

**RESOLUTION**

**NO. R-26-152**

**CITY HALL: April 23, 2026**

**BY: COUNCILMEMBER MORRELL**

**SECONDED BY:**

**RESOLUTION AND ORDER REGARDING THE APPEAL OF MICHAEL STEVENS**

**WHEREAS**, pursuant to the Home Rule Charter of the City of New Orleans, the Council of the City of New Orleans (“Council”) is the governmental body with the power of supervision, regulation, and control over public utilities providing service within the City of New Orleans; and

**WHEREAS**, pursuant to Louisiana Revised Statutes Section 33:4159.2, the Council has the power to establish billing policies for the Sewerage and Water Board of New Orleans (“SWBNO”); and

**WHEREAS**, pursuant to Louisiana Revised Statutes Section 33:4159.3 customers may engage in an arbitration process to resolve disputes related to SWBNO customer bills wherein a customer may appeal an arbiter’s decision to the Council; and

**WHEREAS**, Michael L. Stevens is a SWBNO customer, who at the time of their appeal to the Council is disputing a statement balance of \$2,651.78; and

**WHEREAS**, on October 28, 2025, the Council-appointed firm responsible for reviewing customer bill disputes held a hearing to address the customer’s bill dispute and ruled in favor of a credit in amount of \$3,035.39; and

**WHEREAS**, on November 10, 2025, Michael L. Stevens requested an arbitration hearing; and

**WHEREAS**, the arbitration hearing was held on December 22, 2025, and

**WHEREAS**, on January 16, 2026, the arbiter sent his decision to Mr. Stevens, SWBNO, and the Council Utilities Regulatory Office and found no additional credits should be granted; and

**WHEREAS, pursuant to Section 159-6, customers have 14 days from the date a decision letter was received, exclusive of weekends and holidays, to appeal an arbitration decision to the Council; and**

**WHEREAS, on February 11, 2026, 17 days after the decision letter was received, Michael L. Stevens appealed the arbiter's decision to the Council asserting that the decision letter was received on January 23, 2026, and the arbiter did not properly account for prior disputed amounts or fees; and**

**WHEREAS, the Council has reviewed the arbitration decision, record, and appeal and finds that the appeal was not submitted timely under the Code and there is insufficient evidence to support the customer's claim that the statement balance is erroneous; NOW THEREFORE**

**BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF NEW ORLEANS, That Michael L. Stevens' appeal is DENIED.**

**THE FOREGOING RESOLUTION WAS READ IN FULL, THE ROLL WAS CALLED ON THE ADOPTION THEREOF, AND RESULTED AS FOLLOWS:**

**YEAS:**

**NAYS:**

**ABSENT:**

**AND THE RESOLUTION WAS ADOPTED.**