

Augusta Water
Regular Board Meeting, Thursday, September 18, 2025, at 1:30 p.m.
Field Operations Training Room

PRESENT: Andrew C. Middleton, Chairman, North River District
Garry R. Gordon, Vice Chairman, Middle River District
Harvey Almarode, South River District
Allen Dahl, Beverley Manor District, *via phone call due to traveling*
Matthew Egeli, Wayne District
Michael L. Shull, Riverheads District
Timothy Simmons, Pastures District
Phil Martin, Executive Director
Brent Canterbury, Treasurer
Jean Marshall, Board Secretary

ABSENT: None

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CALL TO ORDER

The Chairman called the meeting to order at 1:30 p.m.

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APPROVAL OF PARTICIPATION THROUGH ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION

Mr. Shull moved, seconded by Mr. Egeli to approve Mr. Dahl to participate in the meeting through electronic communication.

Yeas:	Middleton, Gordon, Almarode, Egeli, Dahl, Shull, and Simmons
Nays:	None

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ADOPTION OF AGENDA

Mr. Martin requested an additional Closed Session be added to the Agenda as Item 11, with all other items following subsequently.

Mr. Gordon moved, seconded by Mr. Shull to adopt the revised Agenda as presented.
Vote was as follows:

Yeas:	Middleton, Gordon, Almarode, Dahl, Egeli, Shull, and Simmons
Nays:	None

Motion approved.

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APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Egeli moved, seconded by Mr. Gordon to approve the Minutes of the Regular Board Meeting of July 17, 2025, which were sent to the members prior to this meeting.

Vote was as follows:

Yeas:	Middleton, Gordon, Almarode, Dahl, Egeli, Shull, and Simmons
Nays:	None

Motion approved.

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MATTERS PRESENTED BY THE PUBLIC

No members of the public were in attendance to make comments and no public comments were brought forth by Staff.

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EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S HIGHLIGHTS

The Highlights, which were included in the Board packets and sent to the Board members prior to this meeting were presented to the Board.

There were no questions or comments by the Board members.

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PROGRESS REPORT

The September Progress Report was included in the Board packets and was reviewed with the Board. There were no questions or comments by the Board members.

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COMMITTEE REPORTS

The Personnel Committee report was presented during the second Closed Session.

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ACTION ITEMS IDENTIFIED IN RECENT BOIL WATER ADVISORY

Mr. Martin gave a PowerPoint presentation, suggesting projects to help with future emergency events, such as the boil water advisory Augusta Water issued in August. The presentation explained the action items and plans for improvements in certain areas of the county.

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Blackburn, Fox Hill & Rt. 250 West/Bon Lea Areas

Mr. Martin explained there are three small areas which receive direct feeds from the City of Staunton (City): Blackburn, Fox Hill, and 250 West/Bon Lee area. Mr. Martin explained Augusta Water could route water to these areas from its own water sources; however, this process would require running approximately 5.7 miles of water main, and the addition of pressure reducing valves (PRV) and booster stations, resulting in an extremely costly project.

Rt. 250 East

Mr. Martin explained the two main places Augusta Water gets water from the City are at the Rt. 250 East PRV, which is in front of Cracker Barrel and at Green Hills Industrial Way at the Mill Place tank. During the incident which caused the boil water advisory in August, Augusta Water was able to supply areas in Fishersville, normally served by the Rt. 250 East PRV without taking any water from the City. Currently, staff is performing a test to see where improvements can be made to make the supply for the Fishersville area better.

Verona/Weyers Cave Areas

The next slide Mr. Martin shared in the presentation concerned the Verona/Weyers Cave pressure zones. He explained the Verona Two area has a hydraulic grade line of 1484 feet, which is the overflow elevation of the tank. The Mt. Sidney tank has a hydraulic grade line of 1527 feet, and Weyers Cave has a hydraulic grade line of 1379 feet. Currently, the Mt. Sidney booster station takes water from the Verona area (either from the Berry Farm plant or from the City) and boosts the pressure to fill up the Mt. Sidney tank. From Mt. Sidney, it flows down to the PRV at the Harshbarger subdivision, where the pressure is cut back, allowing it to go into Weyers Cave to supplement Dice's Spring. Weyers Cave is at a lower grade line than Mt. Sidney, meaning there is not a way to send Dice's Spring water back to Mt. Sidney.

Mr. Martin indicated the location for a future north booster station in the Mt. Sidney area, and a location for a future control valve from Mount Sidney to Verona. The north booster station would allow water at Dice's Spring to be boosted to Mount Sidney, and the PRV from Mt. Sidney to Verona would allow the pressure to drop and get water into the Verona system.

Mr. Martin stated the Mount Sidney north booster station project is already in the preliminary stages and is included in the FY26 budget at a cost of \$720,500. The plans for the booster station are complete and are approved. Mr. Martin reiterated this project will allow Dice's Spring water to be taken from Weyers Cave, boost the pressure and send it to Mt. Sidney and bring it all the way down to the current Mt. Sidney booster station in Verona.

Mr. Egeli asked if Augusta Water has ever supplied water to the City. Mr. Martin stated there have been times when Augusta Water has supplied water to the City. Mr. Egeli stated being able to move the water north and south would help facilitate the provision of water to the City, if needed.

Mr. Martin reminded the Board members Augusta Water is in a contract with the City to purchase a million gallons of water a day. Also, the City has to be able to provide 3 million gallons a day to Augusta Water, if needed.

Mr. Simmons asked for clarification does Augusta Water need to be reliant on the City for water? Mr. Martin stated the aforementioned proposed projects would allow Augusta Water to

be self-sufficient. The way the Verona/Mt. Sidney/Weyers Cave systems operate currently, make it necessary to obtain water from the City.

Mr. Simmons asked if the aforementioned upgrades will fix the current and future interruptions at the Shamrock plant.

Mr. Martin explained the upgrades will not fix the issues by themselves. The County has received grant funding, which may help with upgrades in Verona. This funding will be explained in the next Agenda item

Berry Farm Water Plant

Mr. Martin reminded the Board members the Berry Farm plant is permitted to treat a million gallons of water a day; however, there are plans in place to upgrade the plant to treat two million gallons a day. Construction for the upgrade was not originally planned to take place until closer to the expiration date of the Staunton contract, but it may be advantageous to consider making the upgrades in the near future. Cost estimates for the upgrade in 2018 were around \$3-\$4M; with the current inflation costs, a rough estimate for the upgrade is approximately \$6M. The plans will need to be reviewed to make sure they are still in compliance with regulatory issues, the matter will also be brought before the Technology Committee for their review, and the project will be moved to the FY28 Capital Budget.

Mr. Shull expressed concern about Berry Farm and Dice's Spring being the only two water sources on the northern end of Augusta County. Mr. Martin reminded him Augusta Water can purchase additional water from the City, if needed.

Berry Farm to Verona

Mr. Martin stated the estimated cost to run waterlines from the Berry Farm plant to the Verona tank is approximately \$600,000 and consists of 2,700 feet of water main. An alternate route would be to run the line from the plant and tie in to the system on Quicks Mill Road. This route would require approximately 7,600 – 8,000 linear feet of water main. The alternate route would provide two ways to feed water into the system. The estimated cost for the alternate route would be approximately \$1.1M.

Other Action Items

Mr. Martin explained other Action items include:

1. Request better/more complete information from the City on their pressure zones.
2. Strengthen internal communication.
3. Post maps showing affected areas on the website.
4. Post notices/information at the Augusta Regional Landfill.
5. Work on a critical customers list organized by pressure zones.
6. Obtaining a dedicated reverse 911 system.
7. Explore creating a public information office or communications manager position at Augusta Water.
8. Be more proactive on providing bottled water to the public for emergency situations.

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REQUEST FROM AUGUSTA COUNTY TO PARTICIPATE IN TWO PROJECTS

Mr. Martin explained, earlier this year Augusta County applied for an Economic Development grant pertaining to the Mill Place Commerce Park. The County has been notified of approval of up to \$500,000 in Virginia Business Ready Sites Program (VBRSP) matching grant funds for water and/or sewer utility infrastructure analysis and improvements at the Park. This funding does require a “dollar-for-dollar” match, and projects would need to be completed within two years.

Augusta County asked Augusta Water staff to identify projects which would be attractive to the State. They are as follows:

PROJECT 1

Construction of approximately 580 feet of 12” or 16” water main which would create a connection between the Verona Water Storage Tank and the Mill Place Water Storage Tank. This is a project that had already been identified by staff as necessary to improve reliability of water service to the Mill Place Commerce Park and is included in our Capital Budget (construction in FY-28). The total estimated cost of this project is \$600,000, of which \$300,000 would be provided by the VBRSP grant and \$300,000 would need to be provided by the grant recipient. Augusta County has requested Augusta Water provide the \$300,000 matching contribution.

Staff recommends authorizing Augusta Water to participate in Project 1 for a total value of up to \$300,000. As construction of the project will not begin until FY-27, other projects for that fiscal year will be adjusted to account for this work.

After a brief discussion, Mr. Egeli moved, seconded by Mr. Simmons to authorize Augusta Water to participate in Project 1 as described above, with Augusta Water contributing up to \$300,000 in matching contributions of the total project cost of \$600,000.

Vote was as follows:

Yeas:	Middleton, Gordon, Almarode, Dahl, Egeli, Shull, and Simmons
Nays:	None

PROJECT 2

An engineering study to evaluate options to develop more capacity at the Middle River WWTP and to evaluate options to improve available water and wastewater flow for the Mill Place Commerce Park. This study is not included in any Augusta Water budget. The Rough Order of Magnitude estimated cost of this project is \$220,000. Augusta County has requested that Augusta Water provide the \$110,000 matching contribution. Any funding for this Study would be an Expense item, and not Capital.

Staff makes no recommendation on Project 2, but requests the Board to render a decision as to if Augusta Water will participate, and if so, at what level of funding.

After a brief discussion, Mr. Gordon moved, seconded by Mr. Dahl to authorize Augusta Water to participate in Project 2 by providing half of the required dollar for dollar match up to \$55,000 for the study.

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Dr. Middleton asked how the study would benefit Augusta Water. Mr. Martin stated the study will include how capacity can be increased at the Middle River Wastewater Treatment Plant. It will also include how to improve water and wastewater availability in the Mill Place Commerce Park. While increasing capacity at the Middle River treatment plant would be beneficial to Augusta Water, increasing availability at Mill Place would be more beneficial to the economic development side of Augusta County.

After further discussion, the Board members agreed the study may be beneficial in providing the essential information on the need to increase capacity at the Middle River Treatment Plant, as well as the potential need to increase availability at Mill Place.

Vote was as follows:

Yeas:	Middleton, Gordon, Almarode, Dahl, Egeli, Shull, and Simmons
Nays:	None

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CLOSED SESSIONS

A) Mr. Gordon moved, seconded by Mr. Shull to convene in Closed Session pursuant to Virginia Code §2.2-3711(A)(3), to discuss or consider the acquisition of real property for a public purpose where discussion in an open meeting would adversely affect the bargaining position or negotiating strategy of the public body.

Vote was as follows:

Yeas:	Middleton, Gordon, Almarode, Dahl, Egeli, Shull, and Simmons
Nays:	None

Motion approved.

Mr. Shull moved, seconded by Mr. Simmons to come out of Closed Session.

Vote was as follows:

Yeas:	Middleton, Gordon, Almarode, Dahl, Egeli, Shull, and Simmons
Nays:	None

Motion approved.

Board members were requested to certify only matters pursuant to Virginia Code §2.2-3711(A)(3) were discussed. Members certifying were Middleton, Gordon, Almarode, Dahl, Egeli, Shull, and Simmons.

Mr. Egeli moved, seconded by Mr. Simmons for the Executive Director and Augusta Water staff to continue discussions with Mr. Homer Bauserman consistent with the directions given by the Board during the Closed Session.

Vote was as follows:

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Yeas: Middleton, Gordon, Almarode, Dahl, Egeli,
Shull, and Simmons
Nays: None

Motion approved.

B) Mr. Gordon moved, seconded by Mr. Simmons to convene in Closed Session pursuant to Virginia Code §2.2-3711(A)(1), to discuss personnel matters regarding performance review and evaluation.

Vote was as follows:

Yeas: Middleton, Gordon, Almarode, Dahl, Egeli,
Shull, and Simmons
Nays: None

Motion approved.

Mr. Shull moved, seconded by Mr. Simmons to come out of Closed Session.

Vote was as follows:

Yeas: Middleton, Gordon, Almarode, Dahl, Egeli,
Shull, and Simmons
Nays: None

Motion approved.

Board members were requested to certify only matters pursuant to Virginia Code §2.2-3711(A)(1) were discussed. Members certifying were Middleton, Gordon, Almarode, Dahl, Egeli, Shull, and Simmons.

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BOARD COMMENTS

There were no comments from the Board members.

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ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Mr. Shull moved, seconded by Mr. Egeli to adjourn the meeting at 2:55 p.m.

Vote was as follows:

Yeas: Middleton, Gordon, Almarode, Dahl, Egeli,
Shull and Simmons
Nays: None

Motion approved.

Board Secretary

Chairman