

Washington County Service Authority Board of Commissioners
June 25, 2022 Board Retreat Meeting Minutes

Agenda Item: 1	Call the Meeting to Order
Presenter(s):	Chairman
Time:	9:00 am

Agenda Item: 2	Roll Call
Presenter(s):	Chairman
Present:	Mr. Thayer, Mr. Taylor, Mr. D. Miller, Mr. Campbell, Mr. Hutton, Mrs. C. Miller, and Mr. Hutchinson
Absent:	None

Agenda Item: 3	Prayer and Pledge of Allegiance
Presenter(s):	Mr. Wayne Campbell opened the meeting in prayer and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Agenda Item: 4	Approval of the Agenda
Presenter(s):	Chairman
Potential Conflict(s) of Interest and Abstention(s):	None
Discussion:	None
On the Record:	None
Actual Motion:	Motion to approve the agenda as presented.
Motion By:	Mr. Hutchinson
Second By:	Mr. Thayer
Voting:	Ayes: 7
	Nays: 0
	Abstain: 0

Agenda Item: 5	Setting the Stage
Presenter(s):	Raftelis
Potential Conflict(s) of Interest and Abstention(s):	None

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Discussion:	The retreat began with the Board and staff introducing themselves and then sharing their expectations for the retreat.
On the Record:	None
Actual Motion:	None
Motion By:	
Second By:	
Voting:	Ayes:
	Nays:
	Abstain:

Agenda Item: 6	The Ten Habits of Highly Effective Boards
Presenter(s):	Raftelis
Potential Conflict(s) of Interest and Abstention(s):	None
Discussion:	<p>Raftelis provided an overview of the 10 Habits of a Highly Effective Board, which include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Thinking and acting strategically 2. Demonstrating the value of teams/ teamwork 3. Mastering small-group decision-making 4. Clearly defining roles and relationships 5. Abiding by the Board-Staff partnership 6. Systematically assessing implementation 7. Allocating time and energy effectively 8. Setting clear rules and procedures 9. Incorporating stakeholder input 10. Practicing continuous personal development <p>After discussion of each habit, Raftelis asked participants to select the habits at which they felt the WCSA Board excelled. Participants were broken into groups and asked to provide an example, talk about how the habit helped in the past, and how the habit might help in the future. The top habits are listed below, along with some of the key discussion points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thinking and acting strategically <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ When considering replacing WCSA's galvanized lines, Staff helped to identify 200 miles of problem areas and the Board decided to move forward.

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- The utility had lots of leak and break data for the lines, but it was a considerable undertaking that required debt-financing.
- In 2019, the WCSA developed a strategic plan, which provided a roadmap. This helped to prioritize initiatives and facilitate communication between the Board and Staff.
- Sometimes we make decisions too quickly, and we need to be conscious about taking the time to think through things. We need to be flexible in the future and continue to be strategic as we move forward. Staff knows what's happening day-to-day, but needs the Board's approval to make some of the big
- **Abiding by the Board-Staff partnership**
 - The Board is good about incorporating General Manager and Staff recommendations into policy decisions.
 - The Board encourages recommendations for any issues that require the Board to take an action.
- **Setting clear rules and procedures**
 - We have amended our bylaws and make changes as necessary, though we could probably use more frequent review.

After discussing the habits where the WCSA Board generally does well, participants were asked to select the habits where they felt there were opportunities for improvement, and what the Board could do to improve performance in each area. The habits and associated suggestions for improving performance included the following:

- **Incorporating stakeholder input**
 - Have done a rate-setting advisory task force (2019 and 2014) but haven't done surveys or had broader customer input opportunities, which might be an opportunity.
- **Clearly defining roles and relationships**
 - Clarify the process for instances where customers call Board members. When should Board members engage and when should issues be directed to staff? When customers escalate issues beyond staff, how should the Board handle these issues?
 - Clarify the process for instances where employees contact the Board. When should they be referred to the GM/staff?
 - Schedule periodic reviews of the Board Handbook.
- **Allocating time and energy effectively**
 - Stick to the task at hand.
 - Reduce time spent on legal matters.
 - Go through topics ahead of the meeting to understand background.

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On the Record:	None
Actual Motion:	None
Motion By:	
Second By:	
Voting:	Ayes:
	Nays:
	Abstain:

Agenda Item: 7	Sharing Expectations
Presenter(s):	Raftelis
Potential Conflict(s) of Interest and Abstention(s):	None

Discussion:	<p>Participants reflected on the morning's discussions and their thoughts while preparing for this retreat by articulating the expectations they have for one another and the WCSA staff. Prompt questions included the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What do you need from your Board colleagues in order to be effective? • What are you willing to give your Board colleagues? • What does the Board need from the staff in order to be effective? • What are you willing to give the staff? • What does staff need from the Board in order to be effective? • What is the staff willing to give the Board? <p>The responses were captured in the subsequent tables.</p>
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What do you need from your Board Colleagues to be effective?	What are you willing to give your Board Colleagues?
Open discussion	Willing to listen
Willingness to listen	Respect
Willingness to listen to others	Respect for differences
Vote on how you feel	Time
Be willing to respect my thoughts	Time as I can provide
Honesty	My input for issues affecting the WCSA
Openness to concerns	Knowledge
Willingness to compromise	Willingness to learn the business
Courtesy	Be open-minded
Respect for different opinions	Willingness to change my mind for better ideas

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Be prepared	Common sense
Stay informed	Participation in discussions (voice opinions)
Help in understanding policies and procedures	Not let personal views or wants make my decisions
Respond to "district" concerns, even if they're not in your area	100% support of Board's decisions
Advice in dealing with important issues	Time
Be an advocate for WCSA and quality water	Honesty
Be available for correspondence (answer texts, phone calls, etc.)	Volunteer to participate on committees
Attend Board meetings	History

What does the Board need from Staff in order to be effective?	What is Staff willing to give to the Board?
Support	Careful consideration of things that inform policy, rates, and finances
Support from the employees	Listen, sleep on, and respond to Board input and expectations
Professionalism	
Professional behavior	
Complete work assignments in a timely manner	
Timely responses to issues	
Be courteous to customers	
Sound recommendations	
Guiding reports (general financial information, etc.)	
Facts	
Guidance on specifics	
Accurate information and detailed reports for the Board to make sound decisions	
Availability when needed to help answer questions	
Communicate with the Board	
Cooperation	
Be kept aware of important issues affecting WCSA	
Make sure policy is followed by all employees the same way	

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	What does staff need from the Board in order to be effective?	What is the Board willing to give staff?
	Consideration of action items before the Board	The benefit of the doubt if there's a question
	Support of staff implementation of Board policy	Support staff with what's needed to perform their jobs
	Input based on Board member experience and expertise	Listen to issues that they may have
	Reasonable amounts of time	Listen to concerns
		Reward for excellence in job duties
		Rewards for goals reached
		Time and effort on issues that affect WCSA goals and customers
		Develop policies that consider all aspects of staff
		Support
		Support for staff
		Support and respect staff decisions
		Community relations
		Oversight
On the Record:	None	
Actual Motion:	None	
Motion By:		
Second By:		
Voting:	Ayes:	
	Nays:	
	Abstain:	

Agenda Item: 8	Lunch
Presenter(s):	Raftelis
Potential Conflict(s) of Interest and Abstention(s):	None
Discussion:	The group broke for lunch.
On the Record:	
Actual Motion:	None
Motion By:	
Second By:	
Voting:	Ayes:
	Nays:
	Abstain:

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Agenda Item: 9	Strategic Plan Report and Update
Presenter(s):	Staff / Raftelis
Potential Conflict(s) of Interest and Abstention(s):	None
Discussion:	WCSA Staff presented progress updates on the strategic plan implementation activities that have occurred since 2019, as well as overall progress against each of the goals included in the strategic plan. (See attached presentation) After each presentation, participants considered any additional projects, programs, and initiatives that the Authority should pursue over the next 12-18 months.
On the Record:	None
Actual Motion:	None
Motion By:	
Second By:	
Voting:	Ayes:
	Nays:
	Abstain:

Agenda Item: 10	Strategic Plan Implementation Next Steps
Presenter(s):	Raftelis
Potential Conflict(s) of Interest and Abstention(s):	None
Discussion:	<p>New proposed activities will need to be voted on during an upcoming Board meeting.</p> <p>Infrastructure</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No new initiatives proposed <p>Employer of Choice</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proposed: Develop and implement robust hiring processes to help us identify, attract, and hire the best candidates for open roles • Proposed: Continue to focus on creating a safe working environment for all WCSA employees <p>Financial Viability</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No new initiatives proposed

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	<p>Communication</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discussion of potentially conducting customer outreach/engagement activities to gauge satisfaction (e.g., survey or focus groups) <p>Technology</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proposed: Develop and implement a robust cyber-security posture <p>Growth and Expansion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proposed: Increase efficiency of the developer plan review process to support growth in our County
On the Record:	None
Actual Motion:	None
Motion By:	
Second By:	
Voting:	Ayes:
	Nays:
	Abstain:

Agenda Item: 11	Closing / Next Steps
Presenter(s):	Raftelis
Potential Conflict(s) of Interest and Abstention(s):	None
Discussion:	The retreat was wrapped up.
On the Record:	None
Actual Motion:	None
Motion By:	
Second By:	
Voting:	Ayes:
	Nays:
	Abstain:

Agenda Item: 12	Adjourn
 COMMUNICATION	
Presenter(s):	Commissioner
Discussion:	None

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On the Record:	None
Actual Motion:	Motion to Adjourn.
Motion By:	Mr. Hutchinson
Second By:	Mr. Taylor
Voting:	Ayes: 7
	Nays: 0
	Abstain: 0
End Time:	3:41 pm


Wayne Campbell, Chairman


Carol Ann Shaffer, Assistant Secretary

Washington County Service Authority



Strategic Plan

June 25, 2022
Management Report and Update

1

Strategic Direction



Vision

To be the trusted public utility and community leader in Southwest Virginia



Mission

WCSA's dedicated employees lead the industry and the region by providing excellent, affordable, environmentally responsible water and wastewater service



Values

WCSA has a shared commitment to each other and our customers in all we do, through integrity, trust, accountability, and dependability

2

2

Six Goals



Infrastructure



Employer of Choice



Financial Viability



Communication



Technology



Growth and Expansion

3

3

Infrastructure

**To maintain reliable infrastructure to meet
or exceed the needs of our customers**



4

4

Infrastructure



Strategy 1: Continue to develop and implement WCSA's asset management plan



Progress and Next Steps

- ✓ Critical assets are monitored quarterly
- ✓ Preventative maintenance schedules are in place and completed
- ✓ Work order management system is nearing implementation



The Work Order Management System is designed to provide a centralized location for all data and information to reside in order to allow for efficient workflow on the entirety of WCSA's assets.

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Infrastructure



Strategy 2: Monitor, regulate, and respond to changes in finished product (water & wastewater quality)



Progress and Next Steps

- ✓ Reliable process-monitoring technology
- ✓ Works openly with VDH and DEQ
- ✓ Designated staff members to respond to complex distribution system problems



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Measure of Success

Meet or exceed all permit requirements



6

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Infrastructure

1

Measure of Success

Meet or exceed all permit requirements

Permit	Facility	Permit Exceedances?
Virginia Withdrawal Permit VWP-14-1546	Middle Fork Holston River, South Fork Holston River, Reservation Spring, Cole Spring	None
Mill Creek Discharge (DEQ) - VAG640033	Mill Creek Water Filtration Plant	None
Middle Fork Discharge (DEQ) 640001	Middle Fork Water Treatment Plant	None
Mill Creek Waterworks Operations Permit (ODW) -PWSID: 1191100	Mill Creek Water Filtration Plant	None
Middle Fork, Taylors Valley Operations Permit (ODW) - PWSID: 1191883	Middle Fork, Taylors Valley, BVU	None
Mendota Operations Permit (ODW) PWSID: 1191310	Mendota Well	None
Hayters Gap Operations Permit (ODW) PWSID: 1191295	Hayters Gap/Saltville Distribution	Boil Water Notice (Major Line Failure)
Hidden Valley Operations Permit (ODW) PWSID: 1191311	Hidden Valley Community	Boil Water Notice (Russell County Supply Issue)
Hall Creek Wastewater Treatment VPDES: VA0087378	Hall Creek Wastewater Treatment Plant	None
Damascus Wastewater Treatment VPDES: VA0021130	Damascus Wastewater Treatment Plant	None
Western Washington County Water Reclamation Facility VPDES: VA0092860	Western Washington County Water Reclamation Facility	None

Note: Met or exceeded does not mean there were no comments from the Virginia Department of Health or Department of Environmental Quality during sanitary inspections or self-reporting.

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Infrastructure



Strategy 3: Focus on watershed protection, including source water management and satisfactory wastewater influent



Progress and Next Steps

- ☐ Source water monitoring device in CIP for Middle Fork Holston River not yet underway
 - Installed a pilot Sonic Buster
- ✓ Floating dredge procured to minimize sediment loads at the Middle Fork Raw Water Intake
- ✓ Created a designated maintenance crew for sewer collection system monitoring and repair



Continuous water quality data provided includes:

- pH
- Dissolved Oxygen
- Temperature
- Specific Conductivity
- Turbidity
- Precipitation

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Infrastructure



Strategy 4: Update WCSA's vulnerability assessment by August 2020 and implement recommendations, in accordance with America's Water Infrastructure Act



Progress and Next Steps

- ✓ Contracted Lawrence Hoffman (CHA) to assist with vulnerability assessment and recommendations
- ✓ Assessment completed in June 2021
- ✓ Initial vulnerability mitigations were implemented (e.g., access, cameras, monitoring)
- ☐ Other vulnerabilities are being prioritized to be addressed in the future



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Infrastructure

Measures of Success



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1 Meet or exceed all permit requirements

2 Determine wastewater inflow and infiltration both system wide and in district metered areas, identify target (base practice) for I&I and set reduction targets accordingly by June 2024

- ✓ A designated crew is actively working on systematic repair of failing infrastructure. Reductions in I&I are being realized.
- ☐ Meters need to be procured to set quantitative goals for I&I reduction.

3 NRW to meet or exceed VDH standard of <30%. Reduce the number of leaks by 50% June 2021. Procure meters, develop a standard and begin implementation of an unmetered fire line audit program by June 2020.

- ✓ The AMI network is poised to provide system mass balancing.
- ☐ Establish Project Plan to reduce real/apparent losses

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Infrastructure

Measures of Success



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- 4 With the AWWA Benchmarking Report and SWVA survey of the same, set short- and long-term utility goals by June 2023.

- ✓ Key Performance indicators are being piloted and reported monthly.
- Short and long-term utility goals are forthcoming.

- 5 With new work order system, distinguish preventative and reactive maintenance. As a baseline develops, if appropriate, set goals for reducing reactive maintenance

- ✓ Work Order Management System nearing implementation

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Check-in

Any clarifying questions?

Moving forward: Modifications? Additions? Removals?

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Employer of Choice

To recruit, develop and retain
a best-in-class team



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Employer of Choice



Strategy 1: Continue to expand employee engagement through teams aligned with strategic Initiatives



Progress and Next Steps

- ✓ Numerous teams in progress
- ☐ Continue to develop teams and team leadership



Teams in Progress



- a. AMI meter reading system,
- b. Technology roadmap
- c. Accounting roadmap,
- d. Customer information (billing) system
- e. Work order management system



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Employer of Choice



Strategy 2: Align training opportunities with employee position descriptions



Progress and Next Steps

- ✓ Conducting Position Dependent Training
- ✓ Restarting management development training (paused for Covid)
- ✓ Identifying position-dependent training opportunities (e.g., conferences for customer service representatives)



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Training Opportunities



Available to All Employees

- High Impact Communications
- DISC Behavioral Profile/Self Awareness

Position Dependent

- Water Licensure Requirements
- Waste Water Licensure Requirements
- Sewer Line Inspection
- Drone Pilot – Tank Inspections
- VDOT required training & Certifications (Flagging and Traffic Control)
- Environmental Sediment and Erosion Control Training & Certifications
- Asbestos Remediation
- OSHA Safety Topics

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Employer of Choice



Strategy 3: Maintain WCSA's compensation and benefits package, and update as necessary



Progress and Next Steps

- ☐ Planning to advertise for consulting services for a new market survey
- ☐ Target market survey completion late 2022



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Employer of Choice



Strategy 4: Develop and implement a holistic onboarding process



Progress and Next Steps

- ✓ 90% completed, paused for COVID
- ❑ Plan to restart during 2022

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Employer of Choice

Measures of Success



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1 100% of position descriptions reviewed and revised, as necessary, by December 2019 and reviewed and updated every two years thereafter

- ✓ Completed March 2020 with thorough review by all employees
- ❑ Complete again in 2022

2 Establish annual baseline training hours and set targets

- ❑ Work with Department Managers to set training targets utilizing revised Position Descriptions and Progression Plans

3 Undertake a compensation and benefit survey at 5-year intervals

- ❑ Plan to initiate in 2022

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Check-in

Any clarifying questions?

Moving forward: Modifications? Additions? Removals?

Proposed: Develop and implement robust hiring processes to help us identify, attract, and hire the best candidates for open roles

Proposed: Create a safe working environment for all WCSA employees

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Financial Viability

To serve as financial stewards
of WCSA's resources



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Financial Viability



Strategy 1: Create a culture of continuous improvement to support employee awareness, training, product quality and increased efficiency



Progress and Next Steps

- Considerable Turnover in the Controller position
- ✓ Leader Standard Work identified as preferred methodology moving forward



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Financial Viability



Strategy 2: Fully implement Automated Metering Infrastructure (AMI) or related system as a business model or policy supports



Progress and Next Steps

- ✓ Infrastructure is in place
- ❑ Scheduled go-live date is Q1 2023



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Financial Viability



Strategy 3: Develop and implement financial metrics



Progress and Next Steps

- ✓ Started developing metrics and conducted peer benchmarking
- ✓ Formalized and adopted financial targets
- Considerable Turnover in the Controller position
- ☐ Refine financial metrics and implement

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Strategy 4: Continually review and refine methodology for financial support of extension projects



Progress and Next Steps

- ✓ Forged stronger relationships with VDH (\$8.1 M in grants in 2021) and Washington County (\$3.0 M in grants in 2022)

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Financial Viability

Measures of Success



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1

Maintain debt service coverage of at least 1.5x

- ✓ Achieved

2

Maintain water and wastewater reserves at a minimum of 180 days of operational expenses

- ✓ Achieved

3

Evaluate and determine what a healthy ratio of total outstanding debt to: 1) net plant assets is and achieve/maintain target, 2) % of revenue, or other metric as appropriate

- ✓ Conducted peer comparison – WCSA is challenged by density and existing debt
- ☐ Work with County leaders to attract a large customer

4

Install and have fully functioning AMI or related system by June 30, 2021

- ✓ Infrastructure is in place and being commissioned.
- ☐ Go live is Q1 2023

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Financial Viability

Proposed: Measure of Success - Leader Standard Work (LSW)



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Implement Leader Standard Work (LSW) from the Department Head level upward by the end of 2022.

- Behaviors, actions, and tools incorporated into daily work of leaders
- Proven best practices for organizational improvement
- Benefits
 - Reduces variation
 - Improves performance
 - Develops team members
 - Demonstrates how to make smart changes
 - Supports people
- Defines what, when, and how a leader should take action.

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Check-in

Any clarifying questions?

Moving forward: Modifications? Additions? Removals?

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Communication

To enhance and expand internal and external communication and engagement



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Communication



Strategy 1: Evaluate and, as appropriate, develop external communication avenues including online/customer portal for all business processes, enhanced and current webpage content and push notifications



Progress and Next Steps

New CIS and customer portal allows customers to:

- ✓ Create new accounts
- ✓ Receive bills by email/text
- ✓ Receive disconnect notices by email/text
- ✓ Make payments by cellphone using credit/debit or E-Check



New customer information systems allow communication with customers via text, phone, and e-mail about planned outages, leaks, breaks, etc.

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Communication



Strategy 2: Implement organization wide communication and customer service training



Progress and Next Steps

Focus on continuous training, including:

- ☐ Telephone etiquette
- ☐ Listening skills
- ☐ Defusing anger
- ☐ Resolving complaints and challenging customers

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Communication

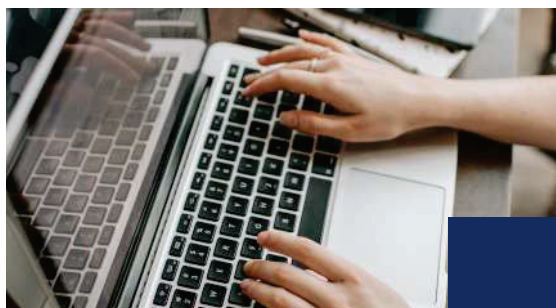


Strategy 3: Develop a WCSA intranet and/or employee portal to share information and organizational updates



Progress and Next Steps

- ✓ Monitors have been installed at all locations
- ☐ Build and communicate content via the intranet



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Communication

Measures of Success



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- 1 Implement Customer Portal allowing all business to be conducted electronically, if desired by the customer, by October 31, 2022

✓ Progressing toward updated go-live date

- 2 Ensure at least 8 hours of communication and customer training per year per employee

✓ Continual training to begin October 31, 2022

- 3 WCSA intranet and/or employee portal to be fully functional by July 31, 2022

✓ Working with Yodeck to get the intranet installed and operational

- 4 With budget, review/update strategic plan annually as required

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Check-in

Any clarifying questions?

Moving forward: Modifications? Additions? Removals?

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Technology

To identify, develop, and integrate technology
in support of effective operations



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Technology



Strategy 1: Develop a technology road map to evaluate and prioritize new technology needs



Progress and Next Steps

- ✓ Developed current state technology roadmap
- ❑ Continue to establish future state technology roadmap



Strategy 2: Evaluate and, if appropriate, implement new or enhanced business systems



Progress and Next Steps

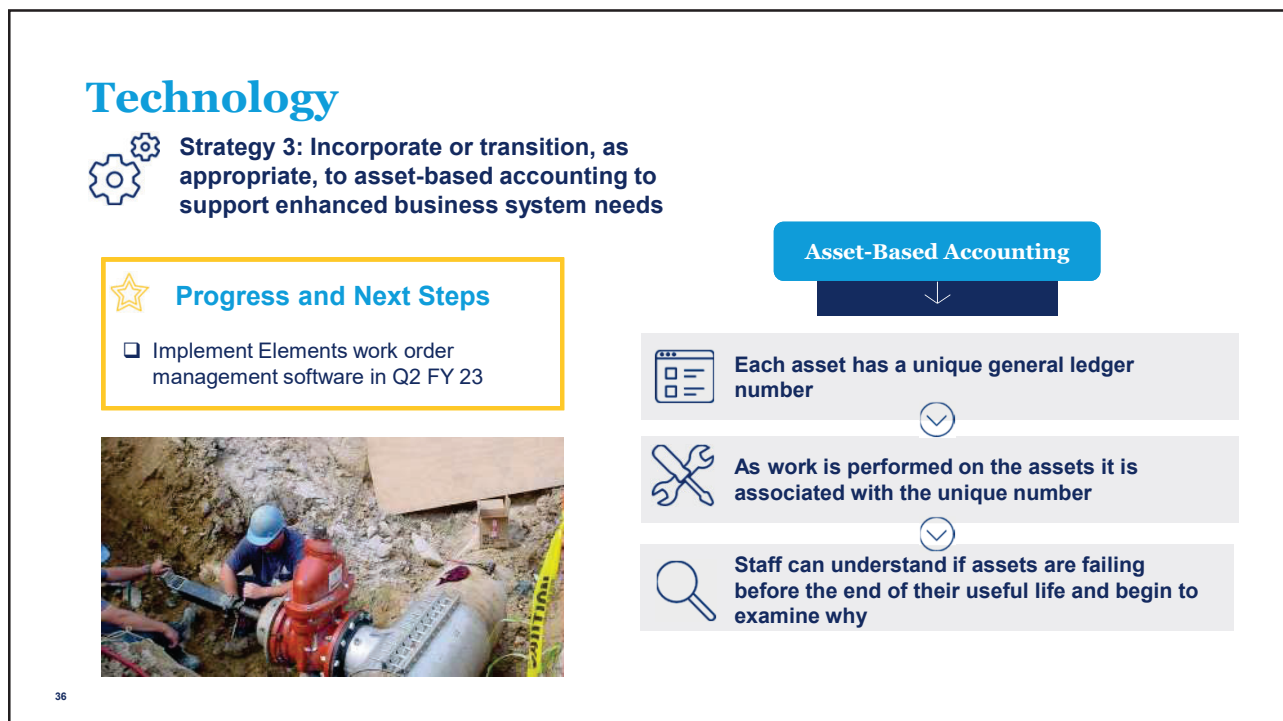
- ✓ Technology road map identifies selected new or enhanced business systems to implement
- ❑ Continue to evaluate on a continuous basis

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Technology

Measures of Success



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- 1 Complete technology roadmap by December 30, 2019 and update annually thereafter

✓ Technology roadmap is currently up-to-date

- 2 Complete business system analysis with recommendations on an annual basis

✓ Completed as part of the future state technology roadmap

- 3 Transition to asset-based accounting or incorporate into appropriate program by June 30, 2023

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Check-in

Any clarifying questions?

Moving forward: Modifications? Additions? Removals?

Proposal: Add specific language around cybersecurity posture

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Growth and Expansion

To pursue opportunities for feasible and desirable growth and expansion



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Growth and Expansion



Strategy 1: Identify areas of need in the community (e.g., failing septic, quality or quantity of drinking water)



Areas Identified with Funding



Water

- ☐ Mendota Road
- ☐ Mary's Chapel Road
- ☐ Abram's Falls Road
- ☐ Green Springs Road
- ☐ Monroe Road
- ☐ Taylor Valley Road
- ☐ Prices Bridge Road
- ☐ Hobbs/Fleenor Memorial Road

Sewer

- ☐ Lee Highway Corridor

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Growth and Expansion



Strategy 2: Consider regional options where feasible and desirable



Progress and Next Steps

- ✓ Ongoing engagement with four neighboring utilities since July 1, 2019



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Growth and Expansion



Strategy 3: Refine process for extending service to unserved citizens



Progress and Next Steps

- ✓ Board adopted 10-year user agreement waiving connection fees
- ✓ Process has been refined and WCSA is confident in the results



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Growth and Expansion



Strategy 4: Refine process for tracking requests and WCSA commitments to prospective customers



Progress and Next Steps

- ❑ WCSA is evaluating electronic opportunities for User Agreements (eliminating the need for a notary)

Goal is to develop better workflow and documentation of commitments made to our customers or future customers



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Growth and Expansion

Measures of Success



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1

By June 30, 2020, assess system extension policy and consider updates as appropriate including approval by the Board

- ✓ The Board has adopted the revised user agreement policy
- ✓ Policy updates have been implemented
- ✓ Cut-off date has been established for considering extension projects

2

Refine process of tracking private development projects by 3rd QTR FYE 23 to make it more efficient for developers, as this is growth in the County.

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Check-in

Any clarifying questions?

Moving forward: Modifications? Additions? Removals?

Proposed Strategy: Develop tracking sheet, schedule of commitment for reviewing developer plans and providing comments to make process more efficient to support growth in our County.

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Next Steps



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Thank you!

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