

UTILITY ADVISORY BOARD
Thursday, September 21, 2023
8:30 – 9:30 am
1300 Market Ave SW
MINUTES

1. Approval of Minutes – August 17, 2023
2. Public Comments on Agenda Items
3. Approval of Agenda
4. Introduction of Environmental Services Manager – James Hurt
5. Water Career Program – Hillary Caron
6. Updates
 - a. August Awards – Jeff McCaul
 - b. Biodigester – Jared Grabinski
 - c. 2023 Lead and Copper Sampling - Wayne Jernberg
7. Public Comments
8. Items from Members
9. Next Meeting – October 19, 2023
10. Adjournment

UTILITY ADVISORY BOARD
Thursday, August 17, 2023
8:30 – 9:30 am
1300 Market Ave SW
MINUTES

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 8:35 a.m. by Mr.Hurt.

Members Present

Tai Verbrugge, Kolene Allen, Wayne Jernberg, James Hurt, Alex Fleet, Darrel Schmalzel, James Ouzts, Jared Grabinski, Jeff McCaul, Molly Clarin, Mark Bennett, Jim Kirkwood, Sam Giffel, Aric Thorne, Brian Bradley

Approval of Minutes – June 15, 2023

Motion to approve the minutes by Mr. Schmalzel, second by Mr. Jernberg.

MOTION CARRIED.

Public Comments on Agenda Items

None

Approval of Agenda

Motion to approve the agenda by Mr. Jernberg, second by Mr. Ouzts.

MOTION CARRIED.

2023 Water/Sewer Rate Study

Mrs. Clarin presented the Utility Service District (USD) Size Recommendation Memo for the 2023 Water/Sewer Rate Study to the board. There are no changes to the current USD areas, but it needs to be approved by the board for the 2023 Rate Study.

Motion to adopt the 2023 USD Size areas by Mr. Jernberg, second by Mr. Verbrugge.

MOTION CARRIED.

Updates

July Awards

Three projects were awarded in July 2023. The first is for the Low Lift Crib Line Repair at the Lake Michigan Filtration Plant for \$178k; the project was awarded to Freedom Construction and Consulting Inc. The second project is for the reconstruction of Milton Street for \$6.3 million; the project was awarded to Lodestar Construction. The third project is for replacing the North Header

Flowmeter at the Market Avenue Pump Station for \$500k; the project was awarded to Allied Mechanical Services.

The report incorrectly listed the substantial completion date for the replacement of the North Header Flowmeter at Market Avenue Pump Station. The correct data is 1/3/2024.

Mr. Hurt asked if the engineer's estimates are now closer to the final bids being received. Mr. Kirkwood said yes, but the delivery time for the watermain has improved.

Kent County Community Action (KCCA) Q2

Mrs. Giffel updated the board on the Water/Sewer Assistance Program; year-to-date, \$39K has been expended, and 108 households have been assisted. The average assistance is \$329.

Mrs. Giffel has been working with a legislative committee led by Senator Chang; they are working on establishing a permanent assistance program in Michigan. The program will assist the asset-limited, income-constrained, and employed (ALICE) population. Once the program is approved, she will recommend an amendment to the water/sewer assistance program with Kent County Community Action to broaden the assistance eligibility, including the ALICE population.

She will be bringing more information to the board about the new program in the future.

Partner Community Service Agreements

Mr. Hurt reminded partner communities that the 5th Extension to the Water and Sanitary Water and Sewer Service Agreements expire at the end of the year. The service agreements must be approved by each partner community governing body and the City of Grand Rapids's Commission.

Mrs. Clarin asked partner communities to contact her if they have questions about the service agreements. The signed agreements can be emailed to Mrs. Clarin or Mrs. Contreras.

GRCC Water Career Program

GRCC and the Water System held three summer water camps for 3rd-9th graders. The camps exposed campers to various jobs in the water and public service industry. They also toured both the water and wastewater plants. Roughly 30 students attended the camps.

The internship for the 1st cohort of students is ending soon; he is happy to announce that all five interns have been offered a job with the City of GR or the City of Wyoming. The recruitment and hiring for the 2nd cohort has ended; this year, 27 people applied and 10 interviewed for the program. Due to funding not being utilized for the 1st cohort, the City could hire eight instead of six interns.

He is very proud of the work that has gone into making the success of the program. GRCC is in discussion with the Environmental Protection Agency for an extension to the grant; they are also exploring a grant from the Kellogg Foundation.

2023 Lead and Copper Rule Sampling

The Lake Plant's lab staff continues collecting water samples for its annual LCR. As of right now, the Action Level for lead is nine ppb.

Kent County Health Department Filter Distribution

The Water System participated in the water distribution events held in the City limits. The Kent County Health Department and the Michigan Department of Human Services distributed 2,000 filters to Kent County residents. The City continues to work on a filter distribution site for the 3rd Ward.

Public Comments

None.

Items from Members

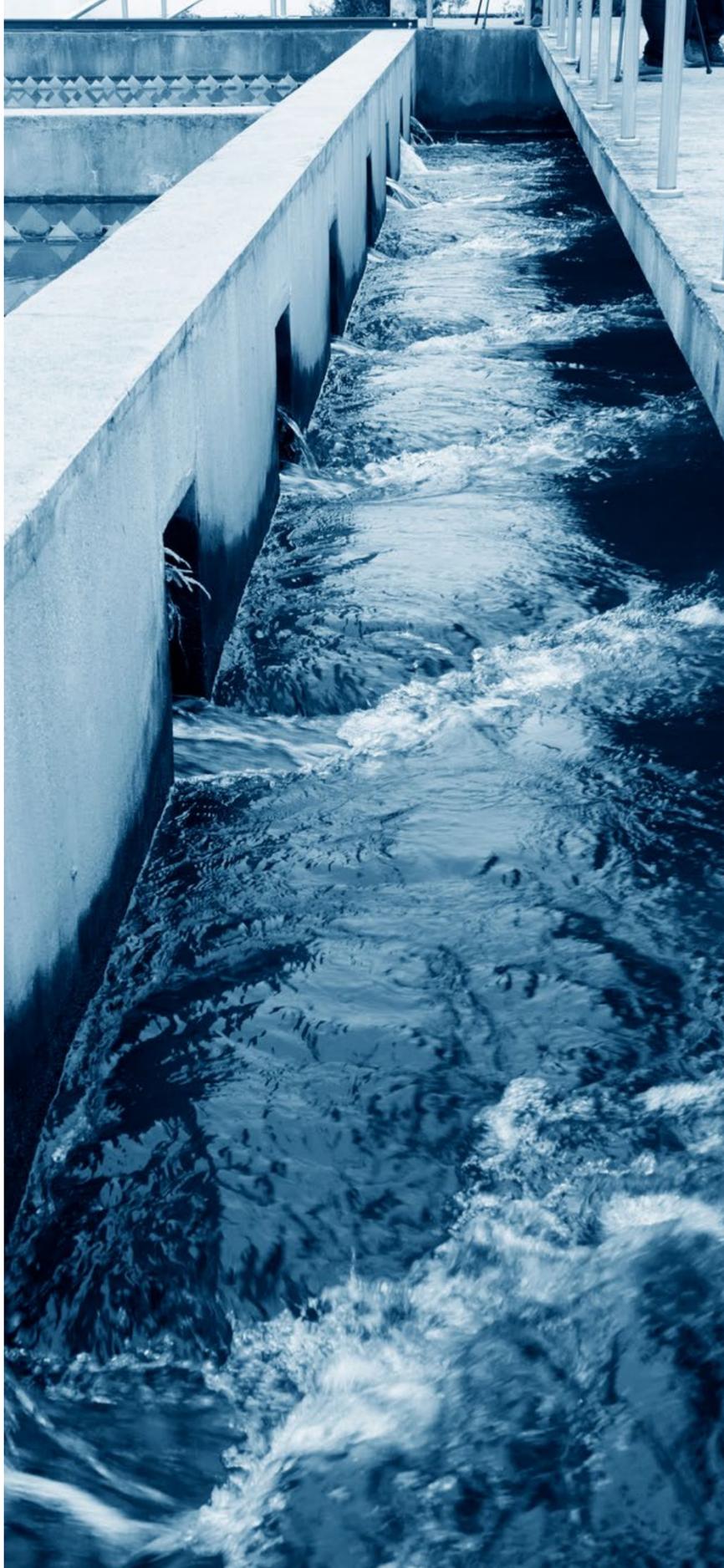
Mr. Bennett said that PFAS was detected at a daycare in Tallmadge. He asked if the board is aware of funding for PFAS testing. Mr. Jernberg said he is unaware, but it should be coordinated with the Ottawa County Health Department and Michigan PFAS Action Response Team (MPART). Tallmadge will be notifying the subdivision near the daycare of the PFAS results. Mr. Bennett said the next step is to extend a watermain to that area, which is a bigger conversation with the Water team.

Mr. Vergrugee will have the year-end financials for FY2023 at the next meeting.

Next Meeting – September 21, 2023

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 9:18 by Mr. Hurt.



The West Michigan Water Career Program: A Year in Review

Hillary Caron

City of Grand Rapids Water System



Mission Statement

To **collaborate** with stakeholders to provide **equitable** and **innovative** opportunities for learning, prosperity, and professional development to all current and future water professionals.

Vision Statement

The West Michigan water community will be a diverse, inclusive, **innovative**, and **collaborative** workforce providing on-the-job training, education, and professional development opportunities for current and future employees to grow and learn.





COLLABORATION

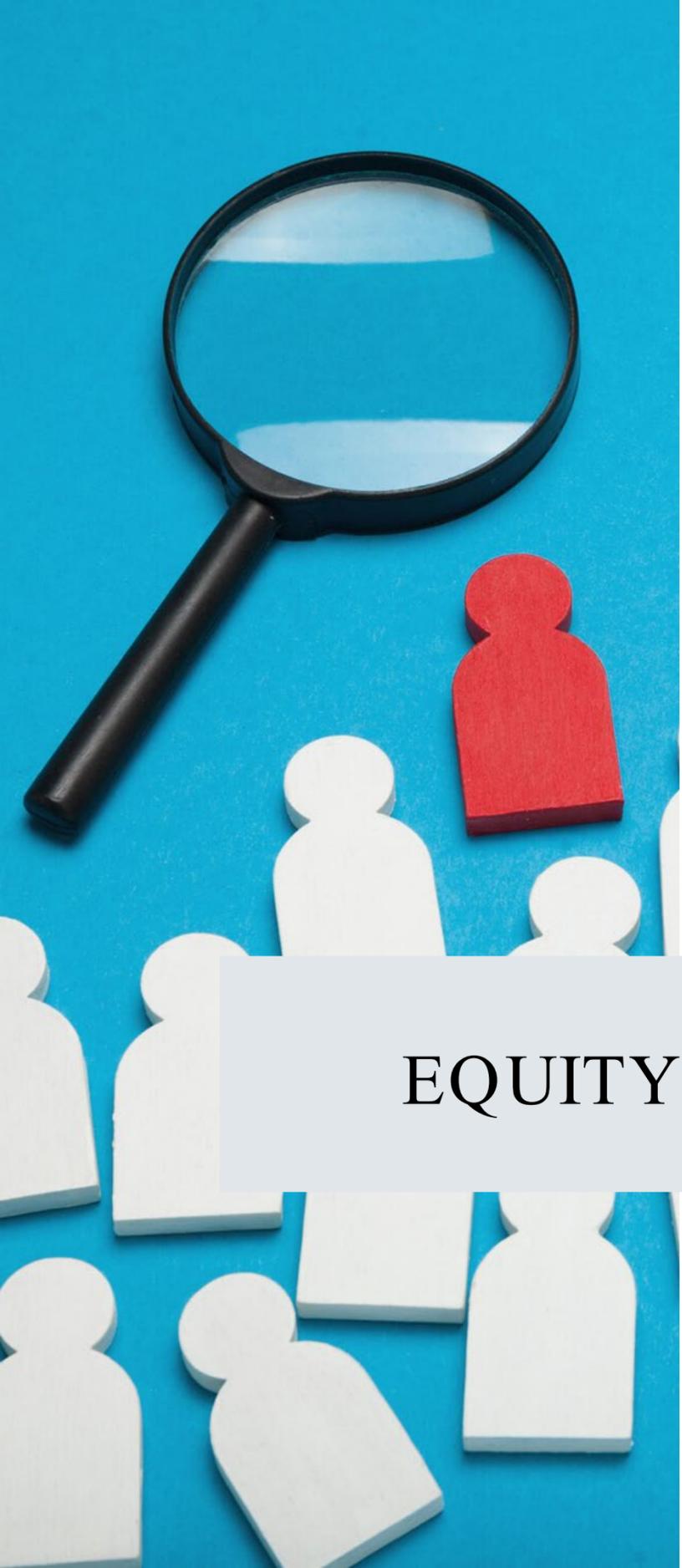


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\$ 5 0 0 K IN FEDERAL FUNDING UNTIL 2 0 2 4





EQUITY

TARGETED AUDIENCE

The City’s “neighborhoods of focus” are targeted for recruitment, as data shows concentrated levels of unemployment by zip code.

ADDRESSING BARRIERS

Removed systemic obstacles to participate in the program & provide resources to help succeed in program

EDUCATION & TRAINING

Participants are enrolled in the Water Certificate Program with Bay College & attend for FREE

All provided training counts toward State Licensing



TECHNICAL TRAINING DURING INTERNSHIP

Each intern will have a competency -based checklist specific to their career track. Experienced trainers will supervise tasks and ensure the intern is competent before signing off



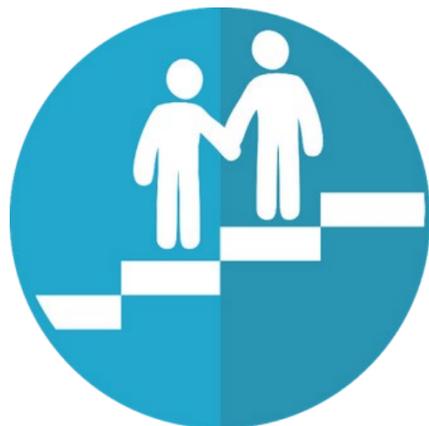
HIGH QUALITY EDUCATION

Interns will complete feedback surveys and have performance evaluations to ensure all needs are being met. Alterations to program will be as needed.



PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT SKILLS

In addition to technical skills, professional skills are incorporated (e.g. interviewing, customer service, resume building, and computer software classes)



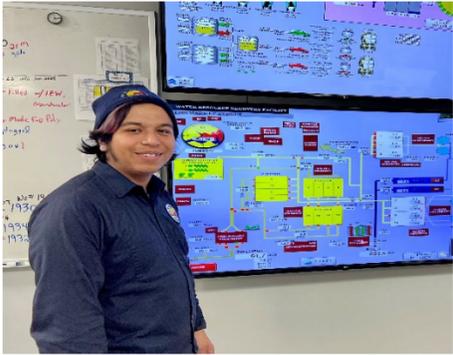
MENTORSHIP

Interns are strategically paired with a water professional. Interns will select a mentor based on compatibility and career interests.



ABIGAIL CAIRNS

Wastewater Operator
City of Grand Rapids Environmental Services



DANIEL RUBIO-MARTINEZ

Wastewater Operator
City of Grand Rapids Environmental Services



SHILOH BOOSAMRA

Engineering Assistant
City of Grand Rapids Environmental Services



ALEX TUMBLING

Utility Aide Intern
City of Grand Rapids Environmental Services



ANDREW DENUYL

Drinking Water Operator
City of Wyoming Water Department

Meet the
2022-2023
interns

Future of Program



COHORT 2 KICKED-OFF AUGUST 2023.

Increased cohort to **EIGHT** interns

CREATE A CO-OP WITH ADDITIONAL WEST MICHIGAN MUNICIPALITIES

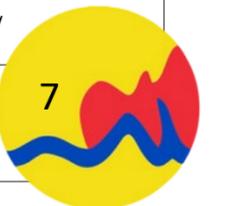
Expand the talent pipeline of future water professionals beyond Grand Rapids

EXPAND CURRENT PROGRAM TO INCLUDE ADDITIONAL PUBLIC WORKS TEAMS

Intentionally collaborate with other Public Services Groups to recruit and retain talent in hard to fill positions

MAINTAIN A SUSTAINABLE FUNDING SOURCE

Current EPA funding will last until 2024



E-MAIL: waterprogram@grcity.us

PHONE: 616-456-3930

WEBSITE: grcity.us/water



Let's Chat!

**Water/Sewer UAB Report
August 2023**

Project Name	Contractor	Award Date	Substantial Completion Date	Final Completion Date	Water Fund Authorized NTE Amt	Sewer Fund Authorized NTE Amt	Est. Year for Rates	Integrated (Y/N)
Reconstruction of State Street from Lafayette Avenue to Madison Avenue		8/8/2023	11/4/2024	9/26/2025	\$414,430.00	\$278,320.00	2025	N (GR)
Façade Repairs and Improvements at the Lake Michigan Filtration Plant	McGraw Construction, Inc.	8/8/2023	12/29/2023	2/2/2024	\$201,750.00	N/A	2024	Y
Ash Lagoon Closure & Stormwater Pump Station Improvements at the Water Resource Recovery Facility	HIS Constructors, Inc.	8/8/2023	10/31/2025	12/5/2025	N/A	\$17,404,280	2025	Y