

MANCHESTER WATER AND SEWER COMMISSION
OCTOBER 14, 2025

The Manchester Water and Sewer Commission met on Tuesday, October 14, 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 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) **Election of Officers:**

a) Chairman Anderson informed this board is required to elect officers every year. Officers serve until they are replaced or re-elected.

1. The floor is open for nominations of Secretary, as current Secretary is Gary Hunt.

Vice-Chairman Watson nominated Gary Hunt as Secretary, seconded by Commissioner Hillsman, and was accepted by Gary Hunt. After a vote was taken, the nomination passed 5-0.

2. The floor is open for nominations of Vice-Chairman, as current Vice-Chairman is Nelson Watson.

Commissioner Hillsman nominated Nelson Watson as Vice-Chairman, seconded by Chairman Anderson, and was accepted by Nelson Watson. After a vote was taken, the nomination passed 5-0.

3. The floor is open for nominations of Chairman, as current Chairman is Mike Anderson.

Secretary Gary Hunt nominated Mike Anderson as Chairman, seconded by Vice-Chairman Watson, and was accepted by Mike Anderson. After a vote was taken, the nomination passed 5-0.

2) The agenda of the special call meeting on October 14, 2025, was approved upon a motion by Commissioner Hillsman, second by Vice-Chairman Watson. 5-0

3) **Citizen Comments:**

a) Sarah Bradley stated that she has reviewed the organizational chart and job descriptions. She requested clarification on whether the City will be following the municipal code or the newly adopted employee handbook regarding hiring procedures, as the two differ. She noted that the city recently adopted the handbook, and it would be helpful to confirm which set of guidelines will be followed so that everyone knows what to expect. I know the date and time have changed. If possible, could we schedule the meeting for the second Tuesday at 6:00 p.m., which is when the County Commission normally meets? If they're not meeting that evening, it would be great to avoid overlapping with a major county meeting. Just something to consider. Chairman Anderson stated that the last page of the packet includes open dates and times. He noted that, regarding the organizational chart, Interim Director Foley prepared a chart showing current staff and the positions that are not yet filled, which he had requested. Job descriptions are also included in the packet, with each one listed.

MA GSK

Chairman Anderson added that he was not sure whether these descriptions differ from those in the employee handbook, as he is not familiar with the handbook.

- 4) Secretary Hunt stated that, according to the ordinance, the minutes are required to be read aloud unless there is unanimous consent to waive the reading. Chairman Anderson and others acknowledged they were also unaware but confirmed that the provision is included in the current ordinance provided by Mayor Hobbs. Secretary Hunt added that if no one disputes the minutes, it would be appropriate for someone to make a motion to dispense with the reading.

Secretary Hunt made a motion that we dispense with the reading of the previous minutes, second by Commissioner Hillsman. After a vote was taken, the motion passed. 5-0.

The minutes of the regular meeting on September 4, 2025 were approved upon a motion by Chairman Anderson, second by Alderman Crosslin. After a vote was taken, the motion passed. 5-0

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

- a) During the month of September, 2025, a total of 34,964 linear feet of sewer lines were televised through the combined efforts of Duke's Root Control and our in-house staff.
- b) At the headworks of the plant, staff installed and wired two new Allen-Bradley PanelView 1000 Plus HMI control screens on the control panel. These upgrades assisted the crew in completing their work while the system was down for maintenance.
- c) We unclogged, purchased, and installed several new lift pumps to replace burned-out units at the 10YD Bridge lift station, serving the Fredonia Road, Kennedy Drive, Waterford Farms, and 7-Eleven pumping station areas. We have some temporary liner pumps installed to keep the stations operational while we wait for the delivery of the new units, which have a lead time of up to a month. Two new pumps have been purchased, and for any two-pump lift station, both pumps will be installed and fully operational once they arrive.
- d) We've been working with WASCON Sales and Service and St. John Engineering to install a new booster pump skid pad at the old water plant booster station due to ongoing safety concerns. About a week and a half ago, the existing pump at the old water treatment plant failed, leaving us without a functioning pump to maintain adequate water pressure throughout the system. With the help of Dana Douglas, we were able to contact Zyl and secure a rental pump within 24 hours. Their team got it installed and operational quickly, restoring water service and pressure to the system. We also performed a temporary repair on the old pump to provide some redundancy, and it's currently back in place inside the building. However, the plan remains to relocate the system outside. The existing building is unsafe, the electrical system is outdated and deteriorated, and I'm not comfortable sending staff or anyone else inside. In short, we're moving forward with the plan to get the equipment out of that structure. It's simply got to go.
- e) We also completed several repairs throughout the distribution and collection systems across the area. In total, we completed about ten repairs, split evenly between the water and wastewater systems.
- f) Interim Director Foley stated we've been working closely with Cityworks GIS Management team. At this point, he doesn't feel additional training is necessary and he is ready to move forward with the rollout. I'm very familiar with Cityworks, and the recent meetings have been largely unproductive, so we decided to pull the trigger and get it started, addressing any issues as they arise.

MA GKH

The rollout is scheduled to begin in the last two weeks of October, 2025. I don't anticipate any major problems, and we should be fully operational with normal day-to-day routines by Thanksgiving.

g) We received nine new vehicles, and all are currently in service. Each vehicle features the newly approved City of Manchester, Tennessee logo. This is the version pre-approved by the Mayor, not the one he personally uses, but the one designated for city vehicles. Feedback from staff has been very positive.

Mayor Hobbs clarified that there are two approved logos:

1. A simplified "City of Manchester" logo for vehicles and similar uses.
2. A more detailed logo featuring City Hall and "City of Manchester, 1836," which will be used for official stationery, letterhead, emails, and other formal materials.

We will continue transitioning to the new vehicle logo over time, but there's no plan to retrofit existing assets immediately. Additionally, flags featuring the city hall logo will be produced and distributed accordingly.

Chairman Anderson asked what vehicles were received. Interim Director Foley explained that the metering division received all new trucks. A repair truck that had become outdated was replaced, and a new crane truck was added for the maintenance team, which has already been heavily utilized. Lonnie noted he was on-site at the 10-yard bridge when the crane truck was used to pull a pump, and it performed well. Additional vehicles were assigned to the Director, Assistant Director, and one of the Operations Managers, all of whom previously did not have trucks. In total, four of the nine vehicles were originally ordered in 2024 and have just been delivered. The remaining five were purchased within the last 30 days and consist of used 2018–2020 model vehicles with relatively low mileage (around 45,000–50,000 miles). The goal was to replace as many vehicles as possible while minimizing costs. The newly added crane truck was purchased new for approximately \$30,000 and is currently operating under warranty. Interim Director Foley mentioned they could still use two or three additional vehicles, and the mayor has authorized him to begin looking for them. The goal is to complete the fleet upgrades so the department can shift focus to other priorities.

h) Chairman Anderson suggested scheduling another tour of the Wastewater Treatment Plant. The group agreed to set a date, with tours typically starting around 10:00 a.m. The goal is to have as many participants as possible, and the event will remain open to the public. Chairman Anderson noted he tries to hold these tours at least twice a year, possibly once a quarter, to observe improvements, repairs, and ongoing or planned projects at the facility. Chairman Anderson also raised a concern regarding the underground pump area, which pumps water into the clarifiers. Because this area is uncovered, rainwater must be pumped out during wet weather, and it requires heating during winter months to prevent freezing. He asked whether there were plans to install a roof or covering to mitigate these issues. Interim Director Foley stated that discussions had previously taken place under former leadership about covering the structure, though it was unclear if quotes were ever obtained. He confirmed that this issue remains on his list of priorities and that the department is revisiting several pending projects to obtain updated quotes and move forward. Chairman Anderson emphasized that the situation is unsafe, citing concerns about standing water, electrical heaters, and overall working conditions in the area.

MA JKH

6) **Budget Review:**

- a) Mayor Hobbs noted that he would not review the full report but invited questions on specific items. He addressed a discrepancy in Account 52115, Line 259 (“Other Professional Services”), which showed \$850,000 spent against a \$20,000 budget. He clarified that this line is being used to track all ARP and grant-related expenditures, which will be reimbursed and reflected as revenue later. Mayor Hobbs also mentioned that overtime spending is currently high, about one-third of the budget used within the first quarter. Interim Director Foley explained this is due to ongoing work with DESD and staffing shortages. As positions are filled, overtime should balance out. Chairman Anderson asked if any quotes required approval. Mayor Hobbs confirmed those items would be addressed under “New Business.”

7) **Mayor’s Report:**

- a) Mayor Hobbs announced that the city was awarded a \$2 million EDA grant applied for in 2023. The grant requires a 20% local match, bringing the total project value to approximately \$2.4 million. The funding will be used for improvements in the industrial basins, and the project is being developed in partnership with St. John Engineering.
- b) Mayor Hobbs announced that the city has also been awarded a \$6 million I-24 Industrial Site Utility Grant. The funding covers engineering work to extend water and sewer service to the I-24 industrial site, formerly known as the “mega site”, located between exits 53 and 55. The grant focuses solely on preliminary engineering and planning, including evaluating multiple scenarios for extending water and sewer lines between the site and the treatment plant, determining necessary water supply infrastructure, and identifying future tank needs. The goal is to have a comprehensive plan in place so that when a major tenant is secured, the city will already be prepared to move forward within an estimated 18–24-month timeline.
- c) Mayor Hobbs reported that the City signed the EPA Administrative Order of Consent on September 26, 2025. The order stems from an earlier audit, and many of the required corrective actions were already developed by St. John Engineering in 2024. Implementation and staff training are now underway, with progress on schedule. The order primarily focuses on standardized reporting, operational consistency, and prevention measures to avoid repeat issues. Chairman Anderson asked about the Little Leaf sewer extension project, which is supported by a Tennessee site grant. Mayor Hobbs explained that Little Leaf’s projected discharge is 120,000 gallons per day initially, increasing to 220,000 gallons over five years. The wastewater plant currently treats about 2 million gallons daily and is permitted for up to 4 million, so capacity is sufficient. The project includes a new pump station and force main along Asbury Road, connecting downstream of Nissan. Little Leaf is also installing a 150,000-gallon on-site tank for flow management and potential reuse. The long-term goal is to identify sustainable ways to reuse or divert non-sewage process water, potentially for agricultural purposes, rather than discharge it to the plant.
- d) Mayor Hobbs noted that eight separate grants are active in the industrial park area. These include:
- 1) A new water tower project inside the plant site (approx. \$3 million total; city share \$250,000) to improve water pressure and storage capacity.
 - 2) Additional state and federal grants supporting roadway improvements and infrastructure development in the same area.
- He added that nearby land recently cleared along Asbury Road was privately purchased for potential housing, though no development plans have been submitted.
- e) Vice-Chairman Watson asked about the current process for obtaining a sewer tap. Mayor Hobbs explained that the city was under the TDEC order and has gone to and

MA 

remains under a self-imposed sewer moratorium order (self-governor ourselves), meaning any new connection must meet a net-zero standard, new flow can only be added if an equivalent or greater amount of inflow and infiltration (I&I) is removed from the system. Since taking office, Mayor Hobbs has approved four new taps, all within existing neighborhoods where lots were subdivided, and capacity offsets were achieved. Applications for new taps are reviewed through Interim Director Foley's office, which evaluates whether the proposed connection passes through any chronic manholes. If it does, final approval must come from the Mayor's office. If it does not, and there are no chronic manholes involved, the connection can proceed under existing policy without additional state approval. The goal remains to eliminate all chronic manholes and continue reducing I&I to allow for future system growth.

8) **New Business:**

a) Mayor Hobbs opened discussion on the city's water loss and presented proposals for a system-wide leak (water supply) detection survey. Two quotes were received: one for \$19,200 covering approximately 166 miles of supply lines, and another from Rye Engineering for \$120,000 for the same scope. The lower proposal, from a contractor previously used by the city, was deemed the most reasonable. Mayor Hobbs clarified that the project focuses on detecting water supply leaks, separate from ongoing inflow and infiltration (I&I) work on the wastewater side. Current water loss fluctuates monthly, averaging 12–15% annually, which is better than statewide averages but could be improved. Interim Director Foley would like to see this percentage under 10%. Interim Director Foley noted efforts to investigate potential unmetered usage and theft, including reports of unauthorized hydrant use. Chairman Anderson requested that water loss data be updated monthly in future reports to help track trends and identify causes for fluctuations. After discussion, members agreed the \$19,200 proposal was the most cost-effective option, and the Mayor requested a formal recommendation for approval.

Alderman Crosslin made a motion to approve the quote from Joe Richards with Richards, LMC for testing water loss site. Vice-Chairman Watson seconded. After a vote was taken, the motion passed. 5-0

b) Mayor Hobbs discussed the updated quote and contract from Duke's Root Control, explaining that the proposal includes a complete packet detailing their services, reporting methods, and project plan. The purpose of this phase is to finish televising and light cleaning of the remaining sections of the city's sewer system. Once complete, Duke's Root Control will compile all footage and data into a comprehensive system study, providing a full record of the city's infrastructure going forward. The first phase covered approximately 300,000 feet of sewer lines, while the new proposal covers 269,464 feet, representing the remainder of the system. The total project cost is approximately \$1.1 million, funded through the city's remaining American Rescue Plan (ARP) allocation. Out of the \$3.2 million in ARP funds originally received, around \$1.8 million has already been spent on Duke's previous work, a new van, and a pump, leaving sufficient funds that must be utilized before September, 2026.

Mayor Hobbs emphasized that completing this phase will allow the department to document every line, manhole, and basin, ensuring future staff have complete records and footage available for review. Duke's Root Control has proven dependable and cost-effective, with prior work completed under budget due to reduced cleaning needs. The department continues to handle minor repairs internally as Duke's reports issues, allowing for faster response times and more efficient system maintenance. Once this project is complete, the city will have a fully televised and cataloged sewer system, which will serve as a foundation for future rehabilitation projects and help guide decisions on larger-scale improvements funded through additional TDEC grants. The project also supports continued improvements in preventive maintenance, as the department now has the equipment and staffing to properly clean and service pump stations, reducing self-inflicted system buildup and promoting long-term efficiency.

MA 

Commissioner Hillsman made a motion to approve Duke's Root Control 360 quota for \$1.1 million. Alderman Crosslin seconded. After a vote was taken, the motion passed. 5-0

- c) Chairman Anderson moved to the next agenda item, the organizational chart, and expressed appreciation for receiving it. He commended Interim Director Foley for preparing the chart, noting that it was well done, but requested a larger and more legible version. Chairman Anderson asked for clarification on a couple of abbreviations within the chart specifically, what "LEO" and "HEO" stood for. Interim Director Foley explained that LEO refers to a Light Equipment Operator and HEO stands for Heavy Equipment Operator. Mayor Hobbs confirmed his understanding and asked if there was any further discussion on the organizational chart. He also noted that there are a few vacant positions shown on the chart that still need to be filled, and the department is currently looking for suitable candidates.
- d) The Interim Director Foley discussed updates to departmental job descriptions, explaining that the review began after requesting assistance from Mayor Hobbs to address ongoing staffing shortages. He noted that the department is significantly short-staffed, causing some essential operational tasks to be completed less frequently than necessary. In evaluating existing job descriptions, the Interim Director Foley found several inconsistencies and outdated qualifications, particularly for the wastewater operator position. The current description allows applicants with less than a high school education, which contradicts state licensing requirements that mandate a high school diploma or GED for certification in Tennessee. This discrepancy has contributed to hiring challenges, with some applicants lacking the minimum knowledge or skills required to perform safely and effectively.
- He emphasized the importance of updating all job descriptions to reflect accurate state requirements, certification expectations, and realistic skill levels. The department currently employs licensed operators, but some staff are still working toward certification. To strengthen the workforce, leadership is exploring consulting opportunities with former experienced operators to help bridge knowledge gaps and improve information transfer. The goal is to ensure every employee has the necessary certification and can perform their duties with minimal supervision through clear guidance and documented procedures.
- Interim Director Foley added that these updates are part of a broader plan to build an internal training structure, develop a SOP (Standard Operating Procedure) manual, and create defined career progression paths for employees. By restructuring roles, such as updating outdated titles like Light Equipment Operator (LEO) and Heavy Equipment Operator (HEO), and defining skill-based advancement opportunities, the department hopes to improve recruitment, training, and retention. He stressed that offering employees a clear pathway for advancement—based on obtaining a CDL or state certification—would motivate them to stay and grow within the organization rather than seek higher-paying positions at competing utilities.
- Members of the Commission agreed that the revisions were practical and necessary. They discussed the importance of including transparent expectations in all job descriptions, such as on-call rotation, working in all weather conditions, and other field responsibilities, to eliminate confusion about job duties. Interim Director Foley noted that being upfront about these conditions sets realistic expectations and accountability from the start. Some job descriptions will require formal approval from the Board of Mayor and Aldermen, and a recommendation from the Commission will be sought before presenting them for adoption in November, 2025. Overall, the discussion reflected a strong focus on professional standards, workforce development, and long-term operational stability within the department.

Vice-Chairman Watson made a motion to approve job descriptions that are in the packet as they are written. Alderman Crosslin seconded. After a vote was taken, the motion passed. 5-0

MA 

e) The Commission discussed the meeting date and time change. The current schedule has the Commission meeting on the first Thursday following the first Board of Mayor and Aldermen (BOMA) meeting at 3:00 p.m. Alderman Crosslin expressed difficulty attending at that time due to work obligations, noting that meetings held before 4:00 p.m. were challenging for him to attend. He stated that he could attend any meeting scheduled at 4:00 p.m. or later but did not want the schedule adjusted solely for his convenience.

Chairman Anderson shared background on why meetings had originally been scheduled for 3:00 p.m., explaining that the earlier time was intended to avoid paying overtime for Water and Sewer Department staff when meetings were held at the warehouse. However, he acknowledged that the earlier time is no longer practical, particularly given increasing traffic congestion and school dismissal hours, which make travel across town at 2:30–3:00 p.m. difficult. Chairman Anderson and other members agreed that moving the meeting to a later time would be beneficial and more accessible to all involved.

The group discussed ensuring the schedule aligns properly with the existing code, which designates the meeting to occur on the Thursday following the first Tuesday BOMA meeting. It was clarified that the code allows flexibility to set the meeting time as needed. After discussion, the Commission agreed to continue meeting on the first Thursday following the first Tuesday of each month, but to change the meeting time from 3:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. This adjustment accommodates members' schedules and improves accessibility for both staff and the public. The official change of the meeting time will be 6:00 p.m. on the Thursday following the first Tuesday of each month. The Commission noted that while this may occasionally result in minor overtime for hourly staff, accommodations such as adjusted schedules or compensatory time would be made as needed.

9) **Commissioners Comments:**


a) Chairman Anderson took a moment to thank Jeff Perry for his service to the department, noting that he had served for approximately a year. Chairman Anderson stated that Mr. Perry implemented several positive changes during his tenure and deserved recognition for his efforts. He mentioned that after reviewing past meeting minutes, the comments regarding Mr. Perry's performance were consistently complimentary. Chairman Anderson expressed his appreciation for the work Mr. Perry accomplished, acknowledging that while there were occasional challenges, such difficulties are a normal part of any leadership role. He concluded by reiterating that Mr. Perry did a reasonably good job and deserved credit for his contributions to the department.

b) Chairman Anderson asked Mayor Hobbs to provide an update on the J.E. Sartain Road water line project. Mayor Hobbs reported that the County Commission was scheduled to vote later that evening on the proposal. The county plans to allocate approximately \$30,000 to \$35,000 toward installing a 4-inch water line. Mayor Hobbs reminded the Commission that the City had originally requested the installation of a 6-inch line to allow for adequate fire protection and the placement of fire hydrants. He explained that he advised the county to proceed with passing whatever funding amount they deemed appropriate, and the City would review the proposal once it was officially approved. However, Mayor Hobbs made it clear that the City would not purchase additional materials to expand the project beyond what the county funds would cover. The City will continue its commitment to providing labor for the installation, as has been done in similar county projects in the past, but the cost of materials must be covered by the county.

In response to a question about the cost difference between a 4-inch and 6-inch line, Mayor Hobbs noted that the increase was approximately \$15,000, not a substantial amount, but significant enough that the county should share the responsibility if they want the larger line. He reiterated that while the City supports helping extend water service to county residents, it must do so in a way that is fair and financially consistent with prior projects, emphasizing that the county must contribute its share for materials to move the project forward.

MA 

- c) Chairman Anderson asked Interim Director Foley to suggest a suitable date for the Commission to tour the wastewater treatment plant. Interim Director Foley responded that he was available any time after the current week. After brief discussion, the Commission agreed to schedule the tour for Tuesday, October 21st at 10:00 a.m. Chairman Anderson noted that the public is welcome to attend the tour as well. He estimated the visit would take approximately 30 minutes to an hour, depending on the number of questions and discussions during the walkthrough. Chairman Anderson stated that it was a good time for the Commission to observe recent improvements at the facility and review ongoing needs and upcoming projects firsthand.
- d) Mayor Hobbs informed the Commission that at the next meeting, members should be prepared to discuss a proposal for the City to borrow additional funds through Water and Sewer in order to continue investing in infrastructure improvements. He explained that the City has existing debt scheduled to be paid off soon, and the goal would be to reborrow funds once that debt is retired, maintaining the same payment structure while keeping infrastructure projects moving forward. The City's financial advisor, based in Knoxville, has provided preliminary figures suggesting the City could potentially borrow around \$20 million through a new bond issuance. Mayor Hobbs noted that interest rates have recently decreased slightly, making this an opportune time to explore new financing options. He explained that some of the current debt is expected to pay off within approximately 16 months, and by the time the new bond is finalized, the old debt will be retired, resulting in a flat overall payment schedule. This approach would allow the department to continue investing steadily in capital improvements without increasing costs to the City.
- Although specific allocations have not been finalized, Mayor Hobbs provided a general framework for how the borrowed funds might be used: approximately \$8 million for the wastewater facility, \$12 million for field and infrastructure improvements, and an additional \$5 million for water supply projects. He emphasized that these figures are preliminary and will be refined as the department develops a detailed spending plan with input from Interim Director Foley and his team. Mayor Hobbs also announced that the City has hired a part-time grant writer, beginning on October 20, 2025, whose focus will be identifying and securing additional funding opportunities to reduce reliance on borrowed funds. The City has also resubmitted a request to the State for approximately \$2.9 million in unspent ARP funds that were returned by other municipalities. Mayor Hobbs explained that some smaller cities in Tennessee, with limited infrastructure needs, declined their ARP allocations, creating an opportunity for other cities, like Manchester, to apply for those returned funds.
- He went on to highlight productive internal meetings between Interim Director Foley, Randal, and Jamie regarding the City's water supply system, noting that the discussions have generated several promising ideas for long-term planning and collaboration. Chairman Anderson apologized for being unable to attend that meeting but emphasized the importance of continued communication and cooperation between departments. Mayor Hobbs concluded by mentioning his participation in ongoing I-24 corridor discussions with the State, which involve evaluating future engineering plans and potential options for connecting directly to new regional water sources. He stressed the importance of maintaining strong partnerships and proactive planning to ensure the City's infrastructure keeps pace with growth and long-term demand.
- e) Mayor Hobbs discussed the WASCON Sales and Service quote, noting that the proposal appeared incomplete. The quote pertains to the supply water pumping station project, for which the Commission had previously approved up to \$250,000 to construct a new building and install pumps at the old wastewater site. Initially, the plan was to complete part of the work in-house, but after further review, it appears that may not be feasible due to limited staff time and capability. Mayor Hobbs explained that while some components could still be handled internally, the department is now obtaining additional quotes to determine whether contracting the full project as a turnkey job would be more cost-effective and efficient. He reminded the Commission that the project originally began with an estimated cost of \$130,000, which later increased to \$250,000 to cover all

MA 

necessary work. Finalized quotes and recommendations will be compiled and presented at the next Commission meeting, with the intent to take the project to BOMA in December, 2025 for formal action.

The meeting stands adjourned.


Mike Anderson, Chairman


Gary Hunt, Recording Secretary

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

jlh/10-25

12/18/25
MWA