.00 and recommended approval of the same.

Mr. Sperling made such a motion – seconded by Mrs. Mahone. There being no further question or comment on the matter, the motion carried 5 – 0 in favor.

Mr. Sperling made a motion to approve and allow Revenue and Tax Levy Claims for payment – seconded by Mr. Falls. There being no question or comment on the matter, the motion carried 5 – 0 in favor.

#### **Harris Law Firm PC**

Mrs. Anderson submitted October 2025, billing summary in the amount of \$ 1,100.00 and November 2025, billing summary in the amount of \$2,227.50 and recommended approval of the same.

Mr. Werner made such a motion – seconded by Mrs. Mahone. There being no question or comment on the matter, the motion carried 4 – 0 in favor.

#### **Schneider Geomatics**

Mr. Kremke provided the Board with a Status Report for the Michigan City Annexed Area Sewer Extension Project (MCASE). It was noted that Substantial Completion has been determined. Mr. Kremke submitted Work Change Directive No. 5 for the substitution of wetland species plantings.

Mrs. Anderson submitted pay Request No. 198290 from Schnieder Geomatics in the amount of \$6,907.50 and recommended approval of the same.

Mr. Werner made such a motion - seconded by Mrs. Mahone. There being no question or comment on the matter, the motion carried 5 – 0 in favor.

Mr. Kremke provided the Board with a Status Report for the Lake Avenue and Highway 12 Lift Station Sewer Relief Project. It was noted that the project is 22.67% complete.

Mrs. Anderson submitted pay Request No. 198291 from Schneider Geomatics in the amount of \$3,707.50 and recommended approval of the same.

Mr. Werner made such a motion – seconded by Mrs. Mahone. There being no question or comment on the matter, the motion carried 5 – 0 in favor.

Mr. Kremke submitted Pay Request No. 198298 from Schneider Geomatics for Topo/Engineering Services at 1933 Lakeshore Drive in the amount of \$150.00. Mrs. Anderson recommended approval of the same.

Mr. Werner made such a motion – seconded by Mrs. Mahone. There being no further question or comment on the matter, the motion carried 5 – 0 in favor.

**Christopher B. Burke Engineering Ltd.**

Mrs. Anderson submitted Invoice No. 40843 for October 2025, On-call Wastewater Compliance Services in the amount of \$1,916.12 and Invoice No. 40984 for November 2025, On-call Wastewater Compliance Services in the amount of \$4,317.50 from Christopher B. Burke Engineering Ltd.

Mr. Werner made a motion to approve both invoices from Christopher B. Burke Engineering Ltd. as submitted – seconded by Mr. Sperling. There being no further question or comment on the matter, the motion carried 5 – 0 in favor.

**CDS Engineers, Inc.**

Mrs. Anderson gave an update on the Pilot Study for the Primary Clarifiers. It was noted that a second Cloth Filter Media pilot test is ongoing with a different vendor. Mrs. Anderson submitted Invoice No. 088-25-01\_04 from CDS Engineers, Inc. in the amount of \$3,030.00 and recommended approval of the same.

Mr. Werner made such a motion – seconded by Mr. Falls. There being no further question or comment on the matter, the motion carried 5 – 0 in favor.

Mr. Walus submitted a Master Services Agreement between the Sanitary District and CDS Engineers, Inc. to continue providing engineering services and support for the Pilot Studies in 2026.

Mrs. Mahone made a motion to approve the Master Services Agreement not-to-exceed \$100,000.00 – seconded by Mr. Werner. There being no further question or comment on the matter, the motion carried 5 – 0 in favor.

**Dentons Bingham Greenebaum, LLC**

Ms. Vachet advised that Dentons continues to provide professional guidance regarding the Rate Study for the Sanitary District. Ms. Vachet submitted Invoice No. 4624609 in the amount of \$10,613.01 and Invoice No. 4626181 in the amount of \$2,310.00 from Dentons Bingham Greenebaum, LLC and recommended approval of the same.

Mr. Werner made such a motion – seconded by Mr. Falls. There being no further question or comment on the matter, the motion carried 5 – 0 in favor.

**300 N. Lift Station Sewer System Project Update**

Ms. Vachet advised that a Lift Station inspection is underway upon the procurement of an Indiana Department of Environmental Management (IDEM) permit.

**Michigan City Sanitary District 2-Year Plan**

Mr. Walus advised that the Sanitary District continues to work with Krohn & Associates to establish an updated fee structure in addition to permit and review fees. Mr. Walus noted that the Collection System staff continue to gather sewer inspection video data of the esplanade sewer along Lake Shore Drive. Mr. Walus reported that the data is being transmitted to Robinson Engineering for their review.

Regarding the Lift Station Assessment, Mr. Walus advised that Christopher B. Burke Engineering Ltd. officials are analyzing the operational data. Mr. Walus reported that the site survey field work is completed for the Springland Avenue/Roeske Avenue sewer redirection project.

Mr. Walus advised that the Sanitary District operating budget is complete and will be addressed later in the meeting.

**Water Reclamation Superintendent**

Mrs. Anderson advised that the Maintenance and Collection staff teamed up to drain and remove vegetation and sludge from the north contact tank and north post-aerated channel. Mrs. Anderson noted that the above-mentioned task had not been completed in over 6 years. Moving forward, this will be an annual task to ensure that these final steps in the treatment process are free of any debris that may compromise the quality of the final effluent that discharged into Trail Creek.

Mrs. Anderson reported that Plant Maintenance Manager, Joe Plunk, created Standard Operating Procedures for power outages and storm water basin overflows for Operations and Maintenance personnel.

### **Old Business**

Mr. Walus provided the Board with a Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) Audit report. Mr. Walus advised that this audit report is a cumulative overview of the MS4 program for specific minimum control measures that include public education and outreach. The purpose of these audits is to identify program areas where an MS4 can improve program implementation, but to also identify deficiencies and/or violations that will require the MS4 to respond or address within specific timelines. It was noted that the Sanitary District had a sufficient audit that occurred on October 7, 2025.

### **New Business**

Mrs. Anderson submitted the Board of Sanitary District Commissioners 2026 Regular Meeting dates and recommended approval of the same.

Mr. Sperling made such a motion – seconded by Mr. Werner. There being no further question or comment on the matter, the motion carried 5 – 0 in favor.

Ms. Vachet advised that the Sanitary District Receptionist/Dispatcher position has been eliminated effective January 31, 2026, pending Board approval. Ms. Vachet submitted the 2026 Sanitary District Budget Proposal. Ms. Vachet also submitted new Sanitary District Job Descriptions, District Engineer, Controls Engineer and Plant Operations Manager in addition to the 2026 Sanitary District Salary Ordinance Proposal and updated Organizational Work Chart and recommended approval of the same.

Mr. Werner made such a motion – seconded by Mr. Sperling. There being no further question or comment on the matter, the motion carried 5 – 0 in favor.

Mr. Yagelski reported that the Sanitary District's current copy machine has reached its life cycle. Mr. Yagelski advised that the Sanitary District would like to purchase a new copy machine in the amount of \$10,500.00 and recommended approval of the same.

Mr. Werner made such a motion - seconded by Mr. Sperling. There being no further question or comment on the matter, the motion carried 5 – 0 in favor.

Mrs. Anderson advised that the Sanitary District received quotes for a Transformer Replacement that came in higher in price than expected.

Mrs. Anderson recommended Board approval to allow the Sanitary District to issue a formal Request for Quotes (RFQ). Attorney Harris advised that Board action is not needed at this time.

Mr. Walus provided the Board with a brief update regarding an emergency repair that took place mid-November 2025. Mr. Walus advised that there was a sewer cave-in in the 700 block of Thruman Avenue. It was noted that Woodruff & Sons, Inc. responded to the emergency repair.

Mr. Walus advised that there was also an emergency repair on Shawmut Avenue a week after the Thruman Avenue incident. Mr. Walus reported that a drywell caved in at this location. It was noted that Rieth-Riley Construction Co. responded to the emergency repair.

Regarding the Trail Creek West Pond Backfill, Ms. Vachet provided the Board with a Proposal from Global Engineering & Land Surveying in the amount of \$22,000.00 to perform Topographic Surveys, Analysis & Calculations. Ms. Vachet then recommended approval of the same.

Mr. Werner made such a motion – seconded by Mrs. Mahone. There being no further question or comment on the matter, the motion carried 5 – 0 in favor.

Mr. Babcock entertained a motion to adjourn the meeting at 5:43 P.M. – seconded by Mr. Werner.

**Next Board of Sanitary District Commissioners Regular Meeting – January 28, 2026, at 1100 E. Eighth Street, Michigan City, IN 46360 at 4:00 P.M. Local Time.**



Don Babcock, President