

**NORTHEAST PUBLIC WATER AUTHORITY  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING MINUTES  
August 21, at 2:00 PM**

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**Call to Order:**

- President Jay Sabella called the meeting to order on August 21, 2025, at 2:13 PM.

**Roll Call:**

Jay Sabella, President, took roll call and members present were Linda McClellan, Dylan Osmon, Matt Bennett, Brett Cox, and Matt Stone with his proxy given to Matt Bennett. Sonia Boling was absent. Also in attendance were Kim Jones, Office Manager and Rickey Lee, Field Manager.

**Approval of Minutes and Reports:**

- Approval of the minutes as distributed for July 2025. Matt Bennett made a motion to approve, seconded by Brett Cox and approved by unanimous vote.
- Approval of the Office Report as distributed for July 2025. Linda McClellan made a motion to approve, Seconded by Matt Bennett and approved by unanimous vote. The Office Report showed a 2.6% increase in revenue from July 2024 to July 2025. Lock-offs increased 42% and e-billings also increased 9% from July 2024.
- Approval of the Treasurer's Report distributed for July 2025. Linda McClellan made a motion to approve, Seconded by Matt Bennett and approved by unanimous vote.
- Approval of the Field Report distributed for July 2025. Jay Sabella made a motion to approve, seconded by Dylan Osmon and approved by unanimous vote. Rickey Lee explained to the Board that there apparently was an MXU replacement program that the previous manager did not share with him. After some research through past minutes, he discovered that back in 2021 the Board approved a radio replacement program by where there should be approx. 60 radios replaces in 3 batches annually, one batch during the early part of the year, one mid and one late in the year. He called Core & Main, and they told him that radios have not been ordered at all in 2025, so he ordered some and hopes to receive them soon. It was pointed out that due to the timing this year, we may have to make up some lost time in 2026 to get back on track with the program. He then shared that the field guys continue working hard to identify water loss and fix leaks as soon as possible to improve the water loss numbers. Rickey also drew attention to the master meter at one of the pump stations that needs to be replaced because it is not picking up all the usage on that side of the system. After a discussion, Jay Sabella made a motion to gather a few quotes on prices and that following that, Rickey may purchase a new meter. This motion was seconded by Linda McClellan and was passed unanimously.

**Old Business:**

- For the first item of old business, Kim Jones presented a proposed new meter installation agreement with a possible deposit requirement on road crossings and possibly road bores. A lengthy discussion commenced regarding the options for road bores and how the boring company could receive payment. Kim Jones was instructed to call the two reputable boring companies in the area and inquire about a possible financial arrangement with them whereby the customer would pay the boring company directly. It was also decided that NPWA will no longer allow a water customer to do their own road crossing, even with approval from the county road and bridge because if or when the line fails or the road sinks, it remains the responsibility of the water department to maintain the line and the road. It was decided that a flat fee for road crossings would also be discontinued and that the Field Manager will compile a time and material per hour cost on a

road crossing and the customer will be required to pay a deposit at a rate of 90% of that cost up front, also a \$150 service fee will be charged to any water customer who requires a road bore, covering any expenses the water department incurs for that process. Jay Sabella made the motion, Dylan Osmon provided the second. The motion was passed with an affirmative vote of 5 and Brett Cox voting against.

- The second item of old business was a report on NPWA's new backflow testing program. Paula Lambert then joined the meeting and reported that all was going very well. She stated that Rob Stanton, our contractor who is performing all the in-house testing, was able to test 24 of the available 30 backflow preventors during the month of July. She had also sent him back to test some that were behind from the month prior and he tested 13 of them. She also reported that she received a perfect report from the backflow auditor who came in and looked at our program. That once Jay signs the new Cross Connection Program policy and that is turned into the state and placed in our rules and regulations, we will all be up to date and in good standing with the state.
- The next item of old business was to discuss the possible water extension down Christensen Rd. Kim Jones reported that the office had received about 17 responses to the interest survey sent to property owners, and 10 responses were interested and 7 were uninterested. She said the next step in the process, according to the previous manager's notes, was to begin the procurement process, to obtain an engineering firm. She also stated she probably needed to call her contact at the Arkansas Economic Development District to make sure it is a feasible project to continue.
- The final item of old business was to change the date of the Christmas party to Thursday, November 20, 2025, because of a change request from the venue.

#### **New Business:**

- For the first item of new business, Rickey Lee informed the board that a gas line was hit during a water line repair on Chism Dr. and Dewyer and Sons Plumbing was called to repair the gas line.
- The second item of new business was to discuss options for covering the top-soil area in the back of the property to protect it better from rain. The board discussed the matter and decided to try a larger, heavier tarp and table the purchase of anything more expensive for now.
- The third item of new business, Kim Jones informed the board that the wholesale water rates will be decreasing by \$0.55 per 1000 gallons, beginning on the October 2025 bill. The board requested that the money saved from this decrease be allocated to fund some of the meters needed for the replacement program.
- Also noted by Kim Jones was the Lead and Copper Survey from the State that will continue each year as long as there are unknown customer service lines on the water system. She said she was not aware from the previous manager that it was an ongoing project and that the responsibility of identifying these lines remains with the water system as part of an annual reporting process, due in October. Rickey, Kim and Paula have been working hard to piece together the portions of the previous manager's job that was not cross trained.
- The next item of new business was to change authorized signers on the water department's bank accounts. Linda McClellan made a motion to remove Gerry Lance as an authorized signer on all Northeast Public Water Authority Bank Accounts and add Rickey Lee as an authorized signer to all bank accounts held by Northeast Public Water Authority. Matt Bennett provided a second and the motion was passed unanimously.
- The final item of new business was to review personnel policies. All changes were passed unanimously by affirmative vote of the board.

#### **Other Business:**

- Linda McClellan brought up the cash that was found in the safe from the previous manager and she proposed how that money should be allocated. Jay Sabella requested they go into executive session. At that time to discuss the issue.

The board went into executive session at 4:10 pm. and readjourned into regular session at 4:25 pm. Jay Sabella summarized the purpose of the executive session, saying they discussed how to allocate the funds in question. He said this subject will be put on the October agenda and they will decide then.

**Meeting Adjourned:**

There was no other business, so Jay Sabella made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Linda McClellan provided a second and the motion passed unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 4:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Brett Cox  
Secretary

Prepared by Kim Jones, Office Manager

Board Approved: 09/18/2025