



## **Community Advisory Panel Meeting Minutes for October 2, 2025**

### **Members attending the meeting:**

Tiki Dixon  
Misty Goodwin  
Claudia Mata  
Amy Nolan  
Brian Strutz  
Janet Testerman  
Wes Willoughby  
Keira Wyatt

### **Others in attendance:**

Dawn Ford, Facilitator

### **KUB Staff:**

Chris Thomas  
Kevin Keaton  
Dannon Dallmann  
John Gresham  
John Williams  
Kurt Stafford

### **KUB Commissioners:**

Kathy Hamilton

### **New Business**

The Community Advisory Panel met at 3:00 p.m. on Thursday, October 2, 2025, at KUB's Kuwahee Wastewater Treatment Plant (2015 Neyland Drive).

Dawn Ford called the meeting to order.

Ms. Ford asked if there were any changes to the June meeting minutes. There were no changes, and the panel approved the minutes.

Ms. Ford shared the meeting's topic as KUB's Fats, Oils, and Grease Program and how KUB and customers can work together to protect the public wastewater system. She recognized Chris Thomas, Manager of Plant Operations, Kevin Keaton, Manager of Laboratory &

Regulatory Compliance, and Dannon Dallmann, Business Analyst in Plant Operations, to give a presentation on the program and the wastewater treatment process.

Mr. Thomas began the presentation by welcoming everyone to Kuwahee Wastewater Treatment Plant and discussing the importance of the facility in the community. He introduced Mr. Keaton to continue the presentation.

Mr. Keaton started by giving an overview of KUB's wastewater system. He shared the history of the system, the EPA Consent Decree from 2004 to 2022, and the work that reduced sanitary sewer overflows (SSOs) and upgraded treatment plants. Mr. Keaton said KUB is one of very few wastewater utilities that successfully fulfilled the requirements of a Consent Decree. Keira Wyatt asked what factors led to KUB's success in completing the Consent Decree. Mr. Keaton said the hard work and commitment of KUB employees were major factors to successfully completing the requirements.

Mr. Keaton continued by discussing KUB's Management, Operation, and Maintenance (MOM) Programs and the goals of the Grease Control Program. Mr. Keaton shared photos of grease accumulation in the wastewater collection system and described sudden releases of grease called slug discharges. Ms. Wyatt asked what would cause the grease to be discharged this way. Mr. Keaton said that the EPA requires a pretreatment program that removes grease and other pollutants at an industrial facility. A process or equipment failure at the facility can cause the slug discharge. Tiki Dixon asked who inspects the industrial pretreatment systems. Mr. Keaton answered that KUB does routine inspections and monitoring.

Mr. Keaton continued by discussing grease collection for food service facilities. KUB routinely carries out compliance inspections at these facilities. Ms. Wyatt asked how often these inspections are carried out. Mr. Keaton said they are random and no less than once a year. If a facility fails an inspection, KUB will inspect them more often to help them get in compliance.

Brian Strutz asked about grease collection and stormwater runoff. Mr. Keaton said the stormwater system is managed by the City of Knoxville.

Mr. Keaton then showed examples of grease control equipment and the different types of greases. He shared diagrams of how a grease interceptor works and an overview of grease recycling. Mr. Strutz said that the cost of grease recycling has gone up in the area due to a lack of competition and asked if KUB has considered providing grease collection and recycling. Mr. Keaton answered that KUB has evaluated providing this service, but collecting grease for recycling would take a significant investment that would negatively impact KUB ratepayers. Mr. Strutz asked what would happen if Knoxville lost the current collection facilities. Mr. Keaton said it would need to be hauled to a city with a grease collection facility.

Mr. Keaton then discussed the outreach and education efforts of the Grease Control Program. He concluded by sharing program successes and the importance of strong relationships between KUB and its customers.

Mr. Dixon asked how food trucks fit into grease regulations. Mr. Keaton said KUB keeps track of food trucks, but they must go to a facility that allows them to offload their waste and grease. KUB does not accept the grease at its facilities. Mr. Dixon asked about employee retention for KUB. Mr. Keaton said retention in his department is high with an average tenure of 18 years. Mr. Dixon complimented Mr. Keaton on an engaging and informative presentation.

Ms. Dallmann began her presentation by giving an overview of the wastewater treatment process beginning with the influent screens. Ms. Wyatt asked what the weight is of the debris that the screens remove. Mr. Thomas answered that he was unsure of the exact weight removed, but the debris is moved to a dumpster which is picked up once a week. Ms. Dallmann then continued by discussing the rest of the wastewater treatment process. Ms. Wyatt asked if KUB had shared innovations or streamlined processes in a way that other treatment plants have adopted. Mr. Thomas said that KUB isn't in the research and development sector that creates these processes. However, KUB works with consulting engineers specializing in water and wastewater systems to evaluate process improvements. He gave examples of KUB moving away from gaseous chlorine and the abnormal (high flow) treatment train as process changes.

Ms. Ford announced that the next meeting would be December 4 at 3:00 p.m.

No members of the public addressed the panel during the public forum.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:45 p.m.