

Minutes of the 912<sup>th</sup> Meeting  
“Celebrating Over 60 Years of Continuous Environmental Excellence”  
Alexandria Renew Enterprises  
6:00 p.m., Tuesday, November 21, 2023

On Tuesday, November 21, 2023, the Alexandria Renew Enterprises Board of Directors held its regular Board of Directors meeting in the Edward Semonian Board Room at 1800 Limerick Street, with the following present:

Members: Mr. John Hill, Chair  
Mr. James Beall, Vice Chair – Electronic via Microsoft Teams  
Ms. Adriana Caldarelli, Secretary-Treasurer  
Mr. Mark Jinks, Member  
Ms. Rebecca Hammer, Member

Staff: Mr. Justin Carl, General Manager/Chief Executive Officer  
Mr. Lake Akinkugbe, Director of Finance  
Mr. Matt Robertson, Director of Communications  
Mr. Myles Cooper, Legislative Policy Analyst  
Ms. Lorna Huff, Secretary to the Board

Counsel: Ms. Amanda Waters, General Counsel,  
McGuireWoods, LLP

Fairfax County  
Representative: Mr. Shahram Mohsenin, Chief  
Wastewater Division

City Representative: Ms. Erin Bevis-Carver – Electronic via Microsoft Teams  
Division Chief, T&ES/Sanitary Infrastructure Division

Call to Order

The Chair called the meeting to order at 6:01 p.m.

Approval of Agenda

The Chair requested that members review and approve the agenda. Mr. Jinks moved and Mr. Beall seconded. The Board unanimously approved.

Public Comment Period

The Chair recognized Mr. Randy Rockwitt of Alexandria. Mr. Rockwitt submitted written comments for the record and discussed his concerns about AlexRenew’s billing rate payers on their winter quarter average, the AlexRenew’s new website, and billing issues associated with the customer service migration. (See attached comments) The Chair welcomed Mr. Rockwitt and Board members introduced themselves, noting the area of Alexandria that they represent.

Mr. Rockwitt reported that he has been living in Alexandria since the 1970’s. His neighborhood is comprised of older citizens in primarily 1 or 2 member per households. He reported that most work to conserve water with a reported usage of approximately 1,000-2,000 gallons of water per month. He noted that AlexRenew bills based on a winter quarter average of 4,000 gallons. He requested that the billing average be changed to a household’s actual average water usage.

Mr. Rockwitt completed his remarks and the Chair inquired whether he ever exceeded the 4,000 -gallon threshold, especially during the summer. He reported that he sometimes exceeded the 4,000 gallons. Mr. Rockwitt reported that the current winter quarter average benefitted those with larger families and does not encourage water conservation.

The Chair recognized Mr. Carl who thanked Mr. Rockwitt for sending the question in advance of the meeting. Mr. Carl reported that AlexRenew's billing is based on VAW metered charges. Staff recognizes that not all water will be returned to the sewer during the summer months which resulted in the winter quarter average threshold. Mr. Carl explained the background and history of the winter quarter average and the formula used to provide the 4,000 gallon figure. Mr. Carl acknowledged the system is not perfect but provided the best equity among consumers. The Board reviews rates biannually and will revisit this issue during the next rate setting session.

The Chair thanked Mr. Rockwitt for his testimony and noted that as a public utility, rates are the way used to generate income and promote conservation. Mr. Rockwitt inquired about VAW billing. Mr. Hill reported that VAW may use cubic measure billing which is then converted to gallons.

### Consent Agenda

The Chair requested that members review the Consent Agenda which contained the Minutes of the October 17 meeting and approval of an amendment to AlexRenew's Computer Management and Maintenance System (CMMS) contract. Mr. Jinks requested that under the Consent Agenda, the word "initially" be inserted before the word "one" in the second sentence of the minutes to clarify the operations of the Innovation District Pumping Station (IDPS). There being no additional questions or comments, the Chair requested a motion to approve the Consent Agenda as amended. Ms. Caldarelli moved and Ms. Hammer seconded. The Board unanimously approved.

### Member and Committee Updates

#### Community Meetings

The Chair noted that the Rosemont Civic Association is focused on affordable housing initiatives in the City. The Rosemont Association recently distributed a survey from the City regarding flooding in the Hooffs Run water shed and discussed the impact of stormwater flooding which involved the sanitary sewer. Ms. Caldarelli noted that she had reached out to her civic association, but has not received a response. She requested an additional email or contact address. Mr. Carl and Ms. Hammer reported they would put Ms. Caldarelli in touch with Mr. Eric Olson who is a member of the North Old Town Citizen Association. Ms. Hammer reported that she is scheduled to attend the Federation of Civic Associations' upcoming meeting.

#### Finance and Audit Committee

Mr. Jinks reported on the November 13 meeting which all members attended. Members discussed the Annual Financial Report and payment assistance program options that were presented from staff and reviewed the path moving forward.

#### Governance Committee

The Chair recognized Mr. Beall. Mr. Beall reported that the Governance Committee discussed changes and updates to the Environmental Justice statement. Ms. Hammer reported that she met with Mr. Carl and Ms. Waters earlier in the evening to discuss a revision to the language developed by the Committee. Mr. Beall and Ms. Hammer will review the final language and then circulate among members for approval at the December meeting.

Mr. Carl reported that the Board Retreat Draft Agenda that was distributed to members as a separate handout. Staff is developing a run of show for the Retreat and providing details of the goals and activities for day 1 and day 2 of the meeting.

Mr. Jinks requested that members or staff provide reading materials in advance to begin the 2060 Vision discussion. Mr. Hill suggested that each member find an article under 50 pages to distribute to other members by mid-December for the January Board Retreat.

#### Unfinished Business

There being no items under Unfinished Business, the Chair moved to New Business.

#### New Business

##### A. Review and Approve Annual Comprehensive Financial Report

###### Discussion.

The Chair recognized Mr. Jinks. Mr. Jinks reported the audit process begins shortly after the end of the June 30 fiscal year. Mr. Jinks then recognized Mr. Akinkugbe who discussed the FY2023 Annual Comprehensive Financial Report (ACFR). Mr. Akinkugbe reported that the final package with Board member comments was submitted and approved by the auditor. AlexRenew received a clean, unqualified opinion. Staff will send hard copies to certain governing bodies and certain individuals as required. Members will receive hard copies by the next Board meeting. The final ACFR will be posted to the AlexRenew website and BoardEffect. Mr. Carl reported that WIFIA and the State of Virginia will also receive copies.

Mr. Jinks congratulated the CEO and the CFO and Finance team for a successful audit. Ms. Caldarelli moved approval of the ACFR, Mr. Beall seconded. The Board unanimously approved.

##### B. Customer Service Migration Update

###### Discussion

Mr. Carl recognized Mr. Robertson who reported on the Customer Service Migration. Call Center services began on November 1. The full migration was completed sooner than expected with the online portal and payment processing beginning on November 3. Bill release began the morning of November 15.

He reviewed AlexRenew's community outreach efforts before and after November 1. Mr. Robertson reviewed successes and challenges, noting that the chat feature has been a customer favorite. AlexRenew has 13,000 Autopay customers who seamlessly transferred to the new system. Outbound registration emails were effective with a 70% open rate. There were 3,370 people registered to the new site as of November 20. Challenges included issues with authentication emails, delays in check processing, and certain targeted email notifications and phone calls. The latter affected fewer than 150 customers. Staff is working with the vendor to address outstanding issues.

Ms. Caldarelli inquired if staff had data on the customer issues being addressed in the chat feature. Mr. Robertson reported that he did not have the information but could have the calls reviewed to determine what the predominant subject is for chats. The Chair requested weekly email follow up to include performance metrics during the migration.

There were no additional questions or comments, the Chairman recognized Mr. Carl for the CEO Monthly Outcomes Report.

### CEO Monthly Outcome Reports

#### CEO Board Report

Mr. Carl referenced the final draft of the 2023 Annual Report with Board edits having been incorporated. He requested that members review and provide additional changes if any. The report will be ready for public distribution by early 2024. Mr. Carl noted the last page is completely new and mirrors the management letter providing the highlights of the audit for FY2023.

Section 1.2: Mr. Carl reported that AlexRenew staff has taken over operations for the Innovation District Pumping Station (IDPS). AlexRenew is still under a temporary agreement but working with legal to clear some of the deeds on the property through an estoppel. Staff expects these to be complete by early next month.

Mr. Carl noted on the last report on page two, staff had received Statement of Qualifications and listed them on the AlexRenew website for the Construction Manager At-Risk (CMAR) for the \$ 30 million solids program. Five respondents were shortlisted. Three will be invited to the RFP phase. The three short-listed teams were Ulliman Schutte, PC Construction and Kokosing. Additionally, staff has issued another Request for Qualification (RFQ) for a CMAR for the Preliminary and Primary Systems Upgrade project. The RFQs were due today.

Staff continues to update Table 1.2 on the JOC Task orders. These are either contractor estimates or final numbers.

For RiverRenew, Mr. Carl reported that Senator Ebbin and Delegate Bulova will introduce legislation on Tuesday, November 21, to support extending the deadline from July 1, 2025 to July 1, 2026. Pre-filing was done on Tuesday. RiverRenew legislation will be considered in the upcoming session. Ms. Caldarelli inquired if the sessions starts in early January. Staff will be attending a delegation event and open house at City hall.

Mr. Jinks inquired on AlexRenew's public outreach plan regarding the delay. Mr. Carl reported that staff has been discussing this delay since Spring 2023, The Stakeholder Advisory Group (SAG), Council Board Workgroup and City staff have been allies in this effort. Staff will circulate talking points to members for use at their civic association meetings. AlexRenew's primary media contacts reach out to staff for periodic updates on the project and are aware of the delay.

The Chair inquired if an opinion piece in a smaller Alexandria paper like the Times or the Gazette would be helpful. Ms. Hammer inquired if staff had informed the Potomac Riverkeeper. Mr. Carl reported that the Riverkeeper sent AlexRenew a letter supporting the extension. A letter is also expected from the Chesapeake Bay Foundation.

Mr. Hill inquired about the status of AlexRenew's payment assistance program. Mr. Carl reported that he has had discussions with Dollar Energy. They will work with staff to operate and rebrand the program from the current WaterFund. Mr. Carl reported on the plan rollout and deadlines. Staff may approach the Board to request start-up funds to begin the administrative part of the program. Early February is when staff would like to launch the program. There were no additional questions or comments on the Outcomes Report and the Chair moved to Closed session.

### Closed Session

At 7:07 p.m., the Chair, Pursuant to Section 2.2-3711 of the Code of Virginia, moved the Board into a closed session to discuss a personnel matter. Ms. Caldarelli seconded. The Board unanimously approved.

At 7:28 p.m. the meeting returned to open session, and the following certification was unanimously adopted by the members: "Pursuant to 2.2-3712(D) of the Virginia Freedom of Information Act, it is hereby certified that to the best of each Member's knowledge, (1) only public business matters lawfully exempted from the open meeting requirements of the Act, and (2) only public business matters identified in the motion by which this closed meeting was convened were heard, discussed, or considered by Alexandria Renew Enterprises."

Mr. Hill moved, and Mr. Beall seconded. All Members present voted via roll call:

Mr. Hill	Aye
Mr. Beall	Aye
Ms. Caldarelli	Aye
Ms. Hammer	Aye
Mr. Jinks	Aye

There being no additional business, the Chairman requested a motion to adjourn. Ms. Caldarelli moved and Mr. Beall seconded. The Board unanimously approved. The meeting adjourned at 7:28 p.m.

APPROVED:

  
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Secretary-Treasurer

During tonight's Board Meeting, can someone address the 4,000 gallon minimum Winter Average? There are quite a few of us living in single family houses who rarely or never use 4,000 gallons except for during the summer. Why not use our actual average winter usage? The 4,000 gallon minimum Winter Average favors large families and group homes, penalizing senior families who are more likely to have just one or two people in the house. Since your computer system can calculate average actual use, why not it or the actual winter usage? If the goal is to conserve resources, be more encouraging to those of us who make an effort to use less water all year, but want to water our gardens during the summer.

The new website looks pretty but I came across a quirk that can easily be fixed. When I tried to edit a very old telephone number it wasn't accepted until I typed it in the exact format that the website uses. Most other companies either preformat the field to make it easy to fill in, or convert the number entered with or without dashes or dots to the format your system displays. Please make it easier for customers to update their phone number instead of frustrating them.

Is there a way that Billing History files could automatically be formatted as YYYY-MM-DD \$NN.NN instead of what appears to be random numbers? Dated file names with the bill dollar amount would be easier for customers to download several of their bills at once. Many of us don't have time to log on every month to download and rename each statement.

Sincerely,

Randy  
Randy Rockwitt