

APPROVED

Pendleton Water Association

Minutes of Board of Directors Meeting
at the Toledo Town Venue
June 24, 2025

1. Call to Order. The June PWA Board meeting was called to order at 5:02 p.m. by Board President Charln Stewart. Board directors in attendance were Carl Jeanise, Charln Stewart, Gloria Thompson and Jerry Burnaman. Also present were Board Treasurer Tina Barrett and Board Secretary Tony Laska.

Representing EOM/Cenla were: Kristen Achziger, Ashley DeSales William Dunham and Jeff Staples.

2. Proof of notice of meeting was confirmed.

3. The May 20, 2025, Board Meeting Minutes were approved as written following a motion by Gloria Thompson, seconded by Carl Jeanise.

4. PWA Board President Charln Stewart thanked the nearly 40 guests in attendance for their interest and participation. Rusty Reeves and Clarence Beebe of the Louisiana Rural Water Association, Warren Founds, of the SRA, and Mr. Mains of Sabine Water Works were in attendance.

5. Directors' Reports

President:

- Inspection Response/Action item progress
 - Confirming earlier reports, EOM/Cenla assisted PWA by summarizing all work done since January 2025, addressing several issues raised during the State inspection. Most responses were completed within 90 days with a couple exceptions that require an extension by the State regulators who expressed satisfaction with progress.
- Contract Operator EOM/Cenla Introduction
 - EOM/Cenla Staff members were introduced and informed attendees of their responsibilities in their organizations.
Charln Stewart summarized the recent history that has led PWA to the current intention of hiring a contract operator. Topics covered included recognition of the problem, a number of violations and challenges from the State with no reasonable prospect of improving the current score of "F". Available options were reviewed by the Board, and most did not improve the situation sufficiently to be undertaken seriously. Recognizing the value of EOM/Cenla in professionally filling gaps in PWA operations and management, a three-month negotiation process began that ultimately satisfied PWA's requirements while keeping within the current budget.
 - An operations contract with EOM/Cenla would absorb existing employees while taking over full responsibility of plant operation and maintenance. The SCADA program will relieve the plant of one on-site operator while providing regulatory expertise and regulator relationship-building. While a 7-year contract, at a fixed \$462,000/yr., this has a 90-day cancellation provision.
 - By agreement, a Q & A session for members was scheduled for later in the meeting.
 - CEO of EOM, Kristen Achziger listed some other contracts they had where comparable services are included. She confirmed that EOM and Cenla were recently merged and agreed to provide information on clients in Louisiana. She committed to identify surface water systems that they served.

- Rusty Reeves of LRWA recognized Cenla and confirmed that they do supply operators. He noted it was a rare situation where an Operator and Manager were the same person. This adds credence to the need for an operator contract in a relatively small system such as PWA.
- Mike Myers noted that Board members are not equivalent to technically trained staff doing water resource management work
- Kristen Achziger confirmed that they have the capability to locate and certify staff and the obligation to relocate as needed.
- The difference between EOM/Cenla doing the billing process and PWA retaining it was only about \$200/mo. This requires further discussion and a decision.
- Major repairs and improvements depend on grant resources.

Treasurer:

- Treasurer Tina Barrett made a comparison between the current year and the previous one.
- On a motion by Gloria Thompson, seconded by Carl Jeanise, the May financials were approved unanimously.

Advisor Reports:

- No reports from Advisors were issued at this meeting. Advisors participated actively in the ongoing meeting.

6. Operator's Report

- Tony Farrell was at a job site and couldn't attend.

7. New Business/Membership Questions

- Ned Goodeaux offered a motion to amend the PWA bylaws to limit the Board's financial actions at a meeting to a maximum of \$50,000. After a conversation it was decided to circulate the sign-in sheet and have people indicate yes or no next to their name. The sheets will be given to Laurie to confirm membership, and the number of votes (members) persons have.
- Charln Stewart stated that the draft operations agreement was reviewed for PWA by two separate attorneys.
- Kristen referred to improvements being part of the long-term plan or short-term.
- Board members described their observations of major repairs needed.
- Water management training for Board members is being offered by the Louisiana Rural Water Association at a number of sites in the state. The first training was at Pleasant Hill on May 28. LRWA has authorized trainers to conduct a special session in the near vicinity in Sabine Parish when Board members are able to sign up.
- The process of "Receivership" was described as it applies to Louisiana water associations.
- An Administrative Order does not, in itself, prevent securing grants. For instance, CDBG, USDA Loans and grants.
- Rusty Reeves stated that a consolidation between two water systems releases \$10 million in state funding to make mutually important improvements. He encouraged the Board to get involved more closely with elected officials and agency personnel
- Members were reminded that a 51% rate increase was a requirement of the grant that was rescinded.
- EOM/Cenla staff committed to provide answers to members' questions.
- Charln Stewart will have responses to members' requests.

8. Adjournment

- With a motion by Charln Stewart, seconded by Carl Jeanise, the meeting was adjourned at 7:00 P.M.
- The next regular meeting of the PWA Board will be at the Toledo Town Venue on July 15th.