



Wes Moore GOVERNOR

Aruna Miller LT. GOVERNOR

Charles Glass, Ph.D., P.E. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING MINUTES

January 23, 2025

LOCATION: Headquarters/Video Call

TIME: 9:30 a.m.

DIRECTORS PRESENT: Shelley Heller, Chair
Judge Frederic Smalkin, Secretary (video)
Robert Witt, II (phone)
Moalie Jose, P.E. (phone)
James H. Johnson Jr., Ph.D., P.E. (video)
Joanna Kille for Dereck Davis (video)
Charles Glass, Ph.D., P.E.

DIRECTORS ABSENT: Brendon Baatz, Treasurer

OTHERS PRESENT:

Priscilla N. Carroll, Esq.	Melissa Slatnick, Technical & Environmental Services (TES)
Ellen Frketic, Deputy Director	Pamela Fuller, Board Clerk
Winsome Condra, Procurement	Casey Powers, IT (video)
Marni Dolinar, Env. Dredging & Restoration (EDR)	Jennifer Wijetunga, WWW
Tim Ford, Environmental Operations (EO)	Melissa Filiaggi, EO
Ramona Jones, Human Resources	Kristian Ramsey, portion of meeting
Matt Lapinsky, Water/Wastewater	Sean Deere, portion of meeting
Hament Patel, Finance	Eric Hartlaub, Esq., portion of meeting
Kanishk Sharma, Administration	

CALL TO ORDER

Ms. Heller called the meeting to order at 9:31 a.m. Some Board members and staff were present at Maryland Environmental Service (MES) Headquarters, and other Board members participated via Zoom video call. The meeting was streamed live to the public on YouTube.

INSPIRE AWARDS

Ms. Wijetunga presented an Extraordinary Service Inspire Award to Kristian Ramsey. Ms. Ramsey showed excellent critical thinking in response to a malfunction at the Tridelphia & Folly Quarters Wastewater Treatment Plant. When initial troubleshooting failed to solve the problem, she investigated further, located the underlying problem, and planned and executed a repair before continuing her rounds to other facilities on schedule. By taking the initiative to purchase parts and complete the repair independently, Ms. Ramsey eliminated the need to bring in a maintenance mechanic, which would have resulted in higher costs to the client and longer plant outages.

Mr. Sharma presented an Extraordinary Service Inspire Award to Sean Deere. Mr. Deere has made outstanding contributions to MES' Workday operations. He was critical to managing Workday tickets and systems operations during a staffing shortage and has initiated valuable changes that have improved user experience and saved costs for MES. Mr. Deere has also shown excellent initiative by completing Workday training courses and helping to recruit top Workday talent. He has earned praise from clients and colleagues for his customer service, responsiveness, and dedication to excellence.

MINUTES

Ms. Heller requested a discussion or motion to approve the minutes from the Board meeting on December 19, 2024. The minutes were approved by consent.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

The Executive Director's and Deputy Director's expense reports for the last month were reviewed. Dr. Glass had one parking expense, and Ms. Frketic had hotel expenses for the Winter Maryland Association of Counties (MACo) Conference.

Dr. Glass reported on external engagements with governmental and private entities over the last month. Many contacts were made in Annapolis at the MACo and Maryland Municipal League (MML) conference receptions. Capital and Operating Bill hearings are scheduled for February.

The Town of Myersville Wastewater Treatment Plant recently received an Area-Wide Optimization Program Silver Award from the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE). This award is a testament to the successful collaboration between MES and the Town of Myersville. MDE presented the award to MES operators Ben Shank, Tanner Bartles, Scott Murphy, Chase Clark, and Bob Barnhart, as well as the town Mayor and Council.

The quarterly strategic advance meeting was held on January 10, 2025, at Aberdeen Proving Ground. Major General Jim Turinetti IV generously addressed the group.

Dr. Glass reviewed the long-term projects he will focus on in the coming months. Many of the items on this list are complete, and he will work on a new list for next month.

NEW BUSINESS REPORT

Ms. Heller presented the New Business Report and asked if there were any questions.

FINANCIAL REPORT

Mr. Patel reported on the agency's preliminary financial performance as of December 2024. Billable labor was aggressively budgeted to be about 5% higher, so the overall amounts are lower than budgeted. Normal growth would have been a 4% increase; this fiscal year's labor sales are 2.53% higher than in FY24. Overall, the agency is doing well compared to last year. Historical analysis reveals the second half of the fiscal year typically shows more growth in billable hours than the first part of the year.

Ms. Kille joined the meeting at 9:51 a.m.

It is unlikely the agency will meet the FY25 budget estimates. The agency has previously grown at an accelerated rate, and that level of increase is not sustainable every year. Additionally, MES is not permitted to market its services or compete with the private sector. A 4% growth projection suggested by a prior Board member and is incorporated into the five-year plan. A new five-year plan will be drafted soon.

RESOLUTION 25-01-1R

Mr. Patel presented Resolution 25-01-1R for the dissolution of the KC-MES J.V., LLC. The joint venture was created with the developer of the MES headquarters building to finance and maintain the property. In 2008, MES bought out the other partner and became the sole owner of the partnership. The mortgage on the property was paid off in August 2024 and the LLC is no longer needed. Mr. Patel will register as the resident agent for one year, as required by law. Dr. Johnson made a motion to approve the resolution; Mr. Witt seconded. The resolution passed unanimously.

RESOLUTION 25-01-2R

Mr. Patel presented Resolution 25-01-2R, declaring the official intent of the agency to reimburse expenditures incurred for the planning, engineering, design, construction, and financing of Midshore II Regional Landfill Cells 1 and 5. With the extension of the Midshore II agreements until 2042, additional cells will be needed. Bonds in the amount of approximately \$25,025,000 will be issued. MES will pay some expenses for the expansion, then be reimbursed through the bond proceeds. Bond payments will be funded with tipping fees. Mr. Witt made a motion to approve the resolution; Ms. Jose seconded. The resolution passed unanimously with the exception of Ms. Heller, who abstained from the discussion, consideration, and vote.

HUMAN RESOURCES REPORT

Ms. Jones presented the Human Resources report. As of January 9, 2025, the agency vacancy rate was 4.29%, with 36 open positions. Winter recruitment events are currently being scheduled.

INTERNAL AUDIT CHARTER

Ms. Condra presented the updated Internal Audit (IA) Charter, which incorporates new standards and practices required by the Institute of Internal Auditors (IIA). The updates change the focus of the IA role from consulting to advisory, as well as provide more detail and new audit technologies. Implementation is required by January 15, 2025. The updated charter was sent to the Audit Committee prior to the meeting, but the Committee did not have the opportunity to hold a formal meeting on the changes. Ms. Kille made a motion to approve the updated charter; Judge Smalkin seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

PROCUREMENT ITEMS

Ms. Condra presented Item 1. The procurement is amendment #1 with SCS Engineers for \$49,120. It is for groundwater and surface water per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) monitoring services at the Brown Station Road Sanitary Landfill. There is a 27.5% minority business enterprise (MBE) goal, and the contractor is currently achieving 27.28%. Judge Smalkin made a motion to approve the item; Mr. Witt seconded. No members were opposed. The motion passed unanimously.

The Board notifications for contracts, purchase orders, amendments, and change orders between \$25,000 and \$200,000 were reviewed.

LEGAL REPORT

Ms. Carroll reported that the filing period has opened with the State Ethics Commission for the filing of financial disclosures, which are due April 30, 2025. She also reported that the process of selecting a new Assistant Attorney General to backfill her prior position is ongoing and should be completed soon. Private bond counsel will be retained for the Midshore II bond transaction.

GROUP UPDATES

Ms. Slatnick presented about the Freedom District Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) positive displacement blower replacement. Four old blower units are to be replaced with two higher-efficiency units. The MES Maintenance Department recently disassembled three malfunctioning blowers, replaced them with a new unit, and updated the electrical conduit, power feeders, and circuit breaker. The first new blower is currently in service. Installation of the second unit is projected to begin at the end of January.

Ms. Filiaggi provided a presentation on the new Tiger HS-55 depackaging system currently being used at the Prince George's County Organic Composting Facility. The first of its kind in the State of Maryland, the system allows the facility to accept packaged food scraps. It separates plastic, cardboard, and metal from food scraps, resulting in a clean stream of compostable materials.

Ms. Wijetunga presented information on PFAS testing at the Darlington Water Treatment Plant (WTP). The facility, which serves about 250 residents in the Town of Darlington, is the only MES-owned WTP. In April 2024, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) issued new regulatory levels for maximum contaminant levels for PFAS in water systems. MES has been testing for PFAS since 2016. The most recent test indicated levels that slightly exceed the new limits. The community has already been notified, and additional testing will be conducted. Solutions are currently being investigated and will be implemented by the 2029 deadline.

Ms. Dolinar provided a presentation on the evolution of design and construction in dredged material placement projects. MES has helped support the Maryland Port Administration (MPA) on these projects since the early 1980s. Hart-Miller Island was the first island dredged material containment facility in Maryland. The project initially did not focus on community outreach efforts, and opposition to the project delayed it for ten years. The original plan was to restore the island for recreation purposes only. However, as wildlife arrived on the island, areas were modified for wildlife habitat restoration. In contrast, the Poplar Island Ecosystem Restoration project focused on island habitat restoration from the beginning, employing considerable community and stakeholder outreach. The newest island dredged material placement project is the Mid-Bay Island Ecosystem Restoration Project, which consists of Barren and James Islands. The project is exploring nature-based solutions for the restoration.

OLD/NEW BUSINESS

The next meeting of the Board is Thursday, February 27, 2025, at 9:30 a.m.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 10:45 a.m.

Frederic N. Smalkin

**HONORABLE FREDERIC SMALKIN
SECRETARY**

Shelley Heller

**SHELLEY HELLER
CHAIR**