



Columbus Water Works

*Serving our Community
Protecting the Environment*

May 11, 2020

Due to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention declaring Corona Virus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) a health emergency and pandemic, the Governor has issued a Statewide Executive Order to Shelter in Place. In accordance, this Board may alternatively utilize virtual meetings during the period of emergency in accordance with O.C.G.A. 50-14-1(g).

The regular monthly meeting of the Board of Water Commissioners of Columbus, Georgia was held as a virtual meeting due to the COVID-10 virus. It was on Monday, May 11, 2020, at 1:30 p.m. Chairman Reynolds Bickerstaff took the roll call and the following Commissioners were present:

Reynolds Bickerstaff, Chairman
Sanders Griffith, Vice Chairman
Becky Rumer
Rodney Close
Mayor Skip Henderson

Receipt of the Minutes from the regular meeting on February 10, 2020, was presented to the Board. Motion was made by Sanders Griffith and seconded by Mayor Henderson to approve the Minutes as written. Motion carried.

Danthea Hill, presented the Financial Reports for February, March and April including Ft. Benning to the Board. Motion was made by Becky Rumer and seconded by Rodney Close to approve the Financial Reports. Motion carried.

Becky Butts presented a brief update on the Customer Service Call Center issues as outlined below:

Customer Service Call Center

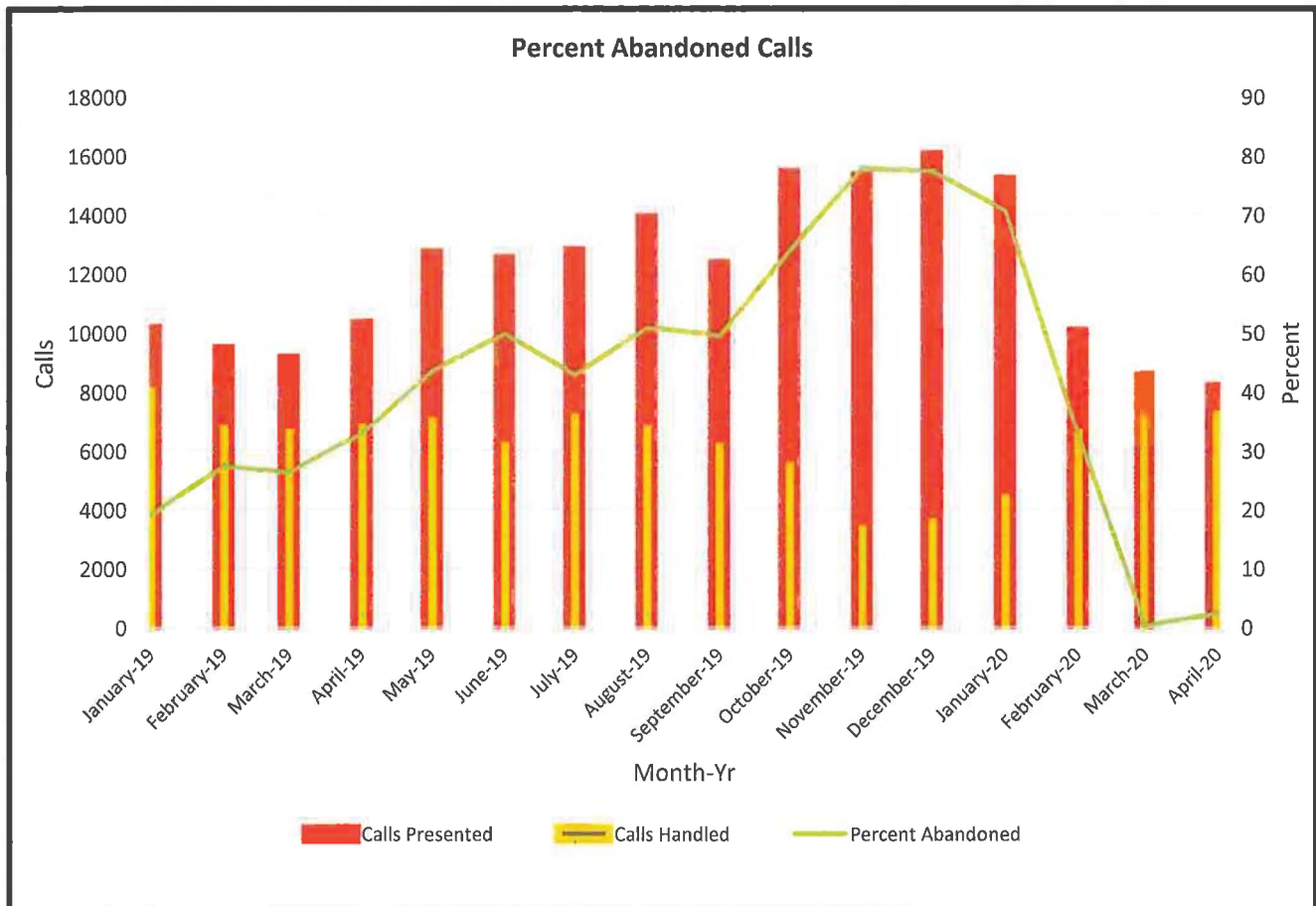
Positive Results:

- ✓ Average customer wait time is less than 5 minutes
- ✓ Abandoned percentage calls have reduced to less than 3%
- ✓ The “Queue Callback” feature has been beneficial for the customer and the Customer Service Representative (CSR’s)
- ✓ Scheduled calendar for CSR’s in CIS training to assist with calls during peak times

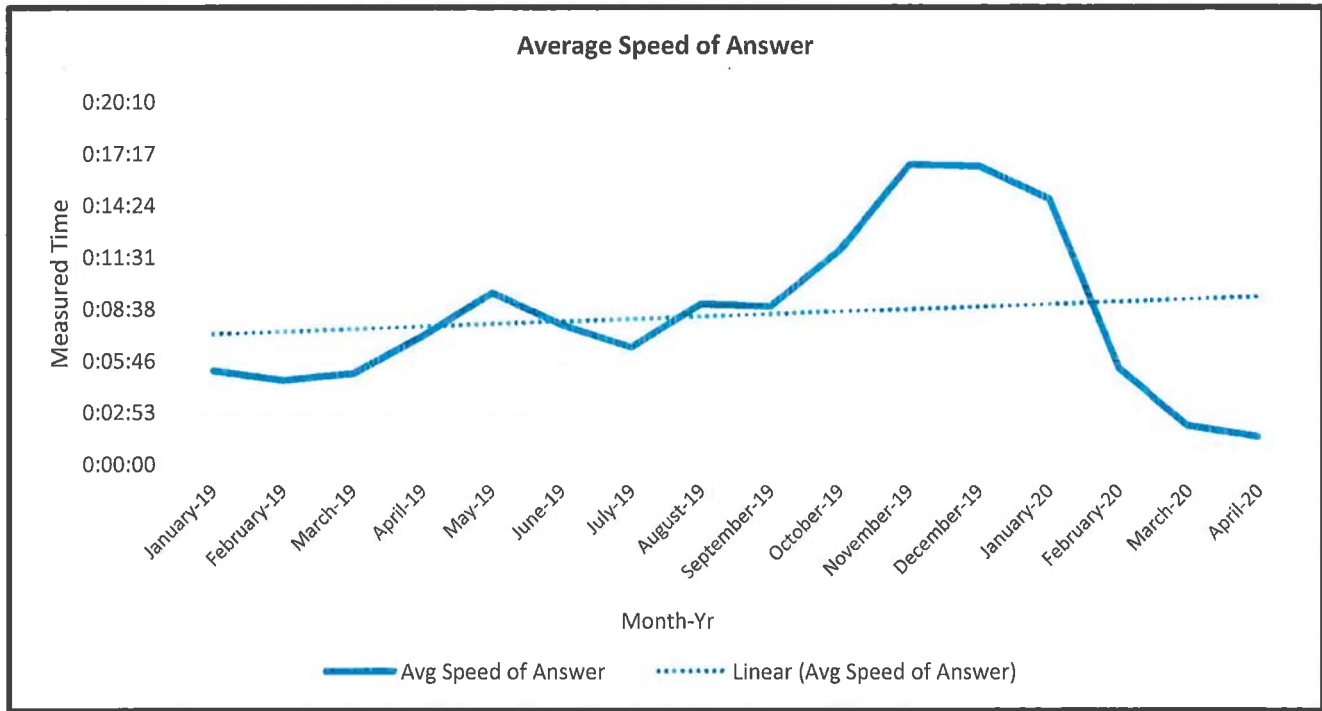
Total for the Month of March and April:

March	-	Total Calls	-	8,795 which includes 360 call backs
		Total VoiceLinks	-	40
		Total Emails	-	74
April	-	Total Calls	-	7,996 which includes 199 call backs
		Total VoiceLinks	-	37
		Total Emails	-	62

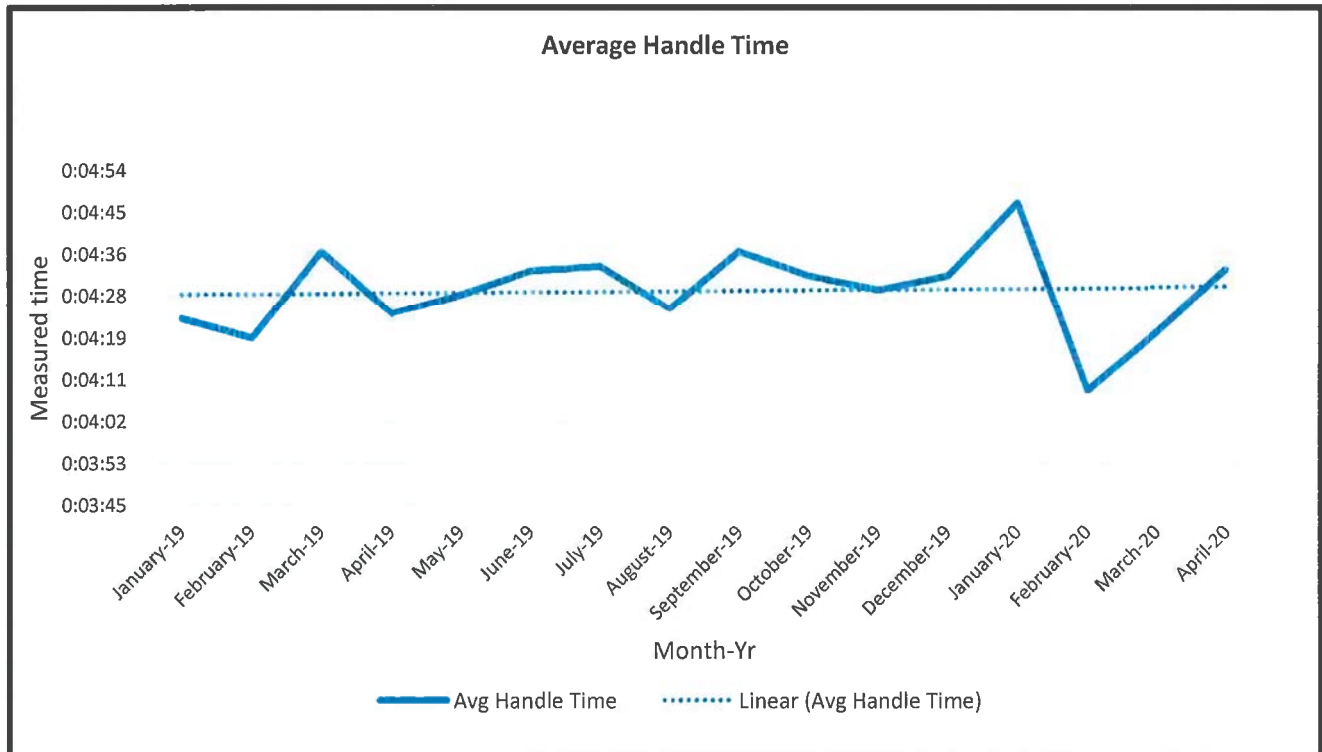
Phone Call Graphs Ending April 2020 – Percent Abandoned Calls



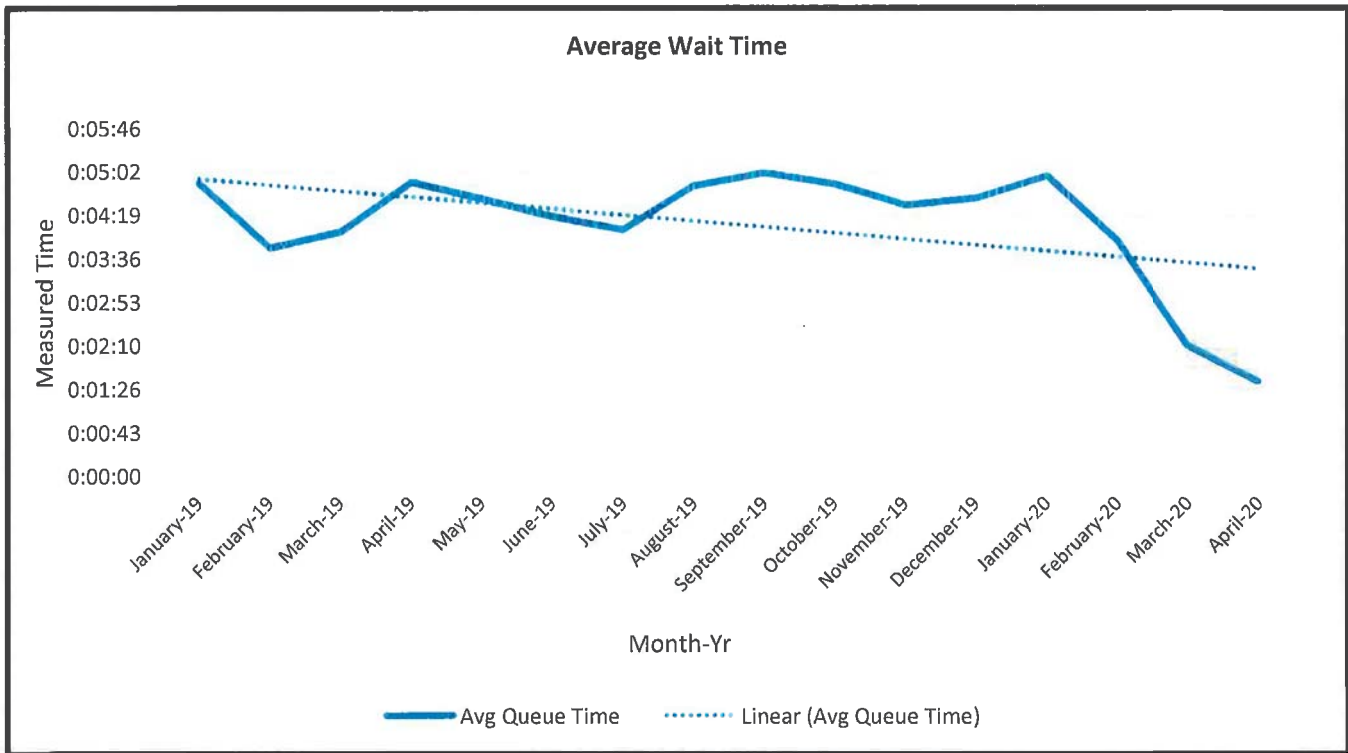
Phone Call Graphs Ending April 2020 – Average Speed of Answer



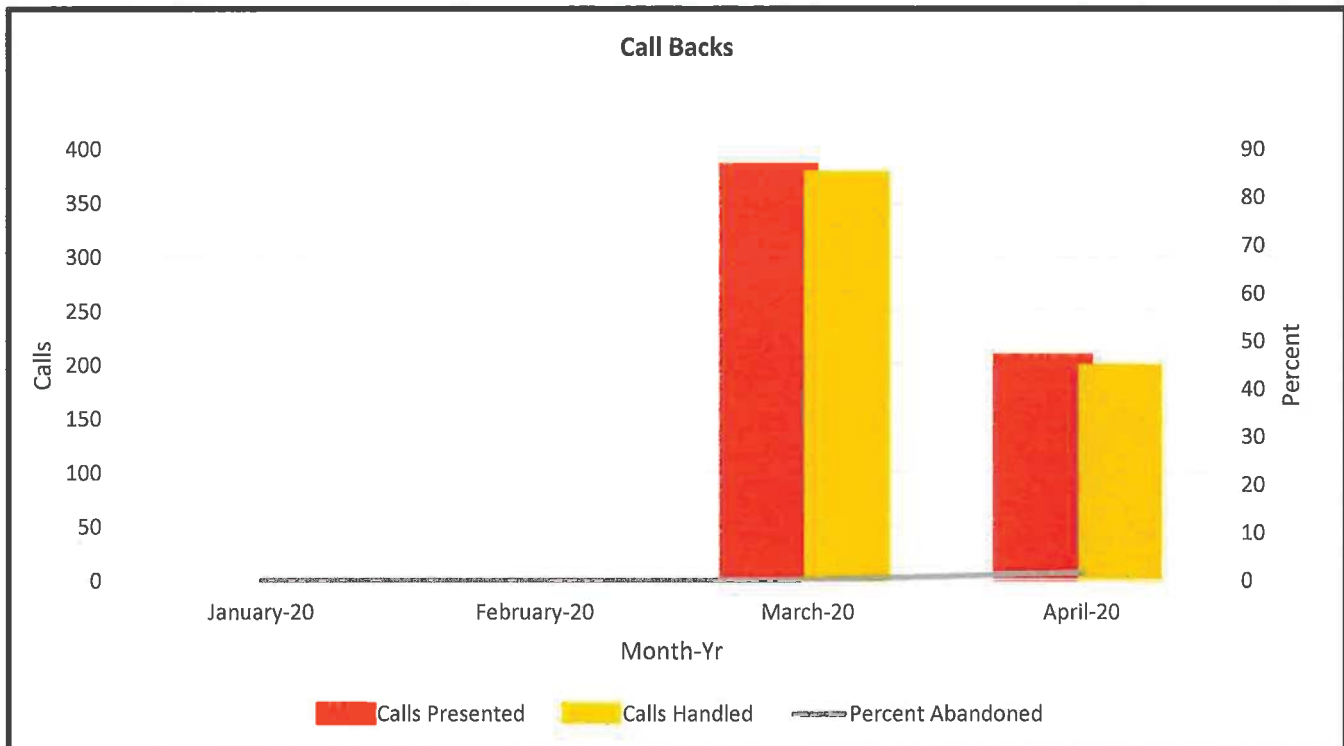
Phone Call Graphs Ending April 2020 – Average Handle Time



Phone Call Graphs Ending April 2020 – Average Wait Time



Phone Call Graphs Ending April 2020 – Call Backs



The Board acknowledged Ms. Butts' report.

Caleb Cole presented a brief update on CWW's responses to Customers Concerns due to the 2020 Base Meter Fee Increase as outlined below:

2020 Rate Increase Letters

- 1522 Letters to residential customers with meters larger than 5/8"
- 2435 Letters to customers with irrigation meters larger than 5/8"
- 214 Letters to customers with essential usage less than 4ccf (24-month average)
- 126 Industrial / commercial customers with multiple large meters
- 33 Customers with large fire line meters

Meter Downsizing

214 Customers with meters larger than 5/8" and less than 4ccf usage on average received a letter explaining the rate increase. These customers also received a waiver to sign if they opted to have their meter downsized.

- 172 Customers have contacted the customer advocacy manager
- 20 Customers are interested in having their meter downsized
- 11 Have signed the waiver to have their meter downsized

Irrigation Meters

2435 Customers with irrigation meters received a letter explaining the rate increase.

- In an effort to mitigate increased costs for these customers on a fixed income, CWW is waving the \$30 reconnect fee for customers that choose to disconnect their irrigation service during the winter months.

Fire Line Meters

Over the past few years CWW had a policy in place that mandated commercial developments install fire line meters. These meters were only meant to be used in the event of a fire. CWW has since changed this policy allowing customers to install a 5/8" meter on their backflow device. Unintentionally this left 33 customers with large meters affected by the rate increase.

- CWW has adjusted these accounts to have a base fire line fee. This is the same fee paid by businesses that installed fire lines before and after the policy was enacted.
- Customer advocacy department has reached out to these customers to explain the changes

Low-Income Credit

CWW has also promoted the low-income credit program for those in our community who have hardships.

- CWW provided 2,500 program flyers to Enrichment Services Program
- CWW included a message for the program on the January bill, and a separate bill insert that outlined the complete program
- CWW ran TV spots that aired during the month of January
- CWW Also communicated the Low-Income Program through our social media and blog

The Board acknowledged Mr. Cole's report.

Vic Burchfield presented a report on the functionality and update of CWW's Customer Information System (CIS) Project as outlined below:

CIS Infinity Project

- Replacement of existing Customer Account and Billing System
- End-user departments affected: Customer Service, Accounting and Meter Maintenance
- CWW Staff Commitment
 - Core Team – 7 members
 - Testing Team – 6 members
- Contractors
 - Advanced Utility Systems (Developer)
 - EMA, Inc. (Testing/Integration Assistance)
- Targeted Go-live: October 19, 2020

Significant Improvements

- **Automation** - Tasks can be created in response to certain events.
- **Workflow** - Financial adjustments and transactions can be processed through approval workflows based on amounts and types of transactions.
- **Mobile** - Paperless Service Orders can be sent directly to Field Technicians for completion using tablets.
- **Link** - Customers can get real time information 24/7 and log service calls, view consumption history, opt-in/out of paperless billing, sign up for auto pay, review and pay their bill and print bill history.
- **Paperless Billing** - Customers can choose to receive an electronic copy of their bill instead of a mailed hard copy.
- **Document Management** - Scanned applications, waivers, lease agreements, etc. can be attached to the customer's account for easy retrieval and viewing by the Customer Service Representative.
- **Powerful Queries** - Customer Service Representatives can easily perform queries to find related data on a customer record.

- **Customer Centered Structure** - The customer account is at the top of the hierarchy and can have multiple service addresses which can have multiple services such as water, sewer, garbage, etc.
- **Consolidated Billing** - At the preference of the customer, multiple services from different service addresses can be consolidated on one bill.
- **GIS Map View** – Customer Service Representatives will be able to see the service location address of the customer’s account within CWW’s Geographical Information System map layers, providing the CSR with visible information about where water mains, sewer lines, hydrants and manholes are located in relation to a customer’s property.

These are just a few of the new and improved features that CWW will use to gain greater efficiencies and improve the customer’s experience.

Vice Chairman Griffith questioned Mr. Burchfield on customization as it relates to the CIS Infinity Project. Mr. Burchfield noted customization is trying to be kept to a minimum, yet customization will need to be done for integrating systems to the CIS Infinity Project. The Board acknowledged Mr. Burchfield’s report.

Kevin White presented the following Garnsey Range Potable Water Well Project to the Board for their approval.:

Garnsey Range Potable Water Well Project

- This project consists of constructing a 40 GPM potable water well at Garnsey Range on Fort Benning and is Phase one of a three-phase project.
- Includes necessary Georgia EPD testing and record keeping.
- On April 23, 2020, CWW received one bid to perform this work in accordance with the engineering plans and specifications provided by Krebs Engineering.
- The bid was publicly opened via video-conference and read as follows:

CONTRACTOR	BID AMOUNT
Greene’s Water Wells, Inc.	\$132,215.00

The engineer’s estimate was \$194,611.00. The engineer has reviewed and tabulated the bid and recommends contract award to Greene’s Water Wells, Inc. as the low responsive, responsible bidder, at the bid price of \$132,215.00 (Funded via Fort Benning Contract Mod).

Staff requests Board approval to award the Garnsey Range Potable Water Well Project to Greene’s Water Wells, Inc. at the bid price of \$132,215.00.

Following discussion, motion was made by Sanders Griffith and seconded by Becky Rumer to award the contract to Greene's Water Wells, Inc., in the amount of \$132,215.00 for the Garnsey Range Potable Water Well Project. Motion carried.

Kevin White gave the Board an update on CWW's 2020-2024 Capital Improvements Plan outlined below:

2020-2024 Capital Improvements Plan

- Projects derived from IT and Facilities Master Plan
- Projects outlined in Facilities Master Plan were developed using Capacity and Non-Capacity assessment
- Operational Indicators were used to identify planning horizons
- Projects are prioritized using an evaluation system that weighs;
 - Likelihood and consequence of asset failure
 - Effect on triple bottom line (Social, Economic, and Environmental)
 - Impact based on strategic initiatives
- Insures effective use of available funds to maintain sustainability, reliability, and customer service throughout system

North Columbus Water Resource Facility

- Chemical Feed Improvements-\$2,300,000
- Finished Water Pump Improvements-\$4,800,000
- Full Scale Capacity Evaluation (Structural Assessment)-\$600,000

Distribution System Improvements

- Cleaning & Lining-\$7,500,000
- Small Line Replacement-\$5,000,000
- Distribution System Flow/Pressure Improvements-\$1,600,000
- Tank Inspections-\$130,200
- Tank Improvements-\$1,083,000
- System-Wide Flow Monitoring-\$225,000

South Columbus Water Resource Facility

- BioWin Model and Pump Coordination Study-\$200,000
- Headworks Improvements-\$5,200,000
- Solids Handling Building-\$10,000,000
- Backup Power Improvements-\$5,000,000
- Uptown Park CSO Grit System Improvements-\$805,000
- Structural Assessment & Repair-\$600,000

Collection System Improvements

- Sewer Basin Upgrades Phase I & II-\$800,000
- Bull Creek Capacity Upgrade-\$13,500,000
- Can Station Replacement-\$1,200,000

- Collection System Rehabilitation-\$5,000,000

Miscellaneous Improvements

- 2024 Facilities Master Plan-\$2,200,000
- GDOT Highway Relocation Projects-\$1,250,000
- New Administration Building Site Prep & Planning-\$1,500,000
- Geospatial Platform Improvements-\$683,900
- Asset and Work Management Improvements-\$2,572,193

The Board acknowledged Mr. White’s report.

Alex Hinton advised the Board that CWW was exploring the option to use State Revolving Loan Funds to fund certain projects identified in the Master Plan as outlined below:

Georgia Environmental Finance Authority (GEFA)

- Columbus Water Works is exploring the option of State Revolving Funds to fund certain projects identified in the Master Plan.
- GEFA is allocated State Revolving Funds for certain water utility projects.
- Columbus Water Works has historically taken loans from Clean Water State Revolving Funds and Drinking Water State Revolving Funds.
- 2009 was last time CWW closed State Revolving Funds loan.
- Since the last time CWW used SRF, SRF has implemented a 1% interest rate reduction program for cities that have been recognized as a WaterFirst community.
- Columbus Water Works was named a WaterFirst community in 2004.
- Final Board Approval will be requested once loan terms offered by GEFA after GEFA November Board meeting.

GEFA Financing Programs

	Georgia Fund	Clean Water SRF	Drinking Water	Water Supply
Project Types	Water, sewer, stormwater, landfills & solar	Sewer, stormwater & solar	Water & solar	Reservoirs & wells
Funding Source	State funds	Federal funds	Federal funds	State funds
Capacity	~\$100M	~\$355M	~\$94M	~\$0
Borrowing Limits	\$3,000,000 per year	\$25,000,000 per year	\$25,000,000 per year	varies
Federal Requirements	N/A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental approval by Georgia EPD • Davis-Bacon wage rate requirements • American Iron and Steel requirements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental approval by Georgia EPD • Davis-Bacon wage rate requirements • American Iron and Steel requirements 	N/A
Grant Opportunities	No	Yes	Yes	State Direct Investment

CWSRF and DWSRF Compared to Bond Funding

- Columbus Water Works is a Water First Community and will qualify for a 1.0% reduction on interest costs, current interest rate anticipated at 0.94% for 20-year term (Bond funding interest rate 5/6/2020 – 2.98%)
- Only pay interest on outstanding loan balance during period of construction (rather than bond funding- interest on all funds starts at closing)
- Issuance Cost of 1% (Bond closing typically runs at 2%)
- Only certain projects meet requirements for CWSRF and DWSRF funding (not as many restrictions on Bond Money)
- Additional administrative burden for CWSRF and DWSRF (Each payment requires documentation rather than Bond funding money in Bank)
- Single Audit required for receipt of governmental funds (no requirement for Bond funding)
- Straight line payment schedule (not as flexible as Bond Structure)

Project Funding from CWSRF and DWSRF

Funding Date	GEFA	Division	Score	Project_Num	Project_Title	Estimated Cost
2020 CWSRF	Clean Water	Collection	175.50	C2A	Sewer Basin Upgrades - Phase I	\$400,000
2020 CWSRF	Clean Water	Collection	175.50	C11	Bull Creek Brennan Sewer	\$13,500,000
2020 CWSRF	Clean Water	SCWRF	229.50	13-WW14	Solids Handling Building - SCWRF	\$10,000,000
2020 CWSRF	Clean Water	SCWRF	171.00	18-WW21	Uptown Park CSO Grit System Improvements	\$805,000
2021 CWSRF	Clean Water	Collection	175.50	C2B	Sewer Basin Upgrade - Phase II	\$400,000
2021 CWSRF	Clean Water	SCWRF	229.50	13-WW13	Headworks Improvements	\$5,200,000
2021 CWSRF	Clean Water	SCWRF	180.00	18-WW15	Backup Power Improvements - SCWRF	\$5,000,000
2021 CWSRF	Clean Water	Collection	144.00	C35	Can Station Replacement - 3 - Phase I	\$1,200,000
Clean Water Total						\$36,505,000
						2020 CWSRF
						\$24,705,000
						2021 CWSRF
						\$11,800,000
						Total 2020 and 2021 CWSRF
						\$36,505,000
2020 DWSRF	Drinking Water	Misc	198.00	18-M02	Columbus Tank Inspections	\$130,200
2020 DWSRF	Drinking Water	Misc	198.00	18-M03A	Columbus Tank Improvements	\$1,083,000
2020 DWSRF	Drinking Water	NCWRF	216.00	18-W06	NCWRF Chemical Feed Improvements – Phase I	\$2,300,000
2020 DWSRF	Drinking Water	Distribution	157.50	DS0A	Distribution System Improvements - Cleaning and Lining	\$7,500,000
2020 DWSRF	Drinking Water	Distribution	157.50	DS0B	Distribution System Improvements - Small Line	\$5,000,000
2020 DWSRF	Drinking Water	Distribution	157.50	DS0C	Distribution System Improvements - System Wide Flow Monitoring	\$225,000
2020 DWSRF	Drinking Water	Distribution	157.50	DS0D	Distribution System Improvements - Flow Improvements	\$1,400,000
2020 DWSRF	Drinking Water	NCWRF	166.50	18-W13	NCWRF Finished Water Pump Station Improvements - Phase I	\$4,800,000
Drinking Water Total						\$22,438,200
						Grand Total GEFA
						\$58,943,200

CWW Funding

Funding Date	GEFA	Division	Score	Project_Num	Project_Title	Estimated Cost
CWW Funding	Funding Breakout	Distribution	270.00	CWW-GDOT	GDOT Highway Relocation Projects (2020-2025)	\$2,200,000
CWW Funding	Funding Breakout	SCWRF	270.00	18-WW22A	BioWin Model and Pump Coordination Study	\$200,000
CWW Funding	Funding Breakout	IT	180.00	18-IT08	Geospatial Platform Improvements	\$683,900 ⁿ
CWW Funding	Funding Breakout	SCWRF	144.00	18-WW24A	SCWRF (Structural Assessment Only)	\$600,000
CWW Funding	Funding Breakout	SCWRF	144.00	18-W08B	NCWRF Full-scale Capacity Evaluation (Structural Assessment Only)	\$600,000
CWW Funding	Funding Breakout	Collection	157.50	CS-REHAB	Collection system rehabilitation	\$5,000,000
CWW Funding	Funding Breakout	Distribution	157.50	DSOE	Distribution System Improvements Pressure Improvements	\$200,000 ⁿ
CWW Funding	Funding Breakout	IT	153.00	18-IT16	AM Roadmap Implementation and Maximo Reimplementation	\$2,572,193
CWW Funding	Funding Breakout	Misc	252.00	18-M01	Masterplan 2022	\$1,250,000
CWW Funding	Funding Breakout	Misc	229.50	18-M04	New Administration Building Site Prep & Planning	\$1,500,000
Funding Breakout Total						\$14,806,093

GEFA

Columbus Water Works would like to request Board approval to continue to explore the option of State Revolving Funds to fund certain projects identified in the Master Plan.

Chairman Bickerstaff noted significant savings in rate differences and questioned if the goal is to payback borrowings sooner or fund additional capital projects. Chairman Bickerstaff voiced his opinion that it would be great if we could expedite payments as opposed to paying same amount for borrowings. Chairman Bickerstaff noted he would like to explore this opportunity to build savings back up and not depend on drought or rate increases. Also, Chairman Bickerstaff asked Secretary Hinton for additional information to include a schedule of savings for Georgia Environmental Financial Authority Loan compared to bond funding to be provided at the June Board meeting. The Board made a motion by Becky Rumer and seconded by Sanders Griffith to continue exploring funding options for the GEFA loan. Motion carried.

The following Departmental Reports for the past three months (February, March and April) were provided to the Board as information only:

- Customer Service Reports
- Customer Advocacy/Meter Maint/Water Accountability Reports
- Engineering Reports

- Field Services Reports
- Information Services/Security/Environmental Services Reports
- Corporate Relations Reports
- Employee Services Reports
- Water Resource Operations/Managed Maintenance Reports

There was no discussion.

There being no further business, motion was made by Sanders Griffith and seconded by Becky Rumer to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried.



Alex D. Hinton, Secretary