

**MINUTES OF COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING  
OF THE WATER WORKS BOARD OF THE CITY OF BIRMINGHAM  
October 10, 2022**

A Communications Committee meeting of the directors of The Water Works Board of the City of Birmingham was held on Monday, October 10, 2022 at 12:30 p.m.

The following Committee members were present: Committee Chairwoman Tereshia Huffman, Lucien Blankenship and Tom Henderson. Directors George Munchus and Ronald Mims were also present.

Others present were: Michael Johnson, General Manager;, Derrick Murphy, and Jeffrey Thompson, Assistant General Managers; Cynthia Williams, Board Administrator; Anitra Clark, Corporate Governance Specialist; Rick Jackson, Joi Dulaney, Colandus Mason, Jessica Fadlevich, Jeff Wade, Charles McGee, and David Walker, BWWB Employees; K. Mark Parnell, Parnell Thompson, LLC; Kelvin Howard, Kelvin W. Howard, LLC; William Canty, and Jasmine Jennings, Agency 54; and Bill Todd, Shekeydrah Robinson, Sherri Stewart and Angela Riley, O2 Ideas.

Committee Chairwoman Huffman declared a quorum in attendance.

Committee Chairwoman called the meeting to order at 12:30 p.m. Colandus Mason, BWWB Employee, opened the meeting with prayer.

Following, Chairwoman Huffman asked for a motion to approve the agenda. She stated she would like to move agenda item 1 to 2. Director Blankenship made a motion to approve the agenda and Director Henderson seconded the motion. The motion was approved by unanimous vote.

Following, the Committee moved to Reports of Officers. Chairwoman Huffman stated she attended the Congressional Black Caucus recently and she attended sessions regarding Communication Crisis and Inflation. Director Munchus requested Chairwoman Huffman provide an overview of what she learned from those sessions.

Following, the Committee moved to the second item on the agenda, Request Committee to hear Strategic Communication Plan from O2 Ideas. Bill Todd, O2 Ideas, stated BWWB is facing a reputation crisis. He then gave an overview of the crisis. He stated there a five key principles to cure a crisis: 1) Make a organization-wide shift to a culture of customers, ethical excellence, and public transparency; 2) Make BWWB become a “best place to work”; 3) Repair and resolve all major billing system and customer complaint issues; 4) The Board must establish clear leadership; and 5) Prioritizing media relations. He indicated BWWB must regain public trust over the next 12 months. Mr. Todd then gave an overview of the communications strategy. He stated an ongoing dialogue must be established with key stakeholders which include customers, employees, news media, and governmental leaders. He then gave an overview of the key messaging plan and the tactical calendar. He indicated the goal is to sew good seeds through community relations. Mr. Todd stated media training will be given to the Board and Staff. Rick Jackson, Public Relations Manager, stated staff has been working with O2 Ideas; however, there is an immediate communications plan to address billing issue. He indicated a response regarding that would be

issued that week. Chairwoman Huffman stated she would like to see more traction on social media and questioned which social media platforms would be used. Mr. Todd responded Instagram, Twitter and Facebook. Chairwoman Huffman stated she would also like for Next Door to be used. She also stated she would like for O2 Ideas to meet with the Governmental Affairs team. She also recommended there be a communications plan for the communities BWWB serves outside of Birmingham. She then questioned the plan to communicate with the 99 neighborhoods in Birmingham. Mr. Todd responded he would like the Board to tell O2 Ideas the level of communication they would like to have. He indicated this could be discussed and they could then develop the best plan. Chairwoman Huffman questioned how those who do not use social media receive communications from BWWB. Mr. Todd responded he stated flyers can be placed in senior citizens homes, churches, and radio is still very effective. Chairwoman Huffman suggested moving up deadlines to late October and she thought it was a good plan. Director Munchus also recommended communication with the Citizens' Advisory Board.

Following, the Committee moved to the first item on the agenda, Request Committee to discuss and consider Board Members' participation in electronic meetings via telephone conferences, video conference, or other similar communication equipment, as noted in the document attached hereto. Director Blankenship stated there is a law that allows Board member to vote electronically. He stated there is a difference of opinion with Parnell Thompson, LLC. He stated to receive an opinion from the State of Alabama Attorney General's Office could take three to six months and he didn't feel it was necessary to receive an opinion since the law is very clear. He stated there are professionals on the Board and they are very busy. He stated by allowing remote participation would help them to stay involved with the Board. He recommended moving this item to the Board for approval. Director Henderson stated he would like to hear from legal counsel. Board Attorney Mark Parnell stated there are two different statutes that apply to electronic voting, and he stated Director Blankenship presented one of those statutes. He then gave an overview of the statutes. A discussion then ensued. Mr. Parnell stated the Board needs to know whether their vote is legally appropriate. He also stated there is a cap on meeting expenses and stated there is a question as to whether remote participation would be covered in expenses. Board Attorney Kelvin Howard stated since there are conflicting opinions, it would be best to get guidance from the Attorney General. Director Henderson stated the Board needs to get more clarification. He stated there are enough questions to get an opinion from the Attorney General. Mr. Parnell stated the Board wants to make sure its vote is counted and it they are provided with civil liability protection.

Subsequently, Chairwoman Huffman stated she recommends getting an opinion from the Attorney General. Director Blankenship requested the Board be able to review the question being presented to the Attorney General prior to its submission. Chairwoman Huffman then made the motion to recommend this item to the Board and Direction Blankenship seconded the motion. The Committee then voted on the item via a roll call: Director Henderson, Yes; Director Blankenship, Yes; and Chairwoman Huffman, Yes. The motion was approved.

Next, Director Blankenship made a motion to adjourn the meeting and Chairwoman Huffman seconded the motion. On a motion duly made and seconded, the motion was approved by unanimous vote, and the meeting was adjourned at 1:18 p.m.

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/s/  
Michael Johnson  
General Manager

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/s/  
Tereshia Huffman  
Communications Committee Chairwoman

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Lucien Blankenship  
Director

/s/

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Tom Henderson  
Director