

**Minutes Of  
Communications Committee Meeting  
Of The Water Works Board  
Of The City Of Birmingham  
May 6, 2016**

A Finance Committee Meeting of The Water Works Board of the City of Birmingham was held on Friday, May 6, 2016, at 9:00 a.m., in the principal office of the Board, 3600 First Avenue North, Birmingham, Alabama, 35222, to discuss finance issues.

The following Committee members were present: Ronald A. Mims and Kevin B. McKie. Also present were George Munchus and Sherry Lewis, who do not serve on the Committee. Ann D. Florie serves on the Committee and was not in attendance.

Inasmuch as a majority of Committee members were present, a quorum was in attendance.

The meeting was also attended by: Mac Underwood, General Manager; Darryl R. Jones, Assistant General Manager of Operations and Technical Services; Michael Johnson, Assistant General Manager of Finance and Administration; Grace Amison, Executive Assistant to the Board of Directors; Tammy Wilson, Executive Assistant to T. M. "Sonny" Jones and Darryl R. Jones; Reginald Nall, Manager of Distribution; George Anderson, Manager of Information Technology; Sam Ford and Paige Goldman, Fuston, Petway & French, LLP; Jesse Lewis, Dorian Kendrick, Chris Ruffin, Rickey White and Francesca Pierce, The Lewis Group; Chandra Abesingha, CE & Associates, Inc.; Bryan Gilliom, Message Point Media.

Chairman Mims called the meeting to order at 9:18 a.m.

There was no discussion under old business.

Following, General Manager Mac Underwood requested the Committee hear a presentation from Lewis and Company regarding the Communications Audit and News Site, as set forth in agenda item 2. Jesse Lewis was recognized and reminded the Committee that Lewis and Company worked with Staff on the Birmingham Water Works Board (BWVB) Excess Property item from last week's Board Meeting. Members of Lewis and Company were introduced; Chris Ruffin, Rickey White, Francesca Pierce and Dorian Kendrick, who gave a presentation. In relation to the BWVB audience, Dorian Kendrick stated it includes Generation X (ages 36 – 56), educated individuals and an overall diverse group. More than 50% are females, with the exception of St. Clair County and the average household income is \$40,000.00 or more. The central themes that BWVB would like to convey according to Lewis and Company are Pure Quality, Serving the Community, Preserving the Environment and Drinking Water. Director Lewis entered the meeting at 9:22 a.m. The Communications Audit has been initiated to properly assess the flow of communications to and from BWVB. The audit goals are to

determine if current communication efforts support the overall strategic plan, the effectiveness of messages produced and available communication opportunities. Key areas to audit internally are the Board of Directors, General Manager, Assistant General Managers, Department Managers, Supervisors, General Staff and Field Service Technicians. Externally, the key areas are Standard Identity Pieces and Promotional Materials. A SWOT analysis will be performed to identify Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats. Following, Lewis and Company will determine recommendations and next steps according to Dorian Kendrick. The Timeline will run from May 16<sup>th</sup> through July 25<sup>th</sup>. Director Munchus asked if an audit had been performed in the past. General Manager Mac Underwood stated the BWWB had done something similar in the past. Lewis and Company proposed a mock-up news site with ongoing communications. The timeline for the news site will begin in May designing and developing the site, curating the content and testing the mobile ready site. In July the new design will be launched. Director McKie asked Lewis and Company to focus on the quality of the content. A sample of Public Service Announcements (PSA's) and General Talking Points handout (a copy of which is on file with the Committee's meeting book) were provided to the Committee. Jesse Lewis added that Lewis and Company would not be responsible for paying for the PSA's. Director McKie suggested PSA's include promotions, concepts and ideas that are important to the BWWB. General Manager Mac Underwood encouraged Lewis and Company to continue with their plan.

Next, General Manager Mac Underwood requested the Committee hear an update from Message Point Media's President, Bryan Gilliom regarding the Birmingham Water Works Board (BWWB) and Customer Responsibility for Leak Repairs Video and Leak Categorization Videos, as set forth in agenda items 3.1 and 3.2. The proposed videos ran continuously on the Message Point Media television screen as Bryan Gilliom spoke. Graphics have been used as much as possible Bryan Gilliom stated and the voice overs will be added last. Director Munchus asked if Staff had seen the proposed videos. Bryan Gilliom responded that Staff had reviewed the videos. Bryan Gilliom stated a tag at the end of the video listing the benefits of HomeServe would be added. A discussion on prioritizing leaks took place ranging from 1 to 4 (largest to smallest). Assistant General Manager Darryl Jones stated Staff is in the process of fine tuning the leak prioritization process. Director Lewis stressed the importance of the customer knowing that the BWWB is concerned with all leaks, no matter how small. Director McKie said he would like added, at the attorneys discretion, a segment in the video showing an example of what HomeServe insurance would cover. General Manager Underwood stated it is challenging to prioritize leaks and Staff is still working on that. Bryan Gilliom stated these videos will be used in conjunction with Lewis and Company's efforts. General Manager Underwood stated he was in a Utilities Committee Meeting recently and many local companies were there participating and eager to share content and information with each other. Some discussion occurred concerning the City of Birmingham's communications with citizens and having BWWB's leak information available on the city's website.

Following, General Manager Mac Underwood requested the Committee hear the Customer Reported Leak Communications update from George Anderson, Manager of

Information Technology, as set forth in agenda item 4. George Anderson stated the Customer Reported Leak Communications process went live March 1, 2016. The current process goes as follows: the customer reports a leak, SAP notification takes place and 14 days after the leak is reported automated calls are made to the customer reporting the leaks and giving a status on the repairs. Calls are made between the hours of 8 AM to 8 PM. A Notification or Call Instances graph was included in the presentation. General Manager Underwood added the system is up and working and customers are being contacted when the leaks repairs are completed. George Anderson stated the Next Steps include continuing to monitor system activity/performance and adding features for customers to receive notification via cell phones and/or email by the end of the second quarter of 2016.

Next, General Manager Mac Underwood requested the Committee review the 2016 Communications Budget including year-to-date expenditures, as set forth in agenda item 5. A handout (a copy of which is on file with the Committee meeting book) was distributed to the Committee consisting of a Public Relations & Communications Department – Cost Center 13045 2016 Budget Analysis spreadsheet and the Breakdown of Public Relations (GL 760680 Expenses) January 1 – March 31, 2016. Director McKie mentioned Next Door, a community message board, stating the BWWB could post to that site regarding leak information relating to item 4. For Larger leaks, the BWWB Distribution Department can use its internal webpage to make mass calls to areas where the BWWB has outages also George Anderson stated. Darryl Jones reminded the Committee when leaks happen after hours and on the weekend, it is more challenging because there is only one crew scheduled to work; therefore call outs are made. Moving back to item 5, General Manager Underwood stated the Board is under budget in relation to communications expenditures. General Manager Underwood stated Staff can provide updates as needed through the year. A lot of the advertising and programs will start up in the Fall Mr. Underwood stated. The information was left with the Committee to review.

Following, General Manager Mac Underwood requested the Committee to review the Communications Specialist Job Description, as set forth in agenda item 6. A handout (a copy of which is on file with the Committee meeting book) was distributed to the Committee consisting of the Job Description for the BWWB Public Relations Specialist. General Manager Underwood stated the position should understand the BWWB operations and customer service. Director McKie responded the BWWB needs to start moving to fill this position. Director McKie stressed that the position be filled with someone who has marketing experience and a background in public relations when they arrive, not someone who has to be taught how to do the job after they are hired. Director McKie said a head hunter could be used if needed. A second position may be needed according to Director McKie; a less experienced, creative person in a lower salary grade to assist the Communications Specialist. Director McKie stated he felt as if it needed to be looked at after the Communications Specialist position is filled. Director Munchus asked if the job would be posted today. General Manager Underwood stated it would not get posted by today. Chairman Mims asked if the attorneys, Lewis & Company and Staff would get together on this position adding the Board had made some mistakes in the past in regards to the Communications Specialist position. Director McKie compared the

position to the BWWB Executive Staff stating similar qualities would be expected by the Board of this person.

As there was no further business to be brought before the Committee, a motion was duly made and seconded, and the meeting was adjourned at 10:12 a.m.

\_\_\_\_\_/s/  
Ronald A. Mims  
Chairman/President

\_\_\_\_\_/s/  
Kevin B. McKie, Esq.  
First Vice-Chairman/First Vice President

\_\_\_\_\_/s/  
George Munchus, Ph.D.  
Secretary-Treasurer

\_\_\_\_\_/s/  
Mac Underwood  
General Manager