

**MINUTES OF PUBLIC MEETING OF THE WEST DES MOINES WATER WORKS  
BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

January 24, 2022

The public meeting was called to order by Chair Scott Brennan at 5:00 PM on Wednesday, January 24, 2022. The meeting was held at the Valley Junction Community Center, 217 5th Street. Chair Scott Brennan and Vice Chair Gretchen Tegeler and Trustee Mary Thomsen were present and Jody Smith by phone. Also present were staff members Christina Murphy, General Manager; and members of the public.

Ted Ohmart, 1026 31<sup>st</sup> Street indicated he supported full regionalization. Mr. Ohmart shared about the other successful regional efforts here in the metro. He acknowledged that there was fear at the beginning of the WRA. He believes there could be cost savings to be realized by regionalizing in the form of bidding chemicals together, possible shared equipment and elimination of duplicative positions by attrition. He indicated that regionalization and securing future water supply is important to economic development.

Randy Celsi, 618 17<sup>th</sup> Street, indicated he is both a homeowner and business owner in West Des Moines. He shared that the WRA has not been all well received and has been tough on small businesses and restaurants with regards to grease interceptor rules. He expressed concern for WDMWW being responsible for paying for DMWW failed infrastructure and concerns that WDMWW would not have water in times of drought since DMWW has trouble pulling water from the river in times of drought. He believes regionalization would mean more restrictions and oversight and would be more in favor of WDMWW drilling our own wells and paying a little more to remain independent.

Larry Anderson, 3109 Meadow Lane, shared that the DMWW will take care of DMWW first and leave WDMWW hanging in limbo. That regionalization of water cannot be compared to other types of regionalization in the metro as they were forced to by the federal government and that is not the case for drinking water. He is disappointed that we are not giving answers to why other alternative suggested are not being considered, that WDMWW has not been making decisions in the public, and not putting information out there for people to see. Information in the service line is too little too late and those that receive their bills electronically would have to click to see the service line. Mr. Anderson doesn't believe that WDMWW will be on the committee to set rates so we will not have gained anything and he spoke of a secret plan by DMWW regarding the 28E. He believes that there are other alternatives that should be considered.

Julie Stauch, 4712 Westwood Drive, spoke about trust issues and that she has heard from folks that are for and against that believe that WDMWW does not need to participate in this resolution. She believes WDMWW is being suckered into it. She requested a failure analysis be completed. She believes the deal is already cut because DMWW is working on a draft 28E with no one else at the table. She requested that Trustee Tegeler recuse herself from the vote if she would vote regionalization no matter what. She indicated that Jody who was behind the WRA regional effort is trying to make this look the same and she believes there are problems with the WRA. She believes that Jody is a part time resident of Alabama and should recuse himself from the vote. She asked Chair Brennan to not rush signing, provide time to regularly discuss parts of the 28E, and insist on a public vote.

Brian Rickert, 4342 Oakwood Lane, explained why he also believed Trustee Tegeler is biased towards regionalization. He shared that he believes that if the Board signs, they are stuck and would look bad to back out. He requested a lot more meetings before signing the 28E to educate ratepayers. He believes that if we regionalize, AC Ward will be shut down. He requests that other options be explored, that a vote on this is not necessary at this time. He shared that the only reason DMWW is doing this is to get out of their existing agreements which is a bad deal for them.

Mr. Jody Smith, Trustee made additional comments that he is not concerned about Des Moines Water Works starting a 28E/29F draft and applauds them for starting that work. Jody discusses the future cost savings being very significant going with this option. He states that he will not recuse himself from this vote as he has the background and ability to make that vote.

The Board expressed appreciation for the public who came to share their opinion.

The public meeting adjourned at 6:35 p.m.

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Scott Brennan  
Chair

Attest:

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Christina Murphy  
Secretary

These Minutes are a draft. If corrections or additions are made the corrected minutes will be published after approval at the February 16, 2022 meeting.