

BOARD OF SANITARY DISTRICT COMMISSIONERS REGULAR MEETING

WENDESDAY, JANUARY 28, 2026, 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 4:13 P.M. by President Don Babcock.

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

Staff present at the meeting were:

Rhonda Anderson, Superintendent of Water Reclamation
Al Walus, Operations & Inspections Manager
Rachel McCline, Administrative Assistant
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
John Kremke, Schneider Geomatics
Michael Bergerson, Attorney at Law Lakeshore Sewer
Dan Cutshaw, CDS Engineering
Nathan DeLisle, CDS Engineering

Election of Board Officers for 2026

Mr. Sperling nominated the following: Mr. Babcock to continue as President of the Board, Mrs. Mahone to be Secretary of the Board and himself to continue as Vice President of the Board. Mrs. Mahone seconded the nominations as presented.

Mr. Babcock entertained a motion to accept the nominations as presented.

Mr. Sperling made such a motion – seconded by Mrs. Mahone. There being no further question or comment on the matter, the motion carried 3 – 0 in favor.

Certification

Pursuant to the Indiana Code § 5-14-1.5-6.1 (d), an executive session was held just prior to this meeting, and no subject matter was discussed in the executive session other than the subject matter specified in the public notice.

Minutes

Mr. Sperling made a motion to approve the minutes of the December 17, 2025, Executive Session and Regular Meeting as presented – seconded by Mrs. Mahone. There being no question or comment on the matter, the motion carried 3 – 0 in favor.

Public Comment

Councilman Przybylinski recommended an update at the next regular meeting regarding the status of the Lafayette Street/Barker Avenue Storm Sewer Project.

Councilman Przybylinski requested an update regarding the litigation with the Town of Long Beach. Attorney Harris advised that settlement negotiations are in progress.

Attorney Bergerson addressed the Board regarding the Sanitary District's general policy in relation to a mandated sanitary sewer connection.

Attorney Harris recommended that Attorney Bergerson submit a formal request followed by a staff recommendation to the Board to accommodate Attorney Bergerson's request.

Attorney Bergerson advised that the Town of Long Beach is considering replacing many streets. Attorney Bergerson recommended a response from the Sanitary District before that project moves forward to avoid disturbing new street resurfacing.

Financial Report

As of December 31, 2025:
Refuse Fund: \$2,143,311.21
Grant Fund: \$249,977.25
SRF Debt Reserve Fund: \$578,045.00
SRF Bond and Interest Fund: \$308,304.86
Storm Water Fund: \$640,765.04
Special Fund: \$10,686.01
Karwick Remediation Fund: \$208,505.19
Levy excess Fund: \$8,522.14
Operating Fund: \$714,231.60
Improvement Fund: \$790,276.62

Vehicle Replacement Fund \$267,677.07
Equipment Replacement Fund \$529,396.70

Mrs. Wall provided the Board with a Budget Performance Report for their review.

Mr. Sperling moved to approve and allow Revenue and Tax Levy Claims for Payment – seconded by Mrs. Mahone. There being no further question or comment on the matter, the motion carried 3 – 0 in favor.

New Business/Board Action

Mr. Walus advised that in late December 2025, the Collection Department initiated a Geographic Information System (GIS) analysis of low-lying intersections in Michigan City that have storm inlets. GIS Coordinator, Tony Bazil conducted the desktop analysis and identified twenty-one (21) potential street surface “ponding” areas where stormwater runoff could accumulate on streets if the storm inlets were clogged. Further GIS overlay work by Mr. Bazil has identified one hundred and sixty-four (164) storm inlets within the twenty-one (21) low-lying intersections.

Mr. Walus reported that the Collection Department staff recommends the Board consider and approve the purchase of an Envrosight Quickview airHD rapid sewer assessment camera (Quantity Purchase Agreement No. 120721-EVS) in the amount of the Best Equipment/Sourcwell quoted price of \$19,500.00 with funding provided by encumbered funds from the 2025 Sanitary District Storm Water Fund 2522.

Mr. Sperling moved to approve the purchase of the Storm Sewer Inspection Equipment as presented – seconded by Mrs. Mahone. There being no further question or comment on the matter, the motion carried 3 – 0 in favor.

Mr. Walus provided the Board with a 2026 On-call Municipal Separate Storm Sewer Systems (MS4) Compliance Assistance Agreement with Christopher B. Burke Engineering, LLC, which is not to exceed \$40,000.00. Mr. Walus 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 3 – 0 in favor.

Mrs. Anderson advised that the Sanitary District would like to enter a Pilot Rental Agreement with Parkson Corporation for the use of a Plate Settler/Flocculator Pilot Unit hydraulically rated up to 60 gallons per minute (GPM). It was noted that the rental fee of \$5,000.00/month will be waived for 3 months.

The Equipment Prep and Cleaning Fee were quoted in the amount of \$1,000.00. Equipment 2-way freight cost (estimate) will bill at actual cost of \$11,200.00. Field Service: Additional days \$4,500.00/ trip covering 1 day on site in the amount of \$4,500.00. The Equipment Deposit was quoted in the amount of \$5,000.00. Mrs. Anderson then recommended approval of the same.

Mr. Sperling moved to approve the expense of the Plate Settler as presented – seconded by Mrs. Mahone. There being no further question or comment on the matter, the motion carried 3 – 0 in favor.

Mrs. Vachet provided the Board with a Vegetation Management Easement with Northern Indiana Public Service Company (NIPSCO) north of Project MAZE property adjacent to Royal Road. Mrs. Vachet then recommended approval of the same.

Mr. Sperling moved to grant the Vegetation Management Easement as presented – seconded by Mrs. Mahone. There being no further question or comment on the matter, the motion carried 3 – 0 in favor.

Mrs. Vachet provided the Board with an update on Michigan City Sanitary District General terms and Conditions for Contracts. Mrs. Vachet noted that a *Contractor shall timely remit detailed monthly invoices outlining the goods and/or services provided, the quantity of goods, and/or increments of time provided during the preceding thirty (30), identification of the individual(s) who provided said services and/or manufacturer of any goods. Should Contractor fail to submit timely monthly invoices at least three (3) times during any giving twelve (12) month period, said failure shall be deemed a breach of contract and subject the Agreement to termination as the discretion of the Michigan City Sanitary District.* It was noted that the correspondence was informational only with no Board action needed. The Board understood.

Mrs. Anderson advised that the Sanitary District needs to upgrade its existing Supervisor Control and Data Acquisition System (SCADA) to System Platform 2023 to meet current standards and industry best practices. Mrs. Anderson then recommended approval of the Professional Services Agreement (PSA) with Actemium to configure the new SCADA hardware in the amount of \$41,710.00 and recommended approval of the same.

Mr. Sperling moved to accept the PSA as presented – seconded by Mrs. Mahone. There being no further question or comment on the matter the motion carried 3 – 0 in favor.

Old Business/Information Updates

Mr. Walus advised that staff and the consultant team continue to assemble data and history to develop an outline and draft content to prepare rate recommendations.

Mr. Walus noted that Krohn & Associates have prepared a proposed fee structure for permits and inspections. Mr. Walus reported that system development charges are still in progress.

Mr. Walus advised that on January 21, 2026, Robinson Engineering submitted reports on the Esplanade and Edgewood Sanitary Sewer rehabilitation recommendations. Budget estimates for this sewer and manhole repair work are \$573,000.00 for the Lake Shore Drive Esplanade Sewer and \$2,175,000.00 for the Edgewood rear yard sewer. These costs will be included in the Capital Plan.

Mr. Nagle provided the Board with a brief presentation regarding the Esplanade and Edgewood reports. It was noted that the Collection System staff did an excellent job at cleaning the discovered surcharge manhole. Mr. Nagle advised that the projects will be prioritized as funding is determined.

Mr. Walus advised that the Christopher B. Burke Engineering analysis of lift station operational data and back-up power needs is ongoing.

Regarding Tax Increment Financing (TIF) Area Needs Analysis and Agreement, Mr. Walus reported that a meeting on priority development projects was held on January 22, 2026. Review of TIF overlays is in progress to identify Collection System needs for these priority projects. Mr. Walus noted that Sanitary District officials met with the Economic Development Commission on January 22, 2026, to review specific projects that could qualify for Economic Development.

Regarding the Springland Avenue/Roeske Avenue Sewer Redirection, Mr. Walus advised that survey/utility data is being incorporated into preliminary construction drawings.

Mr. Walus reported that Sanitary District officials had a meeting with Christopher B. Burke Engineering on January 26, 2026, to review the outfall location options. It was noted that internal staff review is in progress.

Regarding the Ditch Maintenance Plan, Mr. Walus advised that inspections of seventeen (17) ditch culverts were completed on January 15th, 16th and 22nd of 2026. It was noted that inspection results are being evaluated to determine repair/replacement needs and budgetary costs.

Regarding the Lake Avenue and Highway 12 Lift Station Sewer Relief Project, Mr. Kremke reported that directional boring will begin in the next couple of weeks. Mr. Kremke advised that the MCASE project is completely weather dependent at this stage in the project.

Mr. Cutshaw presented a draft of an Engineer's Opinion of Probable Project Costs to the Board. Mr. Cutshaw reported that the New Primary Clarifiers – ESTIMATE PENDING PILOT STUDIES in the amount of \$4,454,000.00 with a 30% contingency. It was noted that the total probable project cost for the Wastewater Treatment Facility is estimated at \$59,685,000.00.

Ms. Vachet advised that the Board will receive more Refuse department updates in the coming meetings.

Mrs. Anderson reported that the Sanitary District received a complaint from Indiana Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) on December 29, 2025. It was noted that the complaint alleged occupational safety or health hazards at the Wastewater Treatment Facility specifically to the nature of the following:

- 1. Women do not have a women's restroom separate from the men's in the collections and refuse side.*
- 2. Employees are not provided with proper personal protective equipment (PPE).*
- 3. Employees smell sulfur dioxide in the Press building.*

Mrs. Anderson reported that the Sanitary District received a complaint from Indiana OSHA on January 7, 2026. It was noted that the complaint alleged occupational safety or health hazards at the Wastewater Treatment Facility specifically to the nature of the following:

- 1. Lack of proper PPE for workers (approximately 15-20)*
- 2. Lack of safety training (15-20)*
- 3. Leaking sulfur dioxide (1), raw sewage backing up in areas of press building (4-5)*
- 4. Laboratory ceiling collapsing and being held up with floor jacks (5-7)*
- 5. Company Vehicles are unsafe (20-30)*

The Sanitary District responded on January 5, 2026, to the December 29, 2026, OSHA complaints.

In Summary:

1. There are twelve (12) restrooms at the 12-acre Sanitary District of Michigan City/Wastewater Treatment Facility (SDMC) for its 70 employees, 15 employees of whom are women. Four (4) of the restrooms are for women only, four (4) are for men only, and there are four (4) unisex bathrooms that lock from the inside.
2. The Sanitary District provides employees with gloves, high-visibility clothing, safety glasses, rain gear, ear plugs, lab coats, and hard hats. Additionally, there is an annual Sanitary District Board of Commissioners approval of \$500.00 clothing allowance and access to SDMC-specific Cintas website from which steel-toe boots and Hi-Vis safety gear may be purchased. There's also a "Vending Machine" that is stocked with PPE, at no cost to employees. Personal gas monitors are provided as needed.
3. Sulfur dioxide (SO₂) tanks are housed in the Gas Storage Building and there is an SO₂ feeder in the Press Building used for de-chlorination in case of a Stormwater Basin Overflow. The feeders operate under a safe vacuum condition that prevents the gas from escaping into the atmosphere in case of a leak meaning the risk of SO₂ in the Press Building. There are SO₂ leak detectors and alarms in both Gas Storage Building and Press Building that are regularly checked for proper operation.

The Sanitary District responded on January 14, 2026, to the January 7, 2026, OSHA complaints.

In Summary:

1. The Sanitary District provides employees with gloves, high-visibility clothing, safety glasses, rain gear, ear plugs, lab coats, and hard hats. Additionally, there is an annual Sanitary District Board of Commissioners approval of \$500.00 clothing allowance and access to SDMC-specific Cintas website from which steel-toe boots and Hi-Vis safety gear may be purchased. There's also a "Vending Machine" that is stocked with PPE, at no cost to employees. Personal gas monitors are provided as needed.

2. March 26, 2025 – Disinfection Chemical Training was provided to the Operations & Maintenance Department Staffs covering the following: Properly handling Chlorine (CL2) and sulfur dioxide (SO2).
May 16, 2025 – Refuse Department received training on DOT requirements for conducting pre and post vehicle inspections and procedures for vehicle breakdown hazard communication/traffic control.
May 19, 2025, Health, Safety, Security and Environment (HSSE) onboarding orientation and refresher training was provided to the Collection Department Staff.
3. Sulfur dioxide (SO2) tanks are housed in the Gas Storage Building and there is an SO2 feeder in the Press Building used for de-chlorination in case of a Stormwater Basin Overflow. The feeders operate under a safe vacuum condition that prevents the gas from escaping into the atmosphere in case of a leak meaning the risk of SO2 in the Press Building. There are SO2 leak detectors and alarms in both Gas Storage Building and Press Building that are regularly checked for proper operation.
4. In response to an overhead noise reported by laboratory personnel, investigations were completed by the Sanitary District maintenance staff, consultant engineers, and construction contractors. It was determined that the roof needed to be replaced. In 2024, the roof was replaced, and the floor jacks were removed.
5. The Sanitary District Vehicle Policy requires that employees conduct pre-trip and post-trip inspections before and after each use and prohibits employees from driving vehicles that are not in safe operating condition. In 2025, there were 3,004 documented vehicle inspections.

Regarding allegations of hazardous workplace or health conditions at the Sanitary District of Michigan City, Section 4.9.1 and Section 4.9.2 of the Sanitary District Personnel Policies Handbook, direct Sanitary District employees to notify management verbally and in writing of safety hazards or potential safety hazards that they observe while working.

It was noted that the allegations listed in this complaint were either never reported to management or were reported and properly addressed.

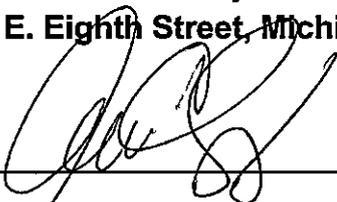
Mr. Yagelski reported that a representative from Highstreet Insurance visited the Sanitary District on January 27, 2026, for a Risk Assessment/Tour of the Wastewater Treatment Facility.

Mr. Yagelski advised that the Sanitary District is looking for alternative vendors regarding the Uniform Program.

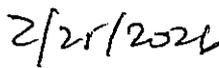
Ms. Vachet reported that the Sanitary District is looking to review and update the Annual Contract Renewals. It was noted that this process should take place every December to determine if the general terms and conditions need to be modified. Mr. Babcock recommended that the contracts be reviewed a month prior to allow plenty of time to review and make any necessary modifications.

Mr. Babcock entertained a motion to adjourn the meeting at 5:53 P.M. – seconded by Mr. Sperling.

Next Board of Sanitary District Commissioners Regular Meeting – **February 25, 2026, at 1100 E. Eighth Street, Michigan City, IN 46360 at 4:00 P.M. Local Time.**



Andrew Sperling, Vice President



Date