

PUNJAB WATER REGULATION AND DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
SCO No. 149-152, Third Floor, Sector 17C, Chandigarh.

Minutes of 82nd Meeting of Punjab Water Regulation and Development Authority held on 15.03.2024 at 11.00 AM in the Committee Room of the Authority under the Chairmanship of Sh. Karan Avtar Singh, Chairperson PWRDA.

Present: Mr. Sushil Gupta, Member and Dr. Surinder Singh Kukal, Member.

In attendance: Mr. Chander Gaiind, IAS Secretary and Mr. J.K. Jain, Additional Secretary.

Item No. 82.01: Confirmation of the Minutes of 81st Meeting.

The Minutes of 81st Meeting held on 29.02.2024 were emailed to all concerned. No comments received. Minutes may be confirmed.

Decision: *Confirmed.*

Item No. 82.02: Action Taken Report.

Action Taken Report on the decisions taken in the previous meetings of the Authority is at **Annexure A82.02.01.**

Decision: *Noted with the observation that ATR on Item no. 76.05 'Hiring of motor vehicles' is pending.*

Item No.82.03: Extension of last date to apply for permission.

Punjab Groundwater Extraction and Conservation Directions, 2023 have come into force w.e.f. February 1, 2023.

2. Time period to apply for permission in case of existing Units extracting volume of groundwater >300 to 1500 cubic meter per month was extended up to 31.03.2024 by the Authority by Resolution No. 78.05 dated 11.01.2024
2. Time period to apply for permission in case of Water Tankers was extended up to 31.03.2024 by the Authority by Resolution No. 81.11 dated 29.02.2024.
3. Time period to apply for permission in case of Power-operated Drilling Rigs was extended up to 31.12.2023 by the Authority by Resolution No. 68.03 dated 16.08.2023.
4. In order to give relief to the users/operators, the time period to apply for permission was extended as under with the approval of Chairperson in anticipation of approval by the Authority:
 - a. For existing Users extracting more than **300 and up to 1,500 cubic metres per month**, the last date to apply for permission is extended to **30th June, 2024**.

- b. For existing **Water Tankers and Power Operated Drilling Rigs**, the last date to apply for permission is extended to **30th June, 2024**.

5. Accordingly, an advertisement (**Annexure A82.03.01**) to this effect was issued in three newspapers and uploaded on PWRDA website on 12.03.2024

6. Subsequent to the extension in time to apply for permission by the Power-operated Drilling Rigs, the Authority may consider extending time for the users to engage a power-operated drilling rig permitted by the Authority in terms of paragraph 3.17 of the Groundwater Directions, 2023.

7. Authority may ratify the decision in para 4 and may decide on proposal para 6 above.

Placed before the Authority for consideration.

Decision: *Ratified the decision in para 4 above.*

Timeline for the Users to engage a power operated drilling rig is extended up to 30.06.2024. This be uploaded on the PWRDA website and an advertisement be given in three daily newspapers one each in Punjabi, Hindi and English language.

Item No. 82.04:- Directions U/S 33 A of the Water (Prevention& Control of Pollution) Act 1974 in the matter of M/s Malbros International Pvt. Ltd., Village Mansoorwal, Tehsil Zira, District Ferozepur.

This subject matter was considered by the Authority in the 66th meeting (**Annexure A82.04.01**) and it was decided to conduct an enquiry under Section 20 of the Punjab Water Resources (Management and Regulation) Act, 2020 (hereinafter the Act). Deputy Commissioner Ferozepur was directed to conduct an enquiry in terms of Punjab Government order no. E305371PJ-3/241 dated 17.05.2022.

2. As per enquiry report received from DC Ferozepur vide letter no. 2056 dated 12.10.2023 (**Annexure A82.04.02**), ten no. of tube wells/extraction structures are reported on the site at the time of inspections which exceeds the no. of tubewells/extraction structures permitted/applied for.

3. For this non-compliance, two Show-Cause Notice(s) were issued on 18.01.2024 (**Annexure A82.04.03**) to M/s Malbros International Private Limited, one under Punjab Guidelines for Groundwater Extraction and Conservation, 2020 and another under Punjab Groundwater Extraction and Conservation Directions, 2023.

4. M/s Malbros International Private Limited replied to these SCNs on 29.01.2024 (**Annexure A82.04.04**) wherein it has admitted the existence of 10 no. borewells/tubewells and 6

no. piezometers in the unit premises. The explanation given by the user for existence of 10 no. borewells/tubewells and 6 no. piezometers in the unit premises appears to be unsatisfactory.

5. Action for non-compliance of directions of the Authority can be taken u/s 23 of the Act which is reproduced below:

“(1) If the Authority, after the due enquiry, is satisfied that any person has willfully failed to comply with the directions issued or conditions imposed under sub-section (2) of section 15 of this Act, the Authority may, by an order, in addition to any other action which may be taken under this Act, ban the operation of machinery using electricity or carrying on of any industrial process which utilizes water in the premises where violation of the directions or conditions imposed has taken place:

Provided that before issuing any order under this sub-section, the Authority shall give an opportunity of hearing to the concerned person after a notice of not less than seven days.

(2) The Authority may, after an order under sub-section (1), issue directions to any entity supplying electricity to the premises mentioned in sub-section (1) for stopping of electricity supply to that premises and the entity shall comply with the order of the Authority within twenty-four hours of the receipt of the orders and shall not restore the electricity supply till such time, as may be permitted by the Authority”.

Therefore, the Authority may consider to afford an opportunity of hearing to M/s Malbros International Private Limited. The draft notice is attached as **Annexure A82.04.05**.

Placed before the Authority for consideration.

Decision: *Notice approved with modifications as per Annexure M 82.04.05.*

Item No. 82.05: Approval of Budget Estimates for the Financial Year 2024-25 and Revised Budget Estimates for Financial Year 2023-24.

Budget Estimates for the Financial Year 2024-25 and Revised Budget Estimates for Financial Year 2023-24 are placed at Annexure A82.05.01 for consideration and approval.

Decision: *Approved.*

Item No. 82.06: Action against units for non-payment of Ground Water Charges.

The subject matter was taken up by the Authority as agenda item no. 80.08 in the meeting held on 09.02.2024 wherein, the following decision was taken:

“Further action against the units defaulting in payment of Groundwater Charges be taken after finalization of the SOP and Notices”.

2. The draft SOP is at **Annexure A 82.06.01**

3. The draft Notices are at **Annexure A 82.06.02, Annexure A 82.06.03, Annexure A 82.06.04 and Annexure A 82.06.05.**

Placed before the Authority for consideration.

Decision: *Deferred.*

Item No. 82.07: Recruitment to one post of Private Secretary.

The subject matter was taken up by the Authority in 80th meeting held on 09.02.2024 as Agenda Item No. 80.11 wherein the following decision was taken:

“The post of Private Secretary be re-advertised. The mode of recruitment, qualification, experience, monthly remuneration and period of contract shall be the same as approved by the Authority in the 76th meeting. However, the test in shorthand is deleted.”

2. Accordingly, the post of Private Secretary was advertised. 29.02.2024 was last date to apply for. Five candidates applied. Three candidates were found eligible by the Scrutiny Committee headed by ADO (**Annexure A 82.07.01**). The eligible candidates were asked to appear in the computer proficiency test on 06.03.2024. The attendance cum marks report is at **AnnexureA82.07.02.**

3. The report of Recommendation Committee constituted by office order no. 44593: PWRDA-PWRDOMISC/14/2020-PWRDA/BR/I/81224 dated 25.01.2024 is at (**Annexure A 82.07.03**),

The overall marks obtained by the candidate are tabulated below:

Sr. No.	Name of the candidate	Bachelor’s Degree (Out of 10)	Post Graduation (Out of 5)	Experience (maximum 10)	Computer Proficiency Test. Max Marks 75	Total marks obtained (out of 100)

1.	Mrs. Vanita Suri	4.30	4.50	10.00	48.00	66.80
----	------------------	------	------	-------	-------	-------

4. Mrs. Vanita Suri did not attempt translation from Punjabi to English and typing of noting/DO in Punjabi language. Keeping in view all relevant factors including the indicative roles and functions of Private Secretary as detailed in the advertisement, the Committee did not find the candidate fit for the post.

Placed before the Authority for consideration.

Decision: *Noted.*

Item No. 82.08: Extension of Contract for providing Support Services.

M/S SS Services Providers, Cabin No. 2, SCO 171, First Floor, Sector 38-C, Chandigarh - 160036 was selected through E-tendering process for providing various support services to the Authority on 09.03.2022 (**Annexure 82.08.01**) as the bid submitted by it was the lowest. It quoted management fee for providing the support services under the Scope of Services for the project as percentage of monthly gross payment @ 1.38 percent. The contract / agreement (**Annexure 82.08.02**) was signed with SS Services Providers for one year i.e., from 01.04.2022 to 31.03.2023 at Mutual Obligation & Terms and Conditions and Management Fee of 1.38 percentage (%) which was extended on 29.03.2023 for one year from 01.04.2023 to 31.03.2024 at the same terms & conditions and management fee of 1.38 per cent. Copy of this contract/agreement and scope of work is at **Annexure 82.08.03**.

2. The Bank Guarantee submitted by the SS Services Providers amounting to Rs.7.20 lakh is valid up to 16.06.2024.

3. Now, the SS Services Providers has submitted application dated 29.02.2024 for extension of the contract which is reproduced below:

"This letter is about the contract awarded to us for providing of support services to PWRDA through personnel of the Service Provider for the period of from 01-04-2022 to 31-03-2023 and further extended up to 31.03.2024 which is going to expire on 31-03-2024. As we are complying with all the statutory obligations of contract and our performance is quite satisfactory, therefore, we are willing in extension of said contract for a period of one more year i.e. from 01-04-2024 to 31-03-2025 with mutual consent as per terms & conditions of contract."

4. Paragraph 2 of Part 2 of the contract "Mutual Obligations & Terms and Conditions" states that *"Subject to the requirement of work and satisfactory performance of the service provider, to be judged by PWRDA, the contract may be extended further on yearly basis upon mutually acceptable terms and conditions."*

5. There is nothing adverse on record against M/S. SS Services Providers and his performance is satisfactory.

6. Authority may consider to extend the contract/agreement with SS Services Providers at the same "Mutual Obligations & Terms and Conditions" and Scope of Work as contained in the current contract/agreement. Authority may indicate period of contract and Management Fee payable to the Contractor.

Placed before the Authority for consideration.

Decision: *Approved to extend the contract with SS Services Providers for a period of one year i.e., 1st April 2024 to 31st March 2025 at the same management fee of 1.38 percent subject to submission of bank guarantee as per requirement of the contract.*

Item No. 82.09: Project Proposal for Enhancement in Permission Module of PWRDA Web Portal/ Mobile Apps & Payment Mobile Apps.

The project proposal 'Web Application for Granting Online Permission (NOC) for Ground Water Extraction, Web portal, and Mobile Application for PWRDA' was approved by the Authority in 32nd meeting held on 29.11.2021. The approved project cost was Rs. 74.65 lakh. of Rs. 69.34 lakh was paid to NIC against this.

2. The Authority in its 64th meeting on 19.04.2023 has approved Rs. 19.74 lacs for the development of the 'Payment Module & its Mobile Apps for Payment of Ground Water Charges for PWRDA.' Apart from the above, during 67th Authority meeting's resolution 67.03 dated: 06.07.2023, the proposal submitted by NIC for the deployment of 2 persons costing Rs. 24.66 lacs during *Operation & Maintenance phase* of 12 months were approved.

3. **Web Application for granting online permission (NOC) for groundwater extraction:** As per the contract, the web portal has been completed. However, the Mobile Application for online permission may not be user-friendly due to lengthy forms, so may be dropped.

4. **Web-based Payment Module for Groundwater Charges for PWRDA:** NIC, vide letter dated 01.03.2024 (**Annexure-A 82.09.01**), has conveyed that the work order for the 'Payment Module & its Mobile Apps for Payment of Groundwater Charges for PWRDA' expired on 30.11.2023. The web-based module is in the UAT (User Acceptance Testing) phase.

5. **Mobile Apps for Payment Module:** As per the approved project proposal this module was to be completed by 30.11.2023. However, it is pending. NIC has submitted that it is expected to be finished by 30.04.2024. There is no overrun cost as the time of development was spent in post-development legacy data entry and other amendments in the permission portal.

6. NIC has submitted the project proposal on 07.02.2024 seeking an extension of project '**Enhancement in Permission Module of PWRDA Web Portal/ Mobile Apps & Payment Mobile**

Apps’ for ten months. The details are at **Annexure A 82.09.02**. The estimated cost of extension of the existing Project to enhance the Permission Module is Rs. 36,28,964.9/- (including all taxes and NICS Margin). It requires the engagement of a manpower of 4 persons for 10 months from 01.12.2023 to 30.09.2024. The proposed target dates for the completion of tasks outlined in the 10-month proposal are at **Annexure A 82.09.03**.

7. NIC was requested to resubmit a revised proposal after dropping the following modules:

- Addition of Aadhaar-based eSign for signing Permission letter
- Integration of Digital Wallet for Partial Payments
- Inclusion of Online Notice.
- Develop an Inspection Module and Implement it in Districts.

8. Revised proposal received from NIC (letter dated 13.03.2024 **Annexure A 82.09.04**: contains following scope of work:

Sr. No.	Scope
1.	Accessibility of Application Form, Application fees as per Water Meter reading
2.	Legacy data and offline Payments Provision for overriding verification by the Administrator
3.	Noting Tik marks in RO/SO/AO
4.	Provision for online settlement of funds in the event of Units surrendering permissions
5.	Mobile application development and its security audit
6.	Post-development Security Audit of Portal

The revised timeline given by NIC for completion of above tasks is 7.5 months from 01.12.2023 to 15.07.2024.

9. Authority may consider to extend the project ‘*Enhancement in Permission Module of PWRDA Web Portal/ Mobile Apps & Payment Mobile Apps*’ for 7.5 months. Authority may also approve expenditure of Rs. 27,21,724/- for this project subject to the condition that NIC will complete the project with in the given timeline and submit the UC within 30 days from the date of completion of the project. Sufficient funds for this purpose are available in the relevant budget for 2023-24. The amount will be released to NIC after deducting applicable taxes. Manager IT may be authorised to stamp and sign the revised Performa Invoice Request Form and PEF (Project Execution Form).

Placed before authority for consideration.

Decision: *Approved.*

Meeting ended with a vote of thanks to the Chair.

Chairperson, PWRDA.