Columbus Water Works®

Serving our Community
Protecting the Environment

August 11, 2025

The regular monthly meeting of the Board of Water Commissioners of Columbus, Georgia was held on Monday, August 11, 2025, at 1:30 p.m. at our Main Office, Chattahoochee Room. Chairman Nick Smith took the roll call, and the following Commissioners were present:

Nick Smith, Chair
Jennifer Upshaw, Vice Chair
Wes Kelley
Oz Roberts
Mayor Skip Henderson

Receipt of the Minutes from the regular meeting on June 16, 2025, was presented to the Board. A motion was made by Oz Roberts and seconded by Jennifer Upshaw to approve the Minutes as written. Motion carried.

Aric Jackson presented the following Resolutions to the Board, recognizing our retirees. Tom Horn, Quinton Pearson, and Steve Adams were in attendance.

A Resolution

Whereas, Thomas F. Horn, has been an employee of the Columbus Board of Water Commissioners since February 1992, is retiring; and,

Whereas, Thomas F. Horn has served in the capacity of Manager of Region Client Services in the Engineering Department with the Columbus Water Works; and,

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Whereas, Thomas F. Horn has performed in an outstanding and productive manner throughout his thirty-three years of service;

Now, Therefore, Be It Resolved that the Board of Water Commissioners of the City of Columbus, Georgia, on behalf of all the people of the City, hereby publicly expresses appreciation and heartfelt thanks to Thomas F. Horn for his diligent and faithful service on behalf of the Columbus Water Works; and,

Be It Further Resolved that this resolution be spread upon the official minutes of this Board on this eleventh day of August 2025 and that the Secretary of this Board be directed to furnish copies of this resolution to the said Thomas F. Horn and to the Clerk of Council of Columbus, Georgia.

PRESIDENT, COLUMBUS WATER WORKS

EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT, COLUMBUS WATER WORKS

CHAIR, BOARD OF WATER COMMISSIONERS

A Resolution

Whereas, Quinton Pearson, has been an employee of the Columbus Board of Water Commissioners since January 2006, is retiring; and,

Whereas, Quinton Pearson has served in the capacity of Field Services Technician I in the Field Services Wastewater Collection Department with the Columbus Water Works; and,

Whereas, Quinton Pearson has performed in an outstanding and productive manner throughout his Nineteen years of service;

Now, Therefore, Be It Resolved that the Board of Water Commissioners of the City of Columbus, Georgia, on behalf of all the people of the City, hereby publicly expresses appreciation and heartfelt thanks to Quinton Pearson for his diligent and faithful service on behalf of the Columbus Water Works; and,

Be It Further Resolved that this resolution be spread upon the official minutes of this Board on this eleventh day of August 2025 and that the Secretary of this Board be directed to furnish copies of this resolution to the said Quinton Pearson and to the Clerk of Council of Columbus, Georgia.

PRESIDENT, COLUMBUS WATER WORKS

EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT, COLUMBUS WATER WORKS

CHAIR, BOARD OF WATER COMMISSIONERS

A Resolution

Whereas, Paula Goble, has been an employee of the Columbus Board of Water Commissioners since November 2003, is retiring; and,

Whereas, Paula Goble has served in the capacity of Admin & Community Outreach Specialist in the Administration Department with the Columbus Water Works; and,

Whereas, Paula Goble has performed in an outstanding and productive manner throughout her thirty-three years of service;

Now, Therefore, Be It Resolved that the Board of Water Commissioners of the City of Columbus, Georgia, on behalf of all the people of the City, hereby publicly expresses appreciation and heartfelt thanks to Paula Goble for her diligent and faithful service on behalf of the Columbus Water Works; and,

Be It Further Resolved that this resolution be spread upon the official minutes of this Board on this eleventh day of August 2025 and that the Secretary of this Board be directed to furnish copies of this resolution to the said Paula Goble and to the Clerk of Council of Columbus, Georgia.

PRESIDENT, COLUMBUS WATER WORKS

EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT, COLUMBUS WATER WORKS

CHAIR, BOARD OF WATER COMMISSIONERS

A Resolution

Whereas, Rita Merritt, has been an employee of the Columbus Board of Water Commissioners since March 1996, is retiring; and,

Whereas, Rita Merritt has served in the capacity of Accounting Assistant in the Financial Services Department with the Columbus Water Works; and,

Whereas, Rita Merritt has performed in an outstanding and productive manner throughout her twenty-nine years of service;

Now, Therefore, Be It Resolved that the Board of Water Commissioners of the City of Columbus, Georgia, on behalf of all the people of the City, hereby publicly expresses appreciation and heartfelt thanks to Rita Merritt for her diligent and faithful service on behalf of the Columbus Water Works; and,

Be It Further Resolved that this resolution be spread upon the official minutes of this Board on this eleventh day of August 2025 and that the Secretary of this Board be directed to furnish copies of this resolution to the said Rita Merritt and to the Clerk of Council of Columbus, Georgia.

PRESIDENT, COLUMBUS WATER WORKS

Gail V. Bufield
EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT, COLUMBUS WATER WORKS

CHAIR, BOARD OF WATER COMMISSIONERS

A Resolution

Whereas, John D. Otto, has been an employee of the Columbus Board of Water Commissioners since May 2011, is retiring; and,

Whereas, John D. Otto has served in the capacity of Water Treatment Superintendent in the North Columbus Water Resource Facility Department with the Columbus Water Works; and, *Whereas,* John D. Otto has performed in an outstanding and productive manner throughout his fourteen years of service;

Now, Therefore, Be It Resolved that the Board of Water Commissioners of the City of Columbus, Georgia, on behalf of all the people of the City, hereby publicly expresses appreciation and heartfelt thanks to John D. Otto for his diligent and faithful service on behalf of the Columbus Water Works; and,

Be It Further Resolved that this resolution be spread upon the official minutes of this Board on this eleventh day of August 2025 and that the Secretary of this Board be directed to furnish copies of this resolution to the said John D. Otto and to the Clerk of Council of Columbus, Georgia.

PRESIDENT, COLUMBUS WATER WORKS

Gail V. Buffield
EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT, COLUMBUS WATER WORKS

CHAIR, BOARD OF WATER COMMISSIONERS

A Resolution

Whereas, Norman Davis Sr., has been an employee of the Columbus Board of Water Commissioners since June 1987, is retiring; and,

Whereas, Norman Davis Sr. has served in the capacity of Field Services Crew Leader II in the Field Services Ft. Benning Distribution Department with the Columbus Water Works; and,

Whereas, Norman Davis Sr. has performed in an outstanding and productive manner throughout his thirty-eight years of service;

Now, Therefore, Be It Resolved that the Board of Water Commissioners of the City of Columbus, Georgia, on behalf of all the people of the City, hereby publicly expresses appreciation and heartfelt thanks to Norman Davis Sr. for his diligent and faithful service on behalf of the Columbus Water Works; and,

Be It Further Resolved that this resolution be spread upon the official minutes of this Board on this eleventh day of August 2025 and that the Secretary of this

Board be directed to furnish copies of this resolution to the said Norman Davis Sr. and to the Clerk of Council of Columbus, Georgia.

PRESIDENT, COLUMBUS WATER WORKS

EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT, COLUMBUS WATER WORKS

CHAIR, BOARD OF WATER COMMISSIONERS

A Resolution

Whereas, Terri D. Morris, has been an employee of the Columbus Board of Water Commissioners since May 1979, is retiring; and,

Whereas, Terri D. Morris has served in the capacity of Executive Administrative Assistant in the Financial Services Department with the Columbus Water Works; and,

Whereas, Terri D. Morris has performed in an outstanding and productive manner throughout her forty-six years of service;

Now, Therefore, Be It Resolved that the Board of Water Commissioners of the City of Columbus, Georgia, on behalf of all the people of the City, hereby publicly expresses appreciation and heartfelt thanks to Terri D. Morris for her diligent and faithful service on behalf of the Columbus Water Works; and,

Be It Further Resolved that this resolution be spread upon the official minutes of this Board on this eleventh day of August 2025 and that the Secretary of this Board be directed to furnish copies of this resolution to the said Rita Merritt and to the Clerk of Council of Columbus, Georgia.

PRESIDENT, COLUMBUS WATER WORKS

EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT, COLUMBUS WATER WORKS

CHAIR, BOARD OF WATER COMMISSIONERS

A Resolution

Whereas, Barbara L. Duff, has been an employee of the Columbus Board of Water Commissioners since July 1996, is retiring; and,

Whereas, Barbara L. Duff has served in the capacity of Planning & Scheduling Coordinator in the Water Accountability Department with the Columbus Water Works; and,

Whereas, Barbara L. Duff has performed in an outstanding and productive manner throughout her twenty-nine years of service;

Now, Therefore, Be It Resolved that the Board of Water Commissioners of the City of Columbus, Georgia, on behalf of all the people of the City, hereby publicly expresses appreciation and heartfelt thanks to Barbara L. Duff for her diligent and faithful service on behalf of the Columbus Water Works; and,

Be It Further Resolved that this resolution be spread upon the official minutes of this Board on this eleventh day of August 2025 and that the Secretary of this Board be directed to furnish copies of this resolution to the said Rita Merritt and to the Clerk of Council of Columbus, Georgia.

PRESIDENT, COLUMBUS WATER WORKS

EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT, COLUMBUS WATER WORKS

CHAIR, BOARD OF WATER COMMISSIONERS

Vickie Clark presented the Financial Reports for the months of June and July 2025, including Ft Benning, to the Board. A motion was made by Jennifer Upshaw and seconded by Oz Roberts to approve the Financial Reports. Motion carried.

John Peebles updated the board on the annual GAWP conference in Savannah, Georgia. The barbecue team participated in the annual barbecue cookoff. Jeremy Cummings was presented with the Arthur Sidney Bedell Award. John Peebles was presented with the Water Environment Federation's Volunteer Service Award and the Lifetime Achievement Award. Columbus Water Works also received the President's Volunteer Service Award, Bronze Level. He also mentioned that Columbus Water Works had three employees present technical sessions at the conference.

Tom Barnes updated the board on the Georgia Alabama Partnership for Sustainability conference that Columbus Water Works participated in. Columbus Water Works was a Platinum Sponsor. Jeremy Cummings was the keynote speaker at lunch on day one and served on a panel during one of the breakout sessions.

Savonne Monell updated the Board on the Strategic Planning Program. The initiative began in October 2024 with a foundational workshop facilitated by Anne Hatcher, Senior Consultant with Thrivence, and attended by executive leadership. As part of this process, the organization's new **Vision, Mission, and Core Values** were developed and presented to the Board:

- **Vision** – To lead the Chattahoochee Valley to health and prosperity by operating a first-class water utility.
- **Mission** – To serve our community; to provide safe, reliable water; to protect public health and our watershed; and to leave a legacy of financial and environmental stewardship.
- **Core Values** – Service First; Ethics and Integrity; Respect for All; Value Excellence; Environmental and Economic Stewardship.

Since that time, the senior and executive teams have incorporated the ten Attributes of Effective Utility Management, as outlined by the American Water Works

Association. They have also reviewed and refined five strategic focus areas and evaluated 24 supporting strategic goals to ensure alignment with the organization's overall strategic direction.

Columbus Water Works is now entering the implementation phase. The next steps include finalizing key elements of the plan, such as:

- Formation of strategy teams
- Defining team composition and leadership
- Establishing a rotation plan for team members
- Assigning strategic goals
- Identifying senior leader champions
- Developing a timeline for progress meetings

Vic Burchfield updated the board on the PFAS 3M Settlement. Columbus Water Works joined the PFAS Multidistrict Litigation in 2023, which is being heard by the U.S. District Court for the District of South Carolina, Charleston Division, over the use of Aqueous Film-Forming Foam. Columbus Water Works recently received notice of the following settlement awards.

- 3M Settlement - $10,759,781.00
- DuPont Settlement - $1,075,978.10
- Tyco and BASF Settlement – still pending

Payments received from the settlements will help fund the additional advanced PFAS treatment required to meet the new EPA PFAS regulations.

The following Departmental Reports for June and July 2025 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/Environmental Services Reports
- Communications Report
- Employee Services Report
- Water Resource Operations/Managed Maintenance Reports

Chairman Nick Smith announced that the Board will now move into an Executive Session to discuss the acquisition of real estate. A motion was made by Mayor Skip Henderson and seconded by Oz Roberts. Motion carried.

After the Executive Session was adjourned, the Board returned to the open meeting. Action approval by vote in Executive Session was presented as follows: The President shall have the authority to execute a contract with Meridian Brick, LLC for the purchase of 144.2 acres at 3000 Plantation Road, Columbus, Georgia in the amount of $2,884,000.00. As part of the contract 44.2 acres of the 144.2 acres shall be leased back to Meridian Brick, LLC at no charge for a duration of 2 years for the continuation of mining. In addition to the purchase amount, real estate fees in the amount of $52,000.00 shall be paid to Braxton Real Estate, LLC. A motion was made by Jennifer Upshaw and seconded by Oz Roberts to approve this purchase. Motion carried.

There being no further business, a motion was made by Mayor Skip Henderson and seconded by Jennifer Upshaw to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried.

Vic Burchfield

Vic Burchfield, Secretary