

NORTHEAST PUBLIC WATER AUTHORITY
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING MINUTES
June 19, 2025, at 1:30 PM

Call to Order:

- President Jay Sabella called the meeting to order on June 19, 2025, at 1:40 PM.

Roll Call:

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

Approval of Minutes and Reports

Kim Jones presented several format options for meeting minutes. After a discussion, the Board moved to approve one of the options and use that as a guide for future minutes. A motion was also made to redact the names of individuals from prior meeting minutes when fulfilling Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests, in order to safeguard personal privacy in accordance with guidance provided in the Arkansas Attorney General's FOIA Handbook and pursuant to Arkansas Code Annotated § 25-19-106. In instances where the unredacted version is required for legal proceedings, it will be made available to legal counsel as appropriate

- Approval of the minutes as distributed for May 2025. Jay Sabella made a motion to approve, Seconded by Dylan Osmon with a Unanimous vote.
- Approval of the Office Report distributed for May 2025. Jay Sabella made a motion to approve, Seconded by Matt Bennett with a Unanimous vote.
- Approval of the Treasurer's Report distributed for May 2025. Jay Sabella made a motion to approve, Seconded by Matt Bennett with a Unanimous vote.
- Approval of the Field Report distributed for May 2025. Rickey Lee mentioned to the Board that there is a water line on Bay Point Dr that needs to be replaced and relocated as it is in a washed-out ditch. Jay Sabella asked Rickey to contact the county to see if they need to shore up the area or is maybe responsible for the repair before we take on the expense of replacing it. Jay Sabella made a motion to approve, Seconded by Dylan Osmon with a Unanimous vote.

Old Business:

- The Medication Disclosure Policy and Internal Controls and Credentials Management Document was tabled until the following month.
- Investment Policy – Jay Sabella made a motion to add the Office Manager as an authorized signer to the Ascend Wealth funding accounts. A second was provided by
- Backflow Program – Paula Lambert discussed with the Board her concerns regarding charging backflow customers a small fee each on their water bill each month to add up to the testing fee each month. Both her and Kim Jones felt the better approach would be to just charge the full testing fee on the water bill as the testing is done each year. Paula also pointed out that the letter we are sending customers highlights the benefits of precipitation. The program is convenient, affordable and reliable. The in-house testing is done by a certified tester and saves time and simplifies compliance. The Board reviewed the letter that is being sent to customers and instructed the office to continue with the program as they see fit and if any problems or concerns arise, to let the Board know. Paula also reported that we had an evaluation from the Department of Health this past month and our program was highly praised.
- Line Extension – The board reviewed a proposed letter to send out to the property down Christensen Rd. surveying them if they would be interested in public water if it became available in their area. The letter was revised to just survey interest without any further details at this time. The office was instructed to begin

sending those letters out and see what kind of response we receive. Rickey Lee pointed out that we will probably need a newer backhoe if we are going to take on projects such as this. Jay Sabella mentioned that he had spoken with Representative Stetson Painter, and he had informed Jay that there were funds out there for rural water expansions.

- Sewer Project – The board looked over a proposed phone script that the office could use to begin surveying where the sewer interest is and give that information to the community members who are spearheading that project.
- New Office Computers – A motion was made by Jay Sabella to hire Nerds Inc. to install a new computer at the drive-thru area and reconfigure the memory in the office network for future growth. A second was provided by Dylan Osmon and the motion was passed unanimously.
- FOIA access to Board Minutes – After a discussion regarding proper handling of FOIA requests for board minutes it was decided to post the approved minutes on the department’s website to give anyone who wants to read them can from the website. Jay Sabella made the motion to post the minutes on the website going forward, Dylan Osmon seconded the motion, and it was passed unanimously.
- Hiring an attorney – The board had a brief discussion regarding options about hiring an attorney to advise them. They went into an executive session at 2:45 pm and came back to the regular session at 3:15 pm. Jay Sabella stated they had discussed the concerns they had causing them to consider hiring an attorney. A discussion was held regarding the costs of legal counsel. A board member asked to go back into an executive session, which they did at 3:20 pm. At 4:02 PM they went back into regular session. Jay Sabella stated that the second executive session was to discuss a field employee’s performance. Sonia Boling joined the meeting by phone during the executive session and then gave her proxy vote to Dylan Osmon for the remainder of the meeting.

Employee Termination

Dylan Osmon made a motion to terminate an employee. Brett Cox provided a second and the motion was passed unanimously. Paula Lambert was instructed to gather the terminated employee’s personal belongings and box them up. Rickey Lee was appointed the position of Field Manager.

Meeting Adjourned

Due to time restraints, Jay Sabella made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Matt Bennett provided a second and the motion was passed unanimously at 4:06 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Brett Cox-
Secretary

Prepared by Kim Jones, Office Manager
Board Approved on 07/17/2025