

WESTERN VIRGINIA WATER AUTHORITY
MINUTES OF BOARD MEETING
October 16, 2025

The Board of the Western Virginia Water Authority (WVWA) met on Thursday, October 16, 2025 in the Board Room at 601 S. Jefferson Street, Roanoke, Virginia. Board Chair Mike Loveman called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m.

BOARD ROLL CALL:

PRESENT: Michael Loveman, Harvey Brookins, Richard Caywood, Don Halliwill, Randall Hancock, Shirley Holland, Valmarie Turner and Hunter Young ----- 8

ABSENT: ----- 0

STAFF PRESENT IN PERSON:

Mike McEvoy, Executive Director; Scott Shirley, Chief Operating Officer Water Quality; Leana Stoltz, Chief Operating Officer Customer Operations; Tammy Lawfield, Director of Finance; Gayle Shrewsbury, Board Secretary; Neil Norris, Director of Human Resources; Sarah Baumgardner, Director of Public Relations; Trent Cox, Deputy Chief Operating Officer Customer Operations; Will Bulloss, Chief Strategy Officer; Steve Nichols, Fleet and Safety Coordinator; Cedric Lavender, Water Production Superintendent; and Ron Agee, retiree of the Authority.

STAFF PRESENT VIA VIDEO CONFERENCE:

Scott Kroll, Director of Infrastructure Development; Tesha Okioga, Director of Engineering Services; Jeff McInnis, Assistant Director of Field Operations; Michelle Caruthers, Director of Plant Operations; Jennifer Meeks, Assistant Director of Finance; Rachel Ramsey, Assistant Director of CS/Billing; Jamie Morris, Capital Projects Manager; Randall Fulton, Engineer II; Stephen Estes, Engineer II; Eric Powers, Water Production Manager; Mackenzie Wilcox, Recruitment, Retention and DEI Coordinator; Robyn Tuck, Learning & Development Manager; and Gail Lowe-Roberts, Human Resources Assistant I.

OTHERS PRESENT:

Jeremy Carroll, Counsel for the Authority; Brandon Flora, Whitman, Requardt & Associates, LLP (participated by video conference); Nick Robertson, Kimley-Horn (participated by video conference); Citizens: Ben Verschoor; Julie Bivins; Camoren Warren; Debbie Freeman; Nick Schmalenberger; W. Hunter Hartley; Sean Koppel; Nikki-Rose Huerta; Lessye DeMoss; Brian King; Misty Vickers; and Emma Berry.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Mr. Hancock moved approval of the July 17, 2025 Board meeting minutes, the August 6, 2025 Special Board meeting minutes and the September 10, 2025 Special Board meeting minutes. Mr. Caywood seconded the motion and the minutes were approved by unanimous voice vote.

Mr. Brookins and Ms. Turner arrived at 3:05 p.m.

CITIZENS COMMENTS: Julie Bivens, Nikki-Rose Huerta, Misty Vickers, Hunter Hartley, Ben Verschoor, Nick Schmalenbeger, and Lessye DeMoss shared comments.

Written comments were submitted by Julie Bivens and Kaley, a resident of Botetourt County, and will be included as part of the official meeting record. A summary of the responses to citizen comments will also be documented in the meeting minutes.

RECOGNIZING THE SERVICE OF RONALD AGEE UPON HIS RETIREMENT: Mr. Shirley read Resolution No. 511 commending the service of Ronald Agee. A copy of this report in its entirety is attached to the approved minutes.

Mr. Brookins moved to approve Resolution No. 511, Mr. Halliwill seconded the motion and it was approved by the following roll call vote:

AYES: Brookins, Caywood, Halliwill, Hancock, Holland, Turner, Young, Loveman ----- 8.

NAYS: ----- 0.

A copy of the approved resolution was presented to Mr. Agee and the board extended their appreciation and best wishes.

Mr. Lavender shared details of Mr. Agee's history with the Authority, expressed his gratitude and shared that Ron will be missed by many.

COMMUNICATION FROM EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR FOR THE MONTHS OF AUGUST and SEPTEMBER 2025: Mr. McEvoy gave a summary of the August and September Executive Director's report which included: Customer Operations, Water Quality Operations, Administration/Engineering, and Regional Efforts/Outreach. A copy of this report in its entirety is filed with the approved minutes.

FINANCIAL REPORTS FOR THE MONTH OF SEPTEMBER 2025: Ms. Lawfield noted that year-to-date September 2025 represented 25% of the fiscal year. A copy of this report in its entirety is attached to the approved minutes. Here follows a summary of the report:

Operating revenues for the Water and WPC funds were 26% and 23%, respectively, of budget. Retail revenues for the Water fund were 24% and WPC fund were 24%. Non-operating revenues for Water were 51% and WPC were 33% of budget. Some of these revenues (Investment Income, Office Building Lease Income) lag a month in reporting. Operation & Maintenance expenses for the year-to-date for the Water system were 24% and WPC were 24%. The Operating Margins for Water and WPC were 29% and 22%. Combined Operating Margin was 25%. The Water system has paid 52% of budgeted interest expense and 90% of principal payments. WPC has paid 49% of interest expense and 57% of principal payments.

REPORT FROM AUTHORITY COUNSEL: Mr. Carroll reported on the following:

1. Acquisition of Ferrum Water and Sewage Authority ("FWSA") System;
2. Acquisition of Bridgewater Pointe Wastewater System;
3. Development Agreements;
4. FOIA Issues;
5. Claim Resolution;
6. Franklin County Water System;
7. Various Contract Issues;
8. Vinton Wrap-Up;
9. RYT, L.L.C./Angel Lane Litigation; and
10. Miscellaneous.

REPORT FROM COMMITTEE CHAIRS: Mr. Brookins shared an IDEA team update, noting that a recent Job fair was a success and that another is planned for the Spring. A new onboarding check list developed to promote consistency has been created, and a test will be rolled once finalized. A new caregiver leave benefit has been in the works and is being presented to the board later in the meeting.

Reminder of the Audit Committee Meeting scheduled for November 20th at 2:00 p.m. (Following the Board meeting this Committee meeting was rescheduled for December 4th at 3:30 p.m.)

ASSUMPTION OF THE IDLEWOOD SHORES WATER SYSTEM: Mr. McEvoy presented a report regarding Assumption of the Idlewood Shores Water System and Resolution No. 512. A copy of this report is attached to the approved minutes.

The Homeowners Association has requested the Authority assume ownership of its privately owned water system due to ongoing water quality and service issues. The Virginia Department of Health supports the transition and may provide grant funding toward improvements. The Authority's contribution would be limited to \$45,000, consistent with its seven-year break-even policy. Staff recommended a temporary one-year operating agreement, with a one-year renewal and 90-day termination option, under which the Authority would operate and bill customers while ownership remains with the HOA. Full ownership may be considered in mid to late 2026 following due diligence and funding confirmation.

Mr. Brookins moved to approve Resolution No. 512 with the understanding that a user agreement would need to be approved by the board. Ms. Holland seconded the motion and it was approved by the following roll call vote:

AYES: Brookins, Caywood, Halliwill, Hancock, Holland, Turner, Young, Loveman ----- 8.

NAYS: ----- 0.

DISCUSSION OF CAREGIVER LEAVE BENEFIT: Mr. Nichols and Mr. Norris presented information on a new possible Caregiver Leave Benefit. A copy of this report is attached to the approved minutes.

The Committee's Recruitment and Retention subcommittee reviewed the Authority's leave benefits and identified a gap in caregiver coverage under the state-mandated hybrid plan. The team recommended providing six weeks of paid caregiver leave for hybrid plan employees and three weeks for legacy employees, with an estimated annual cost of \$86,400. Final benefit details will be developed with the Compensation Committee during the upcoming budget cycle.

The proposal also addresses the absence of formal maternity, paternity, and caregiver leave, aiming to improve employee support and retention. Implementation may align with the planned timekeeping system upgrade, targeting rollout at the start of the next fiscal year.

CLOSED SESSION: At 4:20 p.m., Mr. Caywood made a motion to go into Closed session (1) pursuant to Virginia Code § 2.2-3711(A)(7), for the purposes of consultation with legal council and briefings by staff pertaining to probable litigation regarding a claim related to water quality issues and actual litigation concerning the Virginia Freedom of Information Act in the City of Roanoke Circuit Court, where a consultation or briefing in open meeting would adversely affect the Authority's negotiating or litigating posture; and (2) pursuant to Virginia Code § 2.2-3711(A)(8), for the purpose of consultation with the Authority's legal council regarding specific legal matters mainly the foregoing probable litigation requiring the provision of legal advice by such council.

The motion was seconded by Mr. Hancock and approved by the following roll call vote:

AYES: Brookins, Caywood, Halliwill, Hancock, Holland, Loveman, Turner, Young ----- 8

NAYS: ----- 0

The board took a five-minute break before proceeding with closed session.

On a motion by Mr. Caywood, and seconded by Mr. Hancock, the Board returned to open session once approved by unanimous voice vote.

CERTIFICATION OF CLOSED MEETING: At 5:17 p.m., Mr. Caywood moved for a roll call vote certifying that to the best of each member’s knowledge: (i) only public business matters lawfully exempted from open meeting requirements under the Virginia Freedom of Information Act and (ii) only such public business matters as were identified in the motion convening the closed meeting were heard, discussed, or considered in the closed meeting. It was seconded by Mr. Hancock and approved by the following roll call vote:

AYES: Brookins, Caywood, Halliwill, Hancock, Holland, Loveman, Turner, Young ----- 8

NAYS: ----- 0

OTHER BUSINESS: Mr. McEvoy shared that a Press Release will be issued on the ProChem, Inc. agreement

Mr. Hancock made a motion to approve the agreement with Pro Chem, Inc. and allow the Executive Director to execute. Mr. Caywood seconded the motion and it was approved by the following roll call vote:

AYES: Brookins, Caywood, Halliwill, Hancock, Holland, Turner, Young, Loveman ----- 8.

NAYS: ----- 0.

COMMENTS FROM BOARD MEMBERS: Mr. Brookins noted that at the recent IDEA team meeting, lunch was provided by 525 Shawarma, a new restaurant in Vinton which is owned by an Authority employee and their spouse.

Mr. Loveman adjourned the Board meeting at 5:19 p.m.

APPROVED: November 20, 2025




Gayle Shrewsbury, Secretary
WVWA Board of Directors

Letter to the WVWA
October 13, 2025

Email To Board
Printed only - not a
speaker

To whom it may concern,

My name is Kaley, and I am a concerned resident of Botetourt county, writing to you in opposition to the [proposed plan for a hyperscale Google data center here](#).

Roanoke's Blue Ridge is a scenic, awe-inspiring region with a vast reputation for its natural beauty. In 2023, Roanoke [saw over \\$800 million](#) in direct spending from visitors. Thousands of adrenaline-seeking residents and tourists compete in the region at races like the USA Cycling Endurance Mountain Bike National Championships, the Blue Ridge Marathon, and the IronMan, among others. Some three million people hike the Appalachian Trail annually. [Over 17 million people](#) visit the Blue Ridge Parkway annually, more than twice the combined visitation to Yellowstone, Yosemite, and the Grand Canyon national parks. Amtrak's most profitable route – the Northeast Corridor – added a second route to Roanoke, signaling the area's rising star, akin to the landmark Mill Mountain Star.

My experiences are not unique to me. I grew up in this region. I attended Lord Botetourt High School then later Virginia Tech. I've ran many of our trails and paddle-boarded the peaceful reservoir that is Carvins Cove. Seeing firsthand how developers transformed the undulating fields in Botetourt's Greenfield Education Center (host to my old cross country course) into the sprawling industrial park, I urge you to consider another path.

In the rapid age of artificial intelligence, we are at an ethical and moral crossroads. I urge you to use your good judgment to consider, really consider, the negative strain on the environment, communities, and natural resources of which are little communicated to the general public. I urge you to read the well-documented resistance bubbling up in Virginia [and other states](#) and to listen with empathy as residents raise their concerns. Seemingly overnight, the great state of Virginia became world famous. As of 2025, Virginia is an epicenter – home to over 600 data centers. As of 2025, it is the largest in the world.

This proposed project nearly [topples them all](#).

"Project Raspberry," as it's been named, fails to capture the gravity of what this may mean for residents here and many towns over. This region holds a much brighter and greener future in its natural strengths. Not to mention, AI data centers are sending power bills soaring. Wholesale electricity costs as much as [267 percent more](#) than it did five years ago in areas near data centers. These costs are shouldered by residents. I ask you, genuinely, are 50 jobs and the estimated 2 to 8 million-gallon daily water usage an [equitable tradeoff to accessible drinking water](#) and affordable utilities, in our lifetime?

Consider the legacy of the Blue Ridge Mountains and reconsider efforts that sideline the community for corporate greed.

With regards,

Kaley

Condensed Letter

To the Board of the Western Virginia Water Authority:

I am here today because I am deeply concerned about the Google AI Data Center being built in Botetourt County. I am disappointed that the WVWA and local governments appear to have kept the planning and details of this project secretive and out of public view. You have granted a billion-dollar corporation unprecedented access to our city's drinking water in a way that excludes the public—exactly as they prefer.

The fact that you will not release your agreement with Botetourt County and have signed a non-disclosure agreement with Google—a company with no obligation to our community or environment—is unacceptable. Regardless of how common NDAs may be in this industry, such secrecy directly contradicts your mission “to protect and manage essential water resources” and your core values of *Stewardship, Accountability, Integrity, Respect, and Service*.

I am here to hold you accountable to those values. I strongly request that a **public town hall** be held so WVWA customers can ask questions and receive clear information about how this project will affect our water supply, quality, and long-term sustainability.

Specifically, I ask:

- Has the Board studied the impacts of this sudden increase in water demand?
- Have environmental and drought-related consequences been evaluated?
- What measures will regulate Google's water use, and will their usage data be made public?
- Will they pay the same rate as residents?
- What happens if their consumption exceeds 8 million gallons per day or causes damage to local resources?

Most data centers lose about 80% of their water to evaporation, and the remainder is discharged to municipal wastewater systems that often struggle to handle the volume. Who will be responsible for any necessary upgrades—Google or local ratepayers? Will recycled wastewater or closed-loop cooling systems be required?

According to the Virginia Sierra Club, 8 million gallons a day is enough water for 80,000 people—**30 times** what our largest current user consumes. As AI technologies grow exponentially, so will these demands. How can the WVWA ensure our supply remains stable and protected for residents and the environment?

These are reasonable and necessary questions. We deserve transparency and open dialogue with experts who understand data center impacts and how to regulate them responsibly.

Finally, *The Post and Courier* in South Carolina reported that “Google is notorious for insisting officials help it hide information about its enormous appetite for electricity and water.” While Google has no obligation to the public, **you do.** You are entrusted with protecting our community’s most essential resource.

Please start acting like it.

Respectfully,

Julie Bivins



Response to citizen comments expressed at the
October 16, 2025, Board of Directors Meeting

Thank you for sharing your perspectives. Below are responses to questions asked.

Q: Has the Board studied the impacts of this sudden increase in water demand?

A: Yes, although we do not expect a “sudden” increase in water demand. If the project proceeds, water usage at the site will increase over time as facilities are constructed, which will take a number of years. The Authority periodically studies the region’s growth projections and assesses potential impacts to water and wastewater infrastructure. The Authority has adequate capacity in its existing water sources to supply the region, including this potential project. Growth in Botetourt County presents the Authority with a timely opportunity to take a fresh look at the region’s growth and assess potential water supply alternatives. The Authority will consider ways to improve existing water supply storage, improve existing water treatment, and develop new water supplies from surface or groundwater sources. The Authority will also study reuse of treated wastewater as an option for this project and other non-potable uses in the region.

Q: Have environmental and drought-related consequences been evaluated?

A: Yes. Protection of the environment and our natural resources is foundational to the Water Authority’s function. The Authority maintains a Drought Contingency Plan, which is triggered by declining reservoir levels at Carvins Cove during different months of the year. The Authority has not had to implement the drought contingency plan during its 20-year history. Should the plan ever have to be activated, there are three stages of voluntary, mandatory, and emergency measures which apply to all customers. Google is subject to the Authority’s Drought Contingency Plan and General Business Rules and Regulations, the same as any other customer of the Authority.

Q: What measures will regulate Google’s water use, and will their usage data be made public?

A: The project will be metered, which provides data for billing and allows staff to understand usage and track changes over time. Disclosure of any customer’s consumption information is subject to Freedom of Information Act requirements in the Code of Virginia Code. The Authority publishes a list of its largest principal customers as a part of its annual financial report.

Q: Will they pay the same rates as residents?

A: Yes. Like any customer of the Western Virginia Water Authority, Google will pay for all the water that they use. All customers are subject to the Rates and Fees schedule published on the Authority’s website [Rates and Fees | Western Virginia Water Authority](#).

Google is also paying for studies of select portions of Authority infrastructure including treatment facilities and water supply sources to better inform the Authority so it can meet future water supply needs of all customers in its member jurisdictions.

Q: What happens if their consumption exceeds (a certain volume) or causes damage to local resources?

A: Google will be bound by the Authority's generally-applicable rules and regulations as any customer, including General Business Rules and Regulations, Development Rules and Regulations, Industrial Pretreatment Rules and Regulations, Drought Contingency Plan, and state regulations as well as contractual obligations agreed to specifically for the project.

Q: Who will be responsible for necessary infrastructure upgrades?

A: Google will be responsible for any infrastructure needs or upgrades to get water to their site. Once completed, these infrastructure upgrades will become part of the Authority's system which may provide for incidental enhancements to portions of the Authority's service area in Botetourt County. The costs for these water distribution upgrades will be paid for by Google, and Authority ratepayers will not be subject to higher rates to support this expense.

Q: Will recycled wastewater or closed-loop cooling systems be required?

A: Recycled wastewater, or water re-use, will be studied as an option for this project. The Authority does not currently operate a water re-use system, however, that does not preclude it from considering its use for this or any other project. As part of studies the Authority is conducting, re-use will be looked at as an option for serving Google or other customers in the future. This type of process is typically implemented at the end of the wastewater treatment process. Additional pipes, pumps, and storage tanks are needed to distribute re-use water to a given location. This is all done completely separately from the drinking water system.

Q: How can the Authority ensure the region's water supply remains stable and protected for residents and the environment?

A: This is one of the principal reasons the Western Virginia Water Authority was formed. The Authority regularly evaluates what water supply improvements might be needed to serve the current and future water needs of customers throughout the Authority's service area. This is done in close coordination with leaders and staff of the Authority's member jurisdictions to ensure that the Authority is a supportive partner in the long-term plans of each locality. Maintaining safe, reliable, and dependable water sources is of common interest to the Authority, its member localities, and the communities we serve. The Authority participates in Virginia Department of Environmental Quality's water supply planning program and follows the Local and Regional Water Supply Planning Regulation requirements. While the next update is not due until 2029, staff are working on it now. In addition to water capacity, this effort will evaluate hydrologic, environmental, economic, social, legal, and jurisdictional aspects of water supply planning.