

CONFIDENTIAL



Water Authority of the Cayman Islands

Minutes of 309th Meeting held on 17th June 2020

Members Present:

Chairman:	Mr K Gomez - <i>in person</i>
Members:	Mr H B Ebanks - <i>virtual</i> Mr J Gill - <i>virtual</i> Ms A Owens - <i>virtual</i> Mr C Randall - <i>virtual</i> Mr M Rankine - <i>virtual</i> Mrs L Ryan - <i>phone</i> Mr W Welcome - <i>virtual</i> Mr A Wright - <i>virtual</i>
Secretary:	Dr G Frederick-van Genderen – <i>in person</i>
Apologies:	Mr C Randall

Call to Order

The Chairman welcomed members to the Water Authority's Board meeting conducted with the majority of members connecting remotely. The Chairman noted that due to the continuing COVID-19 pandemic it was not possible for members to meet in person. The Chairman noted apologies for Mr C Randall who was not able to participate due to illness. Members noted their best wishes for Mr Randall's speedy recovery. After ascertaining that there was a quorum, the Chairman declared the meeting open and called to order at 11:04am. The Chairman then asked Mrs L Ryan to open the meeting with prayer.

Confirmation of Minutes of the 308th Meeting held on 29th April 2020

The Chairman asked for confirmation of the Minutes of the 308th Meeting held on 29th April 2020. Mr J Gill moved the motion to accept the Minutes as amended, Mr H B Ebanks seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously by members able to vote.

Declaration of Conflicts of Interest

None.

Matters Arising

a) **Lower Valley Reverse Osmosis Plant (LVRO) - Update.**

The Chairman reported that during the period April-May 2020, running one RO train only, the LVRO Plant produced on average 1,222 cubic metres per day, which is approximately 40% of its design water production capacity.

The electrical parts required to connect the new submersible feed water well pumps have arrived. It is anticipated that the three new well pumps will be installed within the next few weeks. Once the new pumps are operational, the replacement membranes will be installed, which will extend the time between cleaning and thus increase the average water production capacity.

b) **Cayman Brac Infrastructure Upgrade & Expansion Project - Update.**

The Chairman reported that until the travel restrictions between Grand Cayman and Cayman Brac have been removed, the Superintendent and Heavy Equipment Operator of the New Works crew will remain on Grand Cayman. They will initially assist the New Works crew at High Rock Drive, or alternatively work independently on repairing/replacing identified leaking pipeline sections. The Brac-based New Works staff have been assisting with trucked water deliveries during the lock-down period. Their assistance allowed trucked water deliveries to be completed early in the afternoon, and this will continue until the New Works crew resumes pipelaying. They will also assist with repairing any leaks etc.

Redacted under section 21 (1)(b) of the Freedom of Information Law (2020 Revision)



c) **31 December 2018 Audit of Consolidated & Divisional Statements - Update**

31 December 2018 Audit – Consolidated, Divisional and Island Financial Statements for Water, Wastewater and Statutory

The Secretary reported that the Divisional Statements remain with KPMG for their review and the Authority will continue to assist where needed and will

answer questions as they arise. It is expected that the documents will be provided for Board approval at the July 2020 meeting.

Annual Report 2018

The Secretary reported that the 2018 Annual Report was provided to KPMG and the Auditor General (OAG) for their review and confirmation on 10 March 2020 and again on 11 June 2020. The Financial Controller will continue to follow-up as it is important that this document be forwarded to the Ministry for approval in the Legislative Assembly for it to become a public document. However, a copy has been provided to members. Members were respectfully asked to approve the document providing there are no material changes to the document and that the Chairman, Director, and Financial Controller be approved to sign off upon receiving the acceptance from KPMG and the OAG. Members approved the draft Annual Report 2018 and authorised the Chairman, Director, and Financial Controller to sign the Report providing there are no material changes

31 December 2019 Audit – Consolidated, Divisional and Island Financial Statements for Water, Wastewater and Statutory

The Secretary noted that the Divisional and Island Financial Statements for Water, Wastewater and Statutory are being drafted and will be ready for submission once those for 2018 are complete.

Annual Report 2019

The Secretary reported that the 2019 Annual Report is in preparation and will be submitted to the auditors upon completion.

Insurance Review

The Secretary reported that the Financial Controller confirmed that the updated coverage through BritCay has been in place since 29 April 2020 and this matter is now considered closed.

COVID-19 Actions and Impact -Update

The Secretary reminded members the Cayman Islands continues to be under restricted movement due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The Cayman Islands National Emergency Operations Command (NEOC) was officially activated on 03 March 2020, the previously daily meetings are now reduced to twice weekly as the Cayman Islands Government eases restrictions.

- *Office Reopening*

The Secretary reported that after extensive preparations for the protection of staff and customers, on 08 June 2020, the Water Authority's main office in Grand Cayman re-opened (Customer Service and Cashiers) to the public 8:30am-1:00pm Monday-Friday. The Cayman Brac office re-opened with the same period of 8:30am-1:00pm. These reduced hours are necessary to accommodate frontline staff who have childcare issues but continue to work from home. Full services are being offered to the public whether in office or

via email or phone. Since reopening, emails continue to be high in volume while customer presence in the office has been low.

The Water Authority's management prepared a detailed Return to Work Plan which was shared with all staff and executed as of 08 June 2020. Every staff member was required to review the Plan and sign the Return to Work Letter to confirm that they have read and understood the Plan. Copies of the plan are available if members would like to have one.

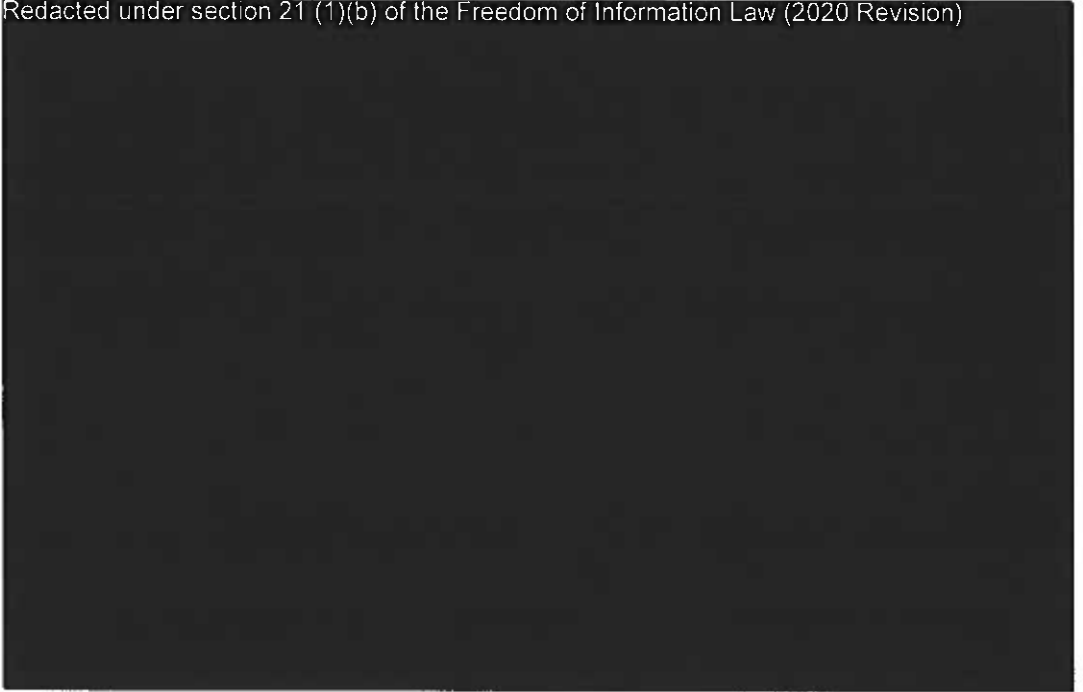
Various policies and protocols are in place to protect employees and customers from being exposed to each other. These include, physical distancing rules, mandatory wearing of masks, hand sanitisers at all key locations, limited number of persons allowed in communal areas, hand washing stations for road crews, bio-shields to protect frontline staff who have face-to face contact, etc. Additionally, there are COVID-19 related notices and signs for customers as well as staff around the office buildings in Grand Cayman and Cayman Brac with floor markings for customers to observe social distancing, customer line up outside to control maximum number of customers in lobby including signage and tent coverage. The Authority also contracted for two security guards to manage customers entering the lobby as access is based on the alphabetically assigned days as per the latest Public Health Regulations.

Redacted under section 21 (1)(b) of the Freedom of Information Law (2020 Revision)

Since the offices reopened, the Authority has resumed full operation albeit with staff working shifts and several continuing to work remotely (due to medically high risk, childcare issues). The shift system helps to manage the number of staff in the office and work crews start an hour apart and work straight for five hours with no lunch break (15 mins breaks are allowed). This prevents the crews from having to congregate in the lunch room or around food trucks. Administrative staff are working reduced hours in the office and some continue to work remotely from home. Members queried when the Board would be able to return to in-person meetings, the Secretary advised that as the Water Authority Boardroom allows for 6 persons to be in attendance with the required 6-ft of physically distancing, some members could be present at the next Water Authority Board meeting.

Redacted under section 21 (1)(b) of the Freedom of Information Law (2020 Revision)

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As part of the Return to Work Plan, the Authority sourced items for sanitation kits (paper towels and disinfection spray) for all Authority vehicles and also for staff. The Authority sought and received 430 reusable cloth masks at no cost from the Support Services Cluster of the NEOC. These were distributed to all staff members with the field crew staff receiving five each while admin staff received two each. As the wearing of masks will be a long-term process, the Authority has ordered another 1,000 reusable cloth masks, half locally and half from an overseas vendor. In addition to securing masks the Authority continues to purchase other disinfectant and cleaning products to support the fight against COVID-19.

- *Payment Deferral Policy*

The Secretary reported that to date the Water Authority has made ten payment agreements (value of \$47,721.25) under this policy. However, the majority of customers have been finding ways to pay their bills. Under the

regular payment agreements, there are 31 agreements in place with value of \$61,980.15.

As members are aware, the Water Authority waived late penalties in March, April and May. The Secretary recommends that this be continued for June or until the Authority's office and all of the Post Offices are back to regular hours. Members able to vote agreed to waive late penalties through the month of June 2020.

*Redacted under section 21 (1)(b) of the Freedom of Information Law (2020 revision)

- *COVID-19 Sewerage Discount Policy*

The Secretary reported that further to the COVID-19 Sewerage Discount Policy approved by the Board at the 308th Meeting on 29 April 2020, the Water Authority has received requests from 13 customers. Of these, 7 have been processed as they provided the required documentation and out of these 7, 5 were approved and 2 did not meet the criteria and hence did not qualify for the discount [REDACTED]. The total discount for the approved customers to date, is \$8,549.55.

Supporting documentation is being awaited from 5 of the applicants. One applicant does not agree with the policy and wants her account dealt with differently and has written to the Board [REDACTED]. This request is to be considered at this meeting under Current Business on the Agenda.

Members discussed the policy and subsequently agreed to extend the temporary relief for commercial customers along the West Bay Road tourist strip for an additional 3 months (July, August, September).

- *Accounts Receivable and Online Payments*

The Secretary reported that when the front office closed to the public a big push was made by the Authority to encourage customers to sign up for E-Billing and set up online payment options to ensure that their bills were paid. This push by the Corporate Communications Unit and managed by the Customer Service Department resulted in a significant increase in value and number of payments received through online portals. For example, the payments received for the period 01 March 2020–31 May 2020 via the Authority's website payments increased by 4,858 payments (70%) over the same period in 2019.

Overall, the online payments increased in volume by 43% and by value by 67%, showing that some of the larger accounts are now utilising online payment options. [REDACTED]

The Secretary noted that the trend is going in the right direction and both the Customer Service Department and the Finance Department are committed to encouraging electronic bills and online payments.

While the Authority is not currently charging penalties or disconnecting customers for non-payment, the Accounts Receivable Balances are closely monitored so that the Authority is aware of and can proactively work with customers to ensure that they do not fall too far behind in payments.

For comparison purposes, the Financial Controller noted that 32% [REDACTED] of the balance was in >90days as at 29 February 2020 and 29% [REDACTED] of the Accounts Receivable balance as at 31 May 2020. In summary, the Accounts Receivable position within the Authority remains strong and as noted above, customers are finding alternate ways to pay their bills rather than visiting the front office.

Redacted under section 21 (1)(b) of the Freedom of Information Law (2020 Revision)

The Secretary reported that the upgrade to the Cogsdale software that was planned prior to the lockdown, will commence in a few weeks. This version will allow a more user-friendly profile for customers to access and pay their bills online.

- *Other COVID-19 Staffing Matters*

- **Recruitment & Staffing**

The Secretary noted that active recruitment will resume now as the Cayman Islands Government has lifted some restrictions and the Authority has resumed operations. Additionally, WORC is now accepting work permit applications online.

The following situations are current for key and much needed positions that will need work permits:

- Operations Engineer-WW - lack of response to overseas ads; recruitment to restart.
- Senior Operator-WWTP - suitable overseas candidate interviewed locally; able to progress the recruitment process but waiting on special request to exempt advertising on the Jobs Cayman government portal (a new requirement effective 01 May 2020 for all work permit applications). Will also need to request special consideration for candidate to travel to Grand Cayman if/when work permit is approved.
- Civil Engineer - job offer accepted. Recruitment process can resume but waiting on special request to exempt from advertising on the Jobs Cayman government portal (a new requirement effective 01 May 2020 for all work permit applications) before submitting the work permit application.
- **Scholarship**

All three of the Authority's current scholarship recipients completed their semester courses online. Currently, two of the three are doing summer courses.

For the 2020-2021 school year, five scholarship applications were received and two applicants have been shortlisted for interviews. Board member Mr A Wright has agreed to represent the Board on the Water Authority's scholarship interview panel as Ms A Owens decided to "hand over the baton" after many years of providing great input and support on the interview panel. Her assistance has been greatly appreciated.

o **Internship Programme**

The annual Water Authority Summer Internship Programme has been cancelled for this year with the exception of the Authority's three scholarship recipients who will be placed in Finance and IT. All applicants for the Summer Internship Programme have been informed accordingly.

o **Annual Staff Meeting**

The Annual Staff Meeting which was to be held on 31 January 2020 at the Westin Resort was postponed due to the earthquake on 28 January 2020. The Westin gave a 6-month extension to reschedule the event. A tentative new date of 09 October 2020 has been set with the venue however it may be necessary to postpone the event to next year as it is unlikely COVID-19 related circumstances will be relaxed enough to hold this event in the foreseeable future.

d)

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Redacted under section 21 (1)(b) of the Freedom of Information Law (2020 Revision)



- e) **Miscellaneous Updates.**

- a) Redacted under section 21 (1)(b) of the Freedom of Information Law (2020 Revision)
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- b) *In-House Pipelaying Crews* - The Chairman advised that on 05 June 2020 work resumed on the pipeline extension along High Rock Drive to the proposed mental health facility (stopped in March 2020 due to the COVID-19 lockdown). The work is being carried out with reduced working hours to allow staff to return home for lunch, rather than standing in line at food trucks, restaurants, etc., thus minimising contact with others. During the week of 08 June 2020, a total of 140 metres (460 feet) of 300mm (12-inch) diameter PVC pipe was installed. To date, a total of 1,750 metres (5,740 feet) of 300mm (12-inch) diameter PVC pipe has been installed, or nearly 74% of the total project length of approximately 2,380 metres (7,800 ft).
- c) *Water Supply Division* - The Chairman advised that as the Reservoir Maintenance Inspection was postponed due to the COVID-19 crisis, Operations started the replacement of approximately 210 metres (700 feet) of 150mm (6-inch) diameter PVC pipe in Spinnaker Road (Red Bay). This work was nearly completed when the lock-down became in effect. This project was resumed and completed last week.

During the week of 08 June 2020 Operations disinfected and flushed the pipeline for Phase 3 of the Vela development in South Sound. Connection and the installation of service lines is scheduled for the week of 15 June 2020.

Operations also tentatively scheduled the connection of the water main into the Indigo Bay site for the week of 15 June 2020.

Work will soon commence on the relaying of Woodstock Road, unless the Authority can commence work on the upgrade of Elgin Avenue, between Hospital Road and Shedden Road.

Elgin Avenue

On 03 June 20120, the Authority found out that preparation work for road paving ("milling") was being carried out on Elgin Avenue. The Authority immediately wrote to the National Roads Authority (NRA) reminding them that on 20 December 2019 they were advised that the Water Authority intended to upgrade the pipeline in Elgin Avenue, between Hospital Road and Shedden Road. The Water Authority at that time had enquired whether this would interfere with any NRA planned works, indicating that we could schedule these upgrade plans accordingly. On 09 January 2020 NRA responded that it had no plans for any paving of this road. The NRA was advised that this pipeline was installed more than 30 years ago, and must be upgraded to better accommodate the Water Authority's customers, and additionally, some sections are prone to leaks.

On 03 June 2020, via email, the Water Authority requested that NRA delay the road overlay work in Elgin Avenue until the Water Authority completed its pipeline upgrade work. The NRA was advised that the Water Authority was prepared to put its already scheduled work on hold and immediately, subject to

sign-off by other utilities, start work on the upgrade of the water main in this road. This would ensure that the Water Authority would not have to dig up a newly paved road to carry out repairs on the existing pipe (whenever there is a leak) or when the upgrade to this pipeline takes (later this year). It was pointed out in the email that not only would this be most embarrassing to both organisations, but will also reduce their overall costs as the Water Authority is prepared to contribute towards the repaving costs (i.e., the reinstatement costs that would have been incurred otherwise).

Unfortunately to date, and in spite of three reminders, no response was received from the NRA. The Secretary reached out to the Deputy Chief Officer (Mr Tristan Hydes) on 16 June 2020 and later the same day the Water Authority received confirmation from the NRA that the Water Authority can proceed with the pipeline upgrade. Other utilities have already been contacted regarding their underground utilities. The work will be scheduled as soon as a response is received from Flow (the only utility still outstanding).

- d) *North Side Water Works* – The Chairman advised that the Business Case for this project has been submitted to, for approval by, the Water Authority's Procurement Committee. Once approved, the tender will be advertised on the Cayman Islands Government's Public Purchasing Portal ("Bonfire").

e) Redacted under section 21 (1) (a) (ii) and (b) of the Freedom of Information Law (2020 Revision)

- f) *Wastewater Division* – The Chairman advised that during the period April-May 2020, the design hydraulic capacity of the wastewater treatment plant (2.5 mgd) was exceeded on ten days. The average daily wastewater inflow from West Bay Road during that period was 2.19 mgd (or approximately 88% of design capacity). This amount was 5.2% less than the average influent measurement during the same period the previous year (2.31 mgd). The daily inflow at the wastewater treatment plant averaged around 2.8 mgd up to around 21 March 2020 (the day Government closed the borders).

Last week Operations-Wastewater connected the new apartment complex Eleven Parc Ltd on Parkway Drive.

Operations-Wastewater also repaired a damaged sewer pipe at the new Aqua Development on Snooze Lane, behind Seven Mile Shops. The pipe was found damaged during the construction of a large retaining wall.

The Water Authority is consistently requesting details from NRA for the Airport Connector Road so that design of the new sewer main and the related tender documents and the business case can be prepared. It is very difficult to get this information from the NRA.

- g) *FOI updates* - The Chairman advised that no new FOI questions were received since the April 2020 Board meeting.

Current Business

a) Management Accounts April 2020.

The Secretary reported that management accounts for the period ending 30 April 2020 had been prepared for the Board’s review.

The Finance Department is strategically moving resources to the 2020 financial period and while a full set of statements is still pending solid figures were provided for the Financial performance for the 4-month period.

Revenue continues to be strong, with water sales in Grand Cayman up 5.7% and 7.5% in the Brac, sewerage fees are also up by 1.5% but this will be adjusted based on the impact of the Sewerage Discount Policy as noted above. The Authority will monitor the eligible discounts, as it stands now with <\$10k the impact will be minimal, however additional requests for the discount are expected to be received.

Redacted under section 21 (1)(b) of the Freedom of Information Law (2020 Revision)

Even with the office shutdown as a result of COVID-19 the Authority continued operations, kept all staff members on full pay, continue to pay all utilities and production related expenses and therefore it is reasonable that both operational and administrative expenses are primarily in line with 2019. It is within expectation that expense line items such as landscaping would have decreased and computer and phone purchases increased.

Members will note that the Authority has not yet incorporated a provision for Health and Pension, but will endeavour to reflect estimated figures in the next reporting period.

Redacted under section 21 (1)(b) of the Freedom of Information Law (2020 Revision)

b) Request for Bill Adjustment re Customer Account# [Redacted]

*Redacted under section 21 (1)(b) of the Freedom of Information Law (2020 Revision)

The Chairman reported that on 18 May 2020 and on 03 June 2020 the Authority received emails from [Redacted] requesting that consideration be given to

adjusting her water bill. A copy of the correspondence and the report from Customer Service was provided to members.

*Redacted under section 21 (1)(b) of the Freedom of Information Law (2020 Revision)

A review of the account was undertaken and the Authority's findings are that the initial meter reading for the billing cycle for April 2020 (carried out on 08 April 2020) was higher than normal thus triggering a Fail Audit. This Fail Audit inspection was completed on 16 April 2020 at the end of Cycle 1 meter reading, at which time the meter reader noted: "*possible leak detected. [REDACTED] was informed.*" Additionally, the metering supervisor called the property owner and informed her of a possible leak: "*[REDACTED] was advised via phone. Consumption is very high at 1300 cubic metres.*"

The April 2020 bill amount was \$9,002.09, for the meter reading period of 11 March 2020 - 16 April 2020 (36 days). The daily average cost for this bill was \$225.91. The daily average consumption during this period was 39.09 cubic metres with a total of 1,407.2 cubic metres.

On 11 May 2020, the customer sent an email confirming that her plumber had identified two issues: a broken pipe and that the valve to the well had been turned on therefore the city water was flowing into the well; she requested advice on how to pay. The customer was then informed of payment options and that a payment agreement was available.

On 18 May 2020, further information was provided by customer regarding difficulties of repair due to COVID situation and that plumbing material was not readily available; also that property is rented to a NAU client; NAU assistance with the bill was sought as tenants did not inform Customer of any issues, but NAU had advised her that they were not able to assist.

Subsequently on 20 May 2020, the customer was informed that the bill was payable and that she should try to make payments online until she was able to setup a payment agreement.

On 03 June 2020, the customer submitted an email letter to the Board requesting that the April bill be adjusted (discounted) due to financial hardship which resulted from loss of income during Covid-19.

In summary, the Water Authority informed the customer regarding the possible leak as soon as it was identified on 16 April 2020; both the tenant and the owner were informed and the owner acknowledged this in her email 11 May 2020. There were no errors on the part of the Authority as there was a leak on the customer's side due to two plumbing problems: a broken pipe and an open valve which allowed water to flow into the well. The customer should be reminded that all plumbing downstream of the meter is the responsibility of the customer.

The customer's new charges from the leak is \$9,002.09. Due to the fact that the customer has multiple properties, and that this property is rented, the Customer Service Manager advised that the customer does not fit the Indigent Assistance Fund (IAF) requirements, however, the Board may wish to consider a discount due to the special circumstances being faced by the customer. These include: customer is elderly (77 years old); lost her income during this COVID period; the leak was enormous; the customer rents to an NAU client; and additionally, the customer acknowledged the leak. An extended payment arrangement may also be offered to settle any remaining balance. The Secretary respectfully sought the Board's decision on the request from the customer. After discussion members noted that the customer may not be an exact fit for the criteria of the IAF and subsequently agreed that those criteria should be waived to allow this customer's situation be referred to the Indigent Assistance Fund.

Mr W Welcome gave his apologies as he had to leave the meeting at this point to attend to prior commitments.

c) **Request for Bill Adjustment re Customer Account** [REDACTED]

*Redacted under section 21 (1)(b) of the Freedom of Information Law (2020 Revision)

The Chairman reported that on 08 June 2020 the Authority received emails from [REDACTED] requesting that consideration be given to adjusting her water bill. A copy of the correspondence and the report from Customer Service was provided to members.

A review of the account was undertaken and the Authority's findings are that the initial meter reading for the billing cycle for April 2020 that was read on 07 April 2020 was higher than normal thus triggering a Fail Audit. This Fail Audit inspection was completed on 16 April 2020 at the end of Cycle 1 meter reading, and at which time the meter reader noted: "*reading correct no leak detected*". The April bill amount was \$241.92, for the meter reading period of 10 March 2020-16 April 2020 (37 days). The daily average cost for this bill was \$6.53. The daily average consumption during this period was 1.06 cubic metres with a total of 39.3 cubic metres.

Based on the customer's request, a service order for complaint of high bill was issued; upon the site visit on 21 May 2020, the meter reader identified a possible leak as there was movement on the meter dial. The customer was not home at the time, and was informed via voice mail and email of findings later that evening.

The May 2020 bill amount was \$79.62, for the meter reading period of 16 April 2020-21 May 2020 (35 days). The daily average cost for this bill was \$2.27. The daily average consumption during this period was .40 cubic metres with a total of 13.9 cubic metres.

Subsequently on 08 June 2020, the customer sent in an email letter requesting an audit and that matter be addressed to the Board; the customer also made claims that the reading in the April 2020 billing was incorrect; billing was generally incorrect; disputes that there was a possible leak identified by the meter reader on 21 May 2020; and, that the meter reader did not visit her property.

On 09 June 2020, Audit was conducted by the utility auditor. The reading of 174.0 was found to be consistent with the account billing, no leaks were found at the time of visit. However, it was identified that customer has been doing construction and she indicated that she has ensured that the water was not wasted and does not know why the bill was so high for April 2020. The utility auditor pointed out to the customer that usage seems to have returned to around normal usage.

In review, during the April billing process, a fail audit was conducted due to the higher than normal usage identified; the reading was found to be correct and no issues were identified. The April reading was verified and the bill was noted as correctly calculated. Further to the complaint of the high April bill, on May 21, 2020 a new reading was taken and during that visit, a possible leak was identified as there was movement on the meter. The customer was informed later that day via voicemail and email as no one was home during the meter reader visit: the communication was that there was '*a possible leak*'. This terminology is used to identify movement identified on a meter dial and no one seems to be home at the premises using water.

The customer further claimed that the meter reader did not visit due to video surveillance. This is refuted as the location of the Water Authority truck driven by the meter reader who executed the service order for the complaint of high bill was verified as being at the said customer's location at the date and time the service order was executed as per the Automile record.

During the audit visit of 09 June 2020, no movement was identified on the meter, however the utility auditor did note that construction was ongoing at the property. The customer also acknowledged that she did have construction ongoing and monitored the usage of water to ensure there was no waste.

The meter is the instrument the Authority uses to measure the water usage and accordingly, all readings obtained are used for billing unless the meter is proven faulty. It is noted that the CSR had offered the option of meter testing to the customer but she does not want to have the meter tested. Additionally, as pointed out by the utility auditor, the May bill seems to be back to around normal usage. The customer should be reminded that all plumbing downstream of the meter is the responsibility of the customer. Accordingly, the bill is payable and a payment agreement can be offered to assist the customer with the higher than normal bill. The Secretary respectfully sought the Board's decision on the request from the customer.

Members discussed the customer's complaint and agreed that the customer should be advised that they reviewed the request and decided not to discount or waive the bill as the Authority's records show that the bill is valid and payable. Members also noted that the customer had chosen not to have the meter tested, the meter is the instrument used by the Authority to measure water usage. The customer should be reminded that all plumbing downstream of the meter is the customer's responsibility. Members agreed that an extended Special Payment Plan Agreement should be offered for a period convenient to the customer with the usual discounting of late fees (providing payments are made regularly according to the agreement).

d) **Request for Bill Adjustment re Customer Account** [REDACTED]

*Redacted under section 21 (1)(b) of the Freedom of Information Law (2020 Revision)

The Chairman reported that on 02 June 2020 the Authority received an email letter from [REDACTED] requesting that consideration be given to adjusting her sewerage fees [REDACTED] differently from the COVID-19 Sewerage Discount Policy approved by the Water Authority Board. A copy of the correspondence and the report from Customer Service was provided to members.

A review of the account was undertaken and the Authority's findings are that on 31 March 2020 the sewerage bill with Sewerage Fixture Units (SFUs) of 363 for the billing cycle of March 2020 was applied; $363 \times 1.672 = 606.94$ less EAF $15.65 = \$591.29$; account was billed for service period 01 March-31 March 2020.

On 30 April 2020, the sewerage bill with SFUs of 363 for the billing cycle of April 2020 was applied; $363 \times 1.672 = 606.94$ less EAF $14.41 = \$592.53$; account was billed for service period 01 April-30 April 2020.

On 31 May 2020, the sewerage bill with SFUs of 363 for the billing cycle of May 2020 was applied; $363 \times 1.672 = 606.94$ less EAF $13.83 = \$593.11$; account was billed for service period 01 May-31 May 2020.

The Water Authority Board approved COVID-19 Sewerage Discount Policy was explained to the customer. The customer clarified that she was not seeking a discount but instead was seeking Board approval that Water Authority change its sewerage billing process for her account and only bill her for part of the building that is currently being used.

Water Authority sewerage customers are billed in accordance with S45 (1) and (2) of Water Authority Regulations (2018 Revision) and the approved rates; a customer's property is assessed Sewerage Fixture Units (SFUs) and each fixture unit is calculated at the constant rate. The current rate is CI\$1.672 and all bills are calculated on a monthly basis.

For each sewerage customer, the premises are connected to the public sewer system via a connection point; there is no meter to measure flow, or a method to monitor/ know whether a customer uses the service or not.

In summary, the Authority's billing calculation process is stipulated in the Authority's Regulations; to deviate from this charge/calculation process for sewerage billing would be detrimental to the Authority. The Authority's billing calculation for sewerage must remain that a monthly rate is charged for the service being provided.

It is further noted that in considering the financial impact of commercial customers in the current environment of COVID, the Board approved a COVID-19 Sewerage Discount Policy for the months of April, May and June.

It would NOT be viable for the Authority to switch to a discharge-based billing calculation rather than the currently used service-based calculation with the SFUs, as it is impossible to assess dates and times various parts of a premises would be used by a customer. For example, if the suggestion was allowed as proposed by the customer, all hotel customers could claim for their bills to be reduced based on room occupancy. If allowed, residential customers could make similar claims that they are only using one bedroom and in a 4-bedroom house and the Authority would have to charge accordingly.

The Authority's sewerage calculation charge is clear in S45 (1) Water Authority Regulations (2018 Revision) in that these charges are payable in order for a premises 'to retain the connection' to the public sewerage system and such charges are for 'collection, treatment and disposal of sewage from premises so connected'. The Secretary respectfully sought the Board's decision on the request from the customer.

Members agreed that the customer should be advised that they reviewed the request and that the methodology to calculate the Water Authority's sewerage charges as per the Section 45 (1) of the Water Authority Regulations (2018 Revision) cannot be deviated from by the Water Authority. Members understood the customer's situation however noted that while the Water Authority is able to offer a temporary discount due to the COVID-19 crisis, it is not possible for the Authority to introduce a methodology that differs from that set out in the Water Authority Regulations to calculate sewerages charges for connected properties.

e) **Request for Waiver re Opening New Account Customer Account** [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] The Chairman reported that on 11 June 2020 the Authority received a letter from [REDACTED] requesting that consideration be given to waiving the requirement for all property owners to sign a water service reconnection application for a property of which he is registered as 1/3-part owner. A copy of

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the correspondence and the report from Customer Service was provided to members.

*Redacted under section 21 (1)(b) of the Freedom of Information Law (2020 Revision)

A review of the account was undertaken and the Authority's findings are that on 03 June 2019, account holder at the time, [REDACTED] requested the account to be temporarily disconnected.

On 10 January 2020, account holder at the time, [REDACTED] mother of [REDACTED], asked for the service to be removed [REDACTED] and did not want to be held accountable for any more illegal usage or for activities that were happening at the property. She also stressed that she wanted the account out of her name and if the property owners wanted service they would have to apply. The service was removed as requested as account had twice been illegally connected in the past and the account holder had been held accountable and paid.

On 11 June 2020, [REDACTED] requested to open an account in his sole name, even though one of the other property owners, [REDACTED] refuses to agree to the installation of the water service. [REDACTED] advised the Authority that [REDACTED] wants to sell his share.

The majority part owner [REDACTED] is noted as being [REDACTED] but there is no mention as to her stance on the application. When [REDACTED] was questioned on this by the customer service representative, he indicated that she is deceased. [REDACTED] appeared to know who inherited this share but has not made contact with them.

[REDACTED] also brought in a sample of water from his well in a Pepsi bottle and stated that the quality of the well water is affecting his skin; assistance was sought from the Lab and they will follow up with him to arrange for proper sample collection and testing.

In summary, [REDACTED] has been informed on previous occasions that he needs to get the consent of other family members/part owners on the shared property in order to open an account. One of the part owners, [REDACTED] refuses for the service to be installed and the majority shareholder's next of kin has not been contacted.

[REDACTED] is asking the Board to consider his situation and allow him to open an account in his sole name as he is finding it difficult to live without city water which has been off since 03 June 2020.

The Authority's account opening process calls for an account to be opened/signed by all the registered property owners, and while the Authority empathises and understands the difficult situation [REDACTED] is in, especially given the current environment of COVID, the Authority should avoid becoming party

*Redacted under section 21 (1)(b) of the Freedom of Information Law (2020 Revision)

to the supposed family dispute. The Board may wish to consider asking [REDACTED] to obtain the support of the majority shareholder if they are minded to override the Authority's account opening process in this case given the circumstances. The Secretary respectfully sought the Board's decision on the request from the customer. Members noted and sympathised with the customer's situation however members agreed that it would not be appropriate for the Water Authority to waive the policy regarding the opening of a new account by all property owners due to the potential family dispute. The customer is encouraged to work with the majority shareholder to assist in getting an agreement from all property owners for the account opening.

Any Other Business

a) **R3 Foundation.**

The Secretary advised that the R3 Foundation was established in May 2020 in response to the unprecedented human and economic hardship resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic, R3 Cayman Foundation is a private sector-led organisation committed to the sustainable future of the Cayman Islands through readiness, relief and recovery in times of crisis.

A registered non-profit, R3 Cayman brings together a diverse group of business and community leaders to support and strengthen Cayman's response in the event of a natural or manmade crisis.

R3 Cayman Foundation complements existing government-led national efforts by supporting local non-profit organisations with funding for projects in the three Rs of a disaster cycle:

- **Readiness:** safeguarding the Cayman Islands by preparing for a range of potential natural (biological, climatological) or manmade (technical, chemical) disasters.
- **Relief:** coordinating assistance for people or entities affected by a disaster or emergency.
- **Recovery:** rebuilding communities, stimulating the economy and protecting the environment through short to medium term initiatives.

The Secretary reported that she has been asked to sit on the Readiness Subcommittee of the R3 Foundation. Members noted and had no objection to the Secretary's membership on the Readiness Subcommittee.

b) **Cayman National Museum - Ms Anne Huldah Bodden's Animatronic Figure.**

The Secretary advised members that on 18 May 2020, the Cayman National Museum did a digital launch of Ms Anne Huldah Bodden's animatronic figure that was sponsored by the Authority as part of the Authority's 35th anniversary celebrations in 2018.

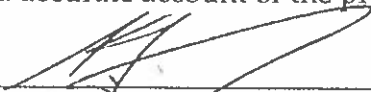
Donation Requests

The Secretary reported that the request below will be dealt with by Sponsorship Assessment Sub-committee after the Board Meeting.


- a) Cayman's ARK - Request for Water Gift Certificates.

Mrs L. Ryan closed the meeting with a very special prayer of healing for Mr C Randall. There being no other business the Chairman thanked members and the meeting was adjourned at 1:06pm.

This is a true and accurate account of the proceedings.



The Chairman



The Secretary