

**WEIRTON AREA WATER BOARD
REGULAR SESSION- 2026 AGENDA**

July 16, 2026

A regular session of the Weirton Area Water Board was called to order at 12:00 p.m. on Thursday, July 16, 2026, in Room 201 of the City Building, by James Shockley, Chairman.

Members in attendance were James Shockley; Ron Jones; Joseph Paolo; Rocky Bragg; Robert Kolanko; and Anthony Rocchio, ex-officio member.

WAWB Staff present were Butch Mastrantoni; Lori Veltri; Brian Kuntz; Chuck Tenaglio; Brent Reckner; Kelsey Ptaszek; and Dan Guida.

Also attending were Jesse Alden and Chuck Kelly of Thrasher Engineering; Ben Erste and Carlo Fabian of the BHJ; and Craig Howell of the Weirton Daily Times.

MINUTES

Mr. Paolo commented that Ms. Veltri did a great job, he had to say. There were quite a few minutes from the last meeting. Mr. Shockley said he told Ms. Veltri he thought he was reading a book. With no additions or corrections requested, Mr. Paolo made a motion to approve the minutes of the June 11, 2026, Board meeting. Mr. Kolanko seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

REPORTS

Administrative Report – With no discussion from Board members regarding the Administrative Report, the report was approved as submitted.

Finance Report: Mr. Kuntz reviewed the finance report, which was included in the Board packet. Mr. Bragg made a motion to approve the Smart Bill for the month of June 2026 in the amount of \$3,231.01. Mr. Jones seconded. The motion passed unanimously. Mr. Kuntz informed the Board that there were copies of bond payments for the quarter included in the report. He told Mr. Paolo that is what he had asked about at the last meeting. Mr. Kuntz reviewed the report for the 06A bond with the Board. He stated this is the bond entry for the whole quarter. It actually gets to him on 6/30, and this is what is needed to make the entry. He said he will include this report in the Board packet every quarter so the Board can be up to date on what is left on the bonds.

Delinquent Report: Mr. Reckner gave the delinquent reports for June and July since he wasn't in attendance at the June meeting. The shut-off date for the April 2026 bill run was June 3, 2026. The 30-day cycle ends on July 6, 2026. Total accounts to be collected or

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terminated on or after the June 3, 2026, shut-off date were 1,224. Of this number, 396 were more than one bill past due, 55 have paid in full, 13 made partial payments and still have an outstanding past due balance, 2 have been shut off, 53 received time extensions and will be collected in regular procedure should they fail to pay as agreed, 10 customers received pledges, and 5 customers are under multi-payment contracts. Eight hundred twenty-eight single bills are past due. The shut-off date for the May 2026 bill run was June 30, 2026. The 30-day cycle ends on July 30, 2026. Total accounts to be collected or terminated on or after the June 30, 2026, shut-off date were 1,376. Of this number, 462 were more than one bill past due, 97 have paid in full, 19 made partial payments and still have an outstanding past due balance, 10 have been shut off, 1 paid and service was restored, 57 received time extensions and will be collected in regular procedure should they fail to pay as agreed, 6 customers received pledges, and 6 customers are under multi-payment contracts. Nine hundred fourteen single bills are past due.

Citizens' Comments and Communications: Councilwoman Brittany Holloway addressed the Board. She stated that Council received an email from Mr. Gruda recently about pump reports relating to East Palestine. She would like an explanation of them if that can be included in Council's report from Mr. Mastrantoni. She asked if anybody else had received those from Mr. Gruda. Mr. Bragg replied that he had heard from him, and they discussed it. Mr. Guida stated that this is comments only. No Q & A. Ms. Holloway replied ok. She said if that could be included in Mr. Mastrantoni's report at the Council meeting, an explanation of those, and if anybody needs a copy, please let her know. Mr. Mastrantoni commented that he would like the record to reflect that he has never seen a copy of Mr. Gruda's submission. If he could get a copy if he is going to report on it. Ms. Holloway said she is just requesting on record that Council get an explanation for the email they received. Thank you.

The next person to address the Board was Chris Gruda. He stated that he has been called the head of a Facebook mob, not by the Board, but by City Council and by the mayor, not everyone on City Council obviously. He's not really the head of any Facebook mob. He's just someone who cares enough to listen when people speak. And people send him private messages, and they look to him, and they want answers, and he doesn't have them because you can't respond during a meeting. You've been told not to. You can't have a back and forth with anybody. You don't put out any kind of serious, meaningful statements on a platform that people have access to. There's been employees working with the department that are villainized because of the image that is created by the lack of transparency here. Mr. Mastrantoni, you came to City Council, and you said that you guys operate in daylight. You do. And everybody's at work when you operate. Most people can't afford to take off.

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They don't have five weeks of vacation to come here and say what they think. He thinks if you would make an effort, especially someone outspoken like Mr. Bragg, would make an effort to make public statements, maybe post them on Facebook, maybe have some meetings, maybe talk about more than plant upgrades at City Council, discuss what happened like on Weir Avenue the other day, which you guys handled awesome, that was a terrible situation, looks great. But no one hears about the good because no one goes on Facebook excited because the Water Board did good. They go on there because they're upset. He thinks that, moving forward, people age out, they get tired of what they're doing and go do new things and new people come in, but social media is important. And people are paying attention to it. And it has more of a voice than anybody here has right now. If you don't take that seriously, the future of politics and the future of city government are gonna be a mystery to you. He's not here to fight. He's not here to point fingers. He told Mr. Mastrantoni if he would give him his email address, he would send him that information and any other information he has about it. He is not his enemy.

Utility Director Communications: Mr. Mastrantoni had no communications to report.

OLD BUSINESS

Update on the WTP Expansion Project –Mr. Alden reviewed a report from Thrasher Engineering that he passed out. There will be a construction progress meeting today at 1:30 p.m. with the contractor, staff, EPA, BHJ, and Thrasher at their office. He stated that Mr. Kelly continues to hold his weekly coordination meetings with staff and the contractor to ensure communication and coordination as the project continues along. He has two Change Orders to present today – one for a time extension and one for a monetary change to the project. The first Change Order is Change Order #8. It is a contract times extension. This was initially included in Change Order #7, and at the last meeting, if the Board recalls, they removed the time extension piece and planned to present that as a stand alone Change Order, which that's what this consists of. This Change Order addresses an extension of the contract times. It's extended for substantial completion for 117 calendar days and the ready for final payment date for 119 calendar days. That puts the revised contract times for substantial completion to October 15, 2026, and final payment November 16, 2026. And there is no change to the contract price as part of this Change Order. This would require a motion from the Board for approval. Mr. Paolo made a motion to approve Change Order #8. Mr. Bragg seconded. The motion passed unanimously. Mr. Rocchio commented that he had people questioning him about the water rate increase. They said they shouldn't

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have the increase due to it not being completed in time. Mr. Mastrantoni replied that he did not understand the question. Ms. Holloway said that according to the ordinance, the second part of the rate increase would be initiated four months prior to completion of the project so if it's extended, does that change when that rate increase should have happened. Mr. Mastrantoni stated that we use an attorney firm of Kay Casto & Chaney that represents us at the Public Service Commission tariffs procedures with regard to tariff changes and step increases. Based on an approved tariff by the WV Public Service Commission, Step 2 rates are to become effective on or after substantial completion of construction of the project or four months prior to the initiation of debt service, whichever should first occur. Mr. Mastrantoni asked Mr. Kuntz when we started making payments on the bonds. Mr. Kuntz said he didn't have an exact date, but we have made two, gonna make three payments before we got the rate increase. Mr. Mastrantoni clarified that before the rate increase was instituted last fall, we started paying for bonds. When we could have presented this four months prior to last fall, we went two months beyond roughly. And the rates were properly instituted. We even went as far as to issue public notice once again when it wasn't really necessary. So yes, according to every information I have, we properly instituted the rate increase, and the substantial completion and final completion dates, the movements of those dates, don't present any problem with what we did legally. Mr. Paolo stated that he felt the confusion came up because of the "or" statement, so since substantial completion doesn't have impact then it's the bond payment in which you have the ability to institute the rate increase. Mr. Mastrantoni commented that anything can go wrong, unforeseen, during the course of construction that would take a project longer, so there's always a good safeguard to have an either-or provision because bond investors expect payment. They don't expect excuses, so we instituted the safeguards to make sure that in the event of the project going long we still had the authority to institute the new rates. Mr. Shockley said we've always stayed up to date on that. Mr. Rocchio said he knew. He has just had people calling him, and now that he knows he can tell them. Mr. Alden then presented Change Order #9. This Change Order addresses costs associated with replacement and installation of two 6" 300 PSI oil cushion swing check valves for the Marland Heights high pressure pump station. This was a change they had to make during construction. They had to get some additional valves to deal with the high pressure of those pumps. The total cost to do that work is an increase to the contract amount by \$21,402.69. This Change Order would have no change to the contract times. And this would require a motion from the Board for approval. Mr. Bragg made a motion to approve Change Order #9. Mr. Paolo seconded. The motion passed unanimously. When Mr. Alden asked the Board if there were any other questions on the Treatment Plant Upgrade progress report, Mr. Paolo asked if the materials that were due to come in will be coming in soon or in August like they thought. Mr. Kelly replied late July or early August. He actually

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got a picture of them yesterday in New York at their fiber coating facility. They do exist. They are getting finalized, and they are on their way. They talked about this yesterday at the plant. Hopefully end of July. Worst case scenario first or second week of August.

Mr. Alden gave an update on the Distribution System Upgrade Project. They are still working through preliminary design. They initially anticipated on already having some of the preliminary field work done, but they've got their mapping processed, they're in the process of developing all of their field sheets with existing information. They're not behind schedule in any way, but they just postponed their field work to get some additional drawing information included on the field sheets before they go out and actually do that field work. They do have correspondence back and forth with the Army Corp. Design is currently happening, but there's also an environmental piece with the Army Corp that they are working on as well. Those things are concurrently happening. The Corp has not scheduled a progress update. He knows that they are currently working through the PPA agreement with the Water Board. He assumes at some point there will be some additional correspondence from Scott Swansinger. They were hoping to have their grant finalized and the grant agreement ready for signatures in late August or September. He thinks they are in good shape with the schedule as far as the Corp is concerned. Mr. Paolo thanked Mr. Alden for calling out the environmental piece, because that's really the lynch pin for completion. Mr. Alden stated that is the critical path for moving the project along, getting environmental clearances and all of that. Mr. Paolo said it is really important to again note that this project was entirely grant funded and won't cost our rate payers any additional fees or that kind of thing. He just wanted to reiterate that.

Mr. Alden also provided an update on the Cast Iron and Galvanized Line Replacement Project. The project team has completed the WV IJDC submission. That was submitted prior to the June 10 deadline. The June 10 submissions will be on the agenda for Technical Review and Funding Committee on July 28. Thrasher will have a representative there on behalf of the Board. Mr. Erste may also attend that meeting potentially. They will make sure they have representation there. In case anything comes up, they will get those questions addressed. To date, he has not received any questions other than a few clarification items from the review committee. What they do typically is they post the technical review comments, they call them TRC comments, they post them on the IJDC's website prior to the meeting. If they post them next week sometime, they'll make sure to try to get ahead of that and answer those questions before the meeting. Once it gets through the Technical Review and Funding Committee, it then has to go to the full Council meeting. That's where they will provide concurrence of the recommended funding

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scenario and give approval to pursue funding. They will also make sure they attend that meeting as well. In addition to that, they have submitted a CDS grant application. They have not heard any information back whether that application was approved or not or made the short list. He did not see it on the initial short list, but that doesn't mean that it won't make another list. The next item on the agenda is to execute Professional Services Agreements. That is slated for July. And then they will be working toward design and all the milestones associated with design from there. They had this discussion at last month's meeting about having the agreement up for discussion today, so he does have the Engineering Services Agreement for the project. Just so all the Board members understand, the planning associated with this project was paid for out of the contingency from the Water Plant project. That was done as an amendment, so there are no planning services included in this agreement. The services that are included are the preliminary design, final design, bidding and negotiating, resident project representation, construction phases, and additional services. The additional services include funding applications, GIS, environmental assessment and impact statement, engineering and topographic surveys, land and right of way surveying, aerial photography and mapping, leak detection, and asset management plan. The total fees for the project – preliminary design is \$1,300,000.00, final design is \$800,000.00, bidding and negotiating is \$100,000.00, construction phase is \$1,000,000.00, post-construction is \$125,000.00, and resident project representation \$1,350,000.00. That includes four full-time project representatives and one full-time construction manager on-site for the duration of the project. And the total for special services is \$590,000.00. Everything that's in there is what was submitted as part of the PER and the total project cost that is in to the Infrastructure Council. This would require a motion from the Board for approval. Mr. Jones made a motion to approve the Engineering Services Agreement. Mr. Bragg seconded. The motion passed unanimously. Mr. Alden stated that they will have to file all of those agreements on the Infrastructure Council dashboard as part of just keeping everything administratively complete. In order to move to the next phase they will have to do all of that.

Mr. Alden then provided an update on the PFAS Treatment Upgrades Project. This project received a funding recommendation from the WV IJDC following the June 3 full Council meeting. The project cost and funding scenario is listed there. \$11,180,000.00 for total project cost. This project they did submit a CDS application, and he informed the Board last month that this job had a \$7,180,000.00 CDS grant that was on the short list for Senator Justice's appropriations list. Should a congressional budget be passed, this project would be included and that grant would be part of the budget so funds would be available at some point moving forward from there. That doesn't mean that it's approved. It just means they are on the next step to get through, which is a very good thing. One other item to note here – during the IJDC review process the DEP requested that they perform a pilot study for the

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proposed equipment that they are wanting to use. They've already kind of started that process, and they will be in coordination with staff to implement a pilot study as they are working through the design on the project.

Mr. Erste presented Draw #25 for the project in the amount of \$727,573.89 consisting of payments to The Thrasher Group for \$37,704.89, Triton Construction for \$688,077.59, and BHJ-MPC in the amount of \$1,791.41. Mr. Paolo made a motion to approve the payment of Draw #25. Mr. Bragg seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

NEW BUSINESS

- 1. Approval of BHJ Administrative Services Agreement – Distribution Systems Upgrade Project (Walnut Street)** – Mr. Erste stated that for the three projects Mr. Alden has been giving the Board updates on - the Walnut Street Project, the Galvanized and Cast Iron replacement, and the PFAS project - he has the BHJ administrative agreements for the Board's approval today. He sent them to Mr. Guida in June at some point, and Ms. Veltri was able to put them on the agenda for him. They are their standard agreement, outside of swapping the language for the specific project to inform that and the amount charged. Jim Kelsh with Bowles Rice is the one who looked over these Administrative Services Agreements and recommended that that's what they use. He has one for each project for the Board's approval, which would require a motion. Mr. Paolo commented that he appreciated them being included in the packet so they could review them. He then made a motion to approve the agreement for the Distribution Systems Upgrade Project (Walnut Street). Mr. Bragg seconded. The motion passed unanimously.
- 2. Approval of BHJ Administrative Services Agreement – Galvanized & Cast Iron Replacement Project** – Mr. Bragg made a motion to approve the agreement for the Galvanized & Cast Iron Replacement Project. Mr. Jones seconded. The motion passed unanimously.
- 3. Approval of BHJ Administrative Services Agreement – PFAS Treatment Upgrades Project** - Mr. Jones made a motion to approve the agreement for the PFAS Treatment Upgrades Project. Mr. Paolo seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

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- 4. Resolution #281 – To Install a New Vertical Turbine Pump at Lee Avenue Pump Station** – Mr. Mastrantoni stated that staff had gotten in touch with the Board by phone to get an early approval on this. It's elemental that we get this vertical turbine pump back in service at Lee Avenue. The Board gave its' approval, and we executed the necessary agreements to get that process going. But this is just a formal action here at the Board meeting to make that an official action of the Board. Mr. Bragg made a motion to approve Resolution #281. Mr. Jones seconded. The motion passed unanimously.
- 5. Resolution #282 – To Authorize Payment of the Annual WV PSC Intrastate Revenue Assessment Fee** – Mr. Mastrantoni stated that yearly we are assessed a fee as a public utility. Mr. Jones made a motion to approve Resolution #282. Mr. Bragg seconded. The motion passed unanimously.
- 6. Next Meeting Date – August 13, 2026**

INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

EXECUTIVE SESSION

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business before the July 16, 2026, Regular Session of the Weirton Area Water Board, the meeting was adjourned at 12:45 p.m. The motion to adjourn was made by Mr. Jones and seconded by Mr. Bragg. The next Regular Session of the Weirton Area Water Board was set for August 13, 2026.



James Shockley, Chairman