

Hart County Water and Sewer Authority Board of Directors Meeting August 18, 2025

The Hart County Water and Sewer Authority met on August 18, 2025, in the Hart County Cooperative Extension Service Building. Chairman Wade Carlton called the meeting to order. Present were Vice Chair Patti York, Board Members Larry Haley, Bennie Harper and Marvin Justice. Also present were Legal Counsel Kim Higginbotham, Director Pat Goran, Office Manager Karen Neal, Hartwell Sun Editor Rose Scoggins and many local residents.

Welcome

Approval of Agenda

Ms. York made a motion to approve the agenda. Mr. Justice seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Approval of July 21st, 2025 Regular Meeting Minutes

Mr. Haley made a motion to approve the minutes of the July 21, 2025 Board meeting. Mr. Justice seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Public Comments

Mark Gregory of Fleming Park Road asked the Board to consider his subdivision and surrounding roads for water system expansion as part of the upcoming Reed Creek area project. While commitment letters have not been mailed out to any residents for the Reed Creek Highway project yet, Mr. Gregory obtained a commitment letter from a friend and collected twenty signatures from residents across seven roads. Mr. Gregory presented these letters to HWCSA staff. Mr. Gregory also stated that the Hartwell Safari is interested in Authority water, but not one from the safari was present.

Jim Stanley, also of Fleming Park Road, detailed how he has allowed neighbors to use his well for free; however, the growth in his neighborhood has tested the well's limits. He said there is simply not enough water for everyone. Mr. Stanley detailed the number of properties and signed commitments Mr. Gregory was able to obtain, and respectfully requested the Board consider extending the HCWSA system to his neighborhood which he said is 1.8 miles from the Reed Creek Highway intersection.

Peter Shedd of Harbor Point again requested his subdivision be added to the Reed Creek area project as well. Mr. Shedd shared there are nineteen homes and an additional ten vacant lots which he expects to be developed in the future. He requested the Board approve sending out commitment letters to his subdivision.

Mr. Alan Brown of Hidden Point Road requested his subdivision be added to the Reed Creek area project. He has spoken to residents and has obtained forty verbal commitments to sign up for service. Mr. Brown also asked the timeline for choosing which roads will be added to the project.

Mr. Gary Farley of Union Hill Church Road near Lankford Road asked the Board to consider expanding the system to include the homes in his area. He spoke of his desire for Authority water because of the poor quality of well water in the area.

General discussion did not result in any motions.

Financial Report

Mr. Goran provided the financial report touching on the current committed and uncommitted SPLOST funds, HCWSA funds as well as the continued positive cash flow. Mr. Goran reminded the Board that HCWSA funds will continue to be volatile during construction projects given the delay between issuing checks for materials and construction and receiving SPLOST reimbursement. Mr. Goran reviewed the master meter readings and stated usage is now at or near record levels. After general discussion regarding specific line items, Mr. Carlton asked about the cost for training. Mr. Goran stated that Field Technician Cory Bouquet is currently taking classes to prepare for taking his Water Distribution Operator exam.

Old Business

Reed Creek area expansion project update and discussion of how to prioritize requests for service outside current scope of project

After comments from residents eager to be added to the Reed Creek expansion project, Mr. Carlton stated HCWSA needs to narrow down the potential streets that may be added to the project to avoid getting anyone's hopes up. Mr. Carlton also asked what the plans were for pipe size in this project. Mr. Goran stated that for Reed Creek Highway it would be 12" pipe up to the Reed Creek School Road intersection reducing down to 8" pipe at that point. Mr. Goran shared this would be adequate for fire flow and water usage. Mr. Carlton also asked if there were any places where HCWSA could complete a loop. Mr. Goran stated there are operational and flow benefits to loops and while HCWSA may have the opportunity to create loops they are very expensive in that area due to the large number of dead end roads. Mr. Goran then stated HCWSA could potentially connect New Prospect to the Old Andersonville line.

Will Bailey Road – Morris Road – Beacon Light Road – Mount Olivet Road project update

Mr. Goran stated Mount Olivet Road has been pressure tested up to the Cleveland Mill Road intersection. Mr. Goran expects Mount Olivet Road to be tied into Fred King Road within a month.

Discussion then turned to resident requests to expand the system down a portion of Cleveland Mill Road to the Reno Drive intersection. Mr. Justice made a motion to approve this project if six commitments were received within the planned scope of the project. Ms. York seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Discussion of Authority's wholesale water purchase arrangement with Hartwell

Mr. Goran stated he was awaiting a response from the City of Hartwell on HCWSA's counterproposal.

Request for water service – 400 Union Hill Church Road poultry operations

Local resident Tony Koehn again petitioned the Board to expand the water system to his and Calvin Harms' poultry operations on Union Hill Church Road. Mr. Koehn stated he will commit to using two million gallons of water annually and will pay the difference if his usage falls short of that amount. He also stated that Mr. Harms shared his intention to commit to using one and a half million gallons annually and will pay the difference if his usage falls short of that amount. Ms. York moved that the Board approve this project if signed commitments are received from both Mr. Koehn and Mr. Harms. Mr. Justice seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Discussion then turned to the previously approved poultry operation on Bowman Highway. Ms. York stated that she believed that operation has closed. Mr. Goran stated he had not heard this information previously.

Discussion of Pursuing Groundwater

Mr. Goran stated he has been busy with other projects and has no update.

New Business - none

Director's Comments

Mr. Goran shared that he has requested the Army Corps of Engineers approve doubling HCWSA's current storage allocation on the lake. Additionally, Mr. Goran stated he has a meeting with Lavonia City Manager Charles Cawthon and their engineering consultant next month and invited Mr. Carlton to join him for that meeting to discuss Lavonia's plans for upgrading their surface water treatment plant. Mr. Goran stated Franklin County has extended their moratorium on new taps into November.

Members' Comments

Ms. York stated she is not available for a Board meeting on October 20th. Mr. Carlton stated they would discuss that date next month. Mr. Haley asked Mr. Goran to ensure the construction area on Mount Olivet Road would be repaired following the recent heavy rains. Mr. Goran said he would reach out to the contractor. Mr. Justice stated he firmly believes HCWSA needs to look ahead at building its own water treatment facility to avoid paying such high rates for purchased water. This was followed by general discussion on water purchases from the City of Hartwell and the City of Lavonia and the future of a potential water treatment facility for HCWSA. Mr. Harper had no comments.

Upcoming Meetings

Mr. Carlton announced the next meeting would be September 15th.

Adjournment

Mr. Harper moved to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Haley seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Wade Carlton, Chairman

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