

MANCHESTER WATER AND SEWER COMMISSION
NOVEMBER 6, 2025

The Manchester Water and Sewer Commission met on Thursday, November 6, 2025 for a special call meeting.

Alderman Crosslin made an announcement that this meeting will be live streaming.

Chairman/Commissioner Anderson called the special call meeting to order at 6:00 PM.

Roll taken by Billing Office Manager Jennifer Hall and present were: Mayor Joey Hobbs, Chairman Mike Anderson, Vice-Chairman Nelson Watson, Secretary Gary Hunt, Commissioner Terrance Hillsman, Alderman Thomas Crosslin, Interim Director Lonnie Foley, and Billing Office Manager Jennifer Hall. A meeting quorum had been established.

Absent: None

Late Arrival: None

- 1) The agenda of the special call meeting on November 6, 2025, was approved upon a motion by Vice-Chairman Watson, second by Commissioner Hillsman. 5-0

2) **Citizen Comments:**

- a) Sarah Bradley, a rural customer outside the city limits served by Manchester Water and Sewer, requested that the commission seek a free, advisory rate study from the Tennessee Board of Utility Regulation (TBOUR). She explained that outside-city customers pay double the in-city rate, despite having no representation on the board or BOMA, and emphasized that while a higher multiplier may sometimes be justified, it can create legal vulnerabilities if not backed by clear evidence. She asked that TBOUR review the entire rate structure, including the outside-city multiplier, capacity and tap fees, and relevant service agreements, so the board can make informed decisions. Board members and Mayor Hobbs discussed the history of charging higher outside-city rates, the added cost of sending crews outside city limits, the longstanding contract with Hillsville, and the belief that city taxpayers subsidize certain utility functions. Bradley also raised concerns about the commission's membership rules, noting the discrepancy between state law and local code regarding whether the board should have five or seven members, and she requested more transparency on legal interpretations. She additionally pointed out outdated code language about where meeting minutes are stored and highlighted the difficulty of finding documents on the city's current website. The mayor noted that a full website redesign is underway to improve access to department information and public records.
- 3) Vice-Chairman Watson made a motion to dispense with the reading of the minutes, seconded by Secretary Hunt. After a vote was taken, the motion passed. 5-0

The minutes of the regular meeting on October 14, 2025 were approved upon a motion by Vice-Chairman Watson, second by Secretary Hunt. After a vote was taken, the motion passed. 5-0

4) **Mayor's Report:**

- a) Mayor Hobbs reported that the city has finalized and approved the contract with Dukes to complete work across the remainder of the city, thanking both the commission and BOMA for their support. He noted that this project will allow the city to fully assess and document the condition of the entire system in 2025. He also commended Lonnie for his strong performance, stating that the utility is beginning to see positive results from his efforts in maintenance and repairs. Other than these updates, he had no further remarks.

5) **Interim Director's Report:**

- a) Interim Director Foley provided a high-level update, noting that staff is steadily completing water taps, wastewater and sewer repairs, and general system maintenance. The maintenance crew has been actively servicing lift stations and replacing pumps,

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including both pumps at the Ten Yard Bridge lift station, which are now operating well. Several new pumps approved by BOMA are still on order due to long lead times, but many outdated pumps that can no longer be repaired will be replaced this year. Foley explained that staff is also uncovering valves and manholes that were previously paved over, as closed or inaccessible valves may contribute to pressure and water quality issues, and buried manholes may be preventing proper cleaning. Renovations are underway at the warehouse to modernize the facility, and updated job descriptions approved by BOMA will soon be posted as he works with HR on departmental structure. He confirmed that all dead-end flushing is completed as required by TDEC for both city and county lines, and he is exploring ways to loop some of these dead ends in the future to improve water quality and reduce maintenance workload. Foley also noted that work continues on plans for replacing the old water treatment plant, and he is seeking a revised turnkey quote so that the entire project can be handled by an external contractor rather than relying on staff capacity.

- b) Chairman Anderson asked Billing Office Manager Jennifer Hall to remove the gallons-per-year chart from future reports, explaining that the calculation, related to the small loss included in the Hillsville rate, is static and no longer useful. He then raised a concern about inconsistent water-loss percentages, noting swings from 20% in August to 8% in September and similar fluctuations in other months. Interim Director Foley explained that approximately 30 large meters, larger than 2 inches, are currently broken or outdated and need replacement, which could significantly affect recorded water loss, especially in cases where a large meter (such as a 6-inch) is not reading correctly. A recent study confirmed the need to replace these meters. Foley added that main breaks have been minimal, small service leaks do occur, and all system flushing is already accounted for in loss calculations. He expects water-loss numbers to improve once the large meters are replaced and billing accuracy increases. Chairman Anderson also emphasized the importance of updated water and sewer account lists for coordination with Duck River meetings, and Foley confirmed he plans to attend those meetings once dates are set.

6) **Budget Review:**

- a) Secretary Hunt asked why the electricity budget appeared to be significantly overrun, referring to account 52213-241 on page eight. After initially misreading the "budget balance" as the year-to-date spending amount, he realized the budget still had \$228,000 remaining rather than being overspent. Even so, Chairman Anderson noted that electricity costs are still running higher than expected and will likely exceed the annual budget by some amount. He and others recalled that Duck River Electric had implemented a rate increase, though the exact timing was uncertain. It was also noted that estimating electrical costs is difficult because TVA rates continue to rise, and similar challenges are faced at other facilities reliant on TVA power. The board acknowledged that increasing utility costs are affecting all budget areas before moving on to other questions.

7) **New Business:**

- a) Interim Director Foley reported that Mr. Allen had contacted him to ask how he could stay informed and more involved with issues related to future developments that may rely on septic systems until sewer service becomes available. Chairman Anderson and Mayor Hobbs then discussed the current approach: in established neighborhoods, if sewer service already exists, the city typically allows new taps when a property owner splits a lot or builds on an existing one, provided the system can show offsetting inflow and infiltration (I&I) reductions. The mayor noted that he has approved several such taps recently and emphasized that the city has not denied sewer taps in established subdivisions where sewer was originally planned. For new developments in areas seeking annexation where sewer is not yet available, the city may need to consider temporarily allowing septic systems until sewer infrastructure is extended, consistent with ordinance requirements that properties must connect once sewer becomes available. Chairman Anderson added that I&I reductions can justify additional taps, and Mayor Hobbs

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explained that ongoing projects, including major work by Dukes and city crews, have significantly reduced chronic manhole issues and improved system capacity. He also noted that the city currently has about 350 approved but unbuilt lots within existing subdivisions and has annexed roughly 1,400 acres in recent years. He plans to provide the commission with updated planning and zoning data at the next meeting to help guide future decisions about development, sewer capacity, and system expansion.

- b) Interim Director Foley reported that the Fisher Excavating project, running from Willis to Skinner Flat, is now at substantial completion. The city is working with the contractor to finish some final televising to verify that all work has been fully completed. According to St. John, the remaining retainage will be held until the contractor removes the remaining silt fencing, after which the project will be officially closed out.
- c) Interim Director Foley stated that the Norris Brothers project has completed its original scope of work, with all scheduled pipe installation finished on time. Mayor Hobbs authorized additional work to be completed using remaining project funds, and the contractor is currently working on those items. The project extends from Sherwood across Willis Farm toward Skinner Flat. Chairman Anderson asked whether the line reaches all the way to Skinner Flat, and Mayor Hobbs clarified that a gap remains; however, a separate project is being developed to address that section. The mayor also noted plans to upsize lines across Mr. Roberts' property to accommodate the flow committed to the industrial park, ensuring that the entire corridor will ultimately be upgraded.
- d) Interim Director Foley stated that Duke's has completed both the first and second contracts, which included CCTV inspections and manhole assessments. Mayor Hobbs noted that they recently completed 300,000 feet of televising, light cleaning, and smoke testing within the city. Due to the project's success, the city plans to move forward with Duke's to complete work on the remaining sections, aiming to cover the full 600,000 feet of the city's sewer system for a comprehensive assessment.
- e) Interim Director Foley reported that Reed & Shows completed their calibration study of the city's 30 large meters, many of which have been in service for years without replacement. While their contract does not include meter replacement, Foley requested a turnkey quote for parts and installation, which he recently received and will share with the mayor and the commission. Many of the meters are six-inch units that measure flow and are costly to replace, but they are well past their life expectancy and have likely been neglected for over three years. Foley emphasized the importance of replacing them to ensure accurate readings and revenue collection, noting that outdated meters often under-report usage, resulting in lost revenue. He concluded that while the replacement cost is significant, it is necessary to maintain system accuracy and reliability.

8) **Commissioners Comments:**

None to report.

On a motion from Vice-Chairman Watson, seconded by Commissioner Hillsman, the meeting adjourned.


Mike Anderson, Chairman


Gary Hunt, Recording Secretary

LIVE STREAMING <https://www.youtube.com/@CityOfManchesterTennessee>