

WATER COMMITTEE
MAY 9, 2012
MINUTES

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Pete Frisina, Chairman
James K “Chip” Conner, Vice Chairman
Jack Krakeel
Tony Parrott

ABSENT:

Brian Cardoza

NON-VOTING MEMBERS:

David Jaeger

GUEST:

Stephen Hogan, WASA

STAFF PRESENT:

Russell Ray

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Pete Frisina at 8:00 A.M.

I. APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM THE MEETING ON APRIL 25, 2012.

Vice Chairman Chip Conner made the motion and Jack Krakeel seconded, to approve the minutes from the meeting on April 25, 2012. There was no opposition.

II. LAKE MCINTOSH UPDATE.

David Jaeger updated the committee on the progress on the Lake McIntosh project. He showed slides with an aerial view showing the dam and spillway. Three of the four slabs are complete in the upper spillway, all of the stilling basin area is done; slab sections one, two and three are done. In section four, currently rebar is being tied in that area; they are planning to place concrete there in about three weeks. This area has to be used for access for concrete. The crane is parked in this area and they are using it to perform some of the work. He said that this will be the last section that is poured. He pointed out the outside area that is rip rap, not concrete slabs. He went on to say the contractor is working on the side walls, and he estimated the west side wall is about 75% complete.

Mr. Jaeger showed more construction photos showing the construction of the side walls. He pointed out the notch in the top of the wall that will be where the access bridge is placed to span across the spillway for access to both sides for maintenance equipment once the project is complete. Another slide showed the rebar for the labyrinth walls; these will be poured after the side walls are complete. The next slide showed the work on the downstream outlet channel (the tie in between that channel and the creek); this is something the contractor has been working on as well. He showed the creek moving away from this offsite, then the channel downstream of the spillway tying into the creek. Currently the creek is routed through the sixty inch diameter pipe.

Mr. Jaeger said the clearing is complete except for a portion of the stream buffer that will remain until we are closer to completion of the concrete work and the backfill. They will then resume clearing the stream buffer.

Mr. Jaeger explained that the bridge on the walking trail for the Southern Conservation Trust is now complete. They still have a little work to do on the approaches, but that is done.

Mr. Jaeger reported that the pump station work is coming along. This is a separate contract from the dam, but is working concurrently. The exterior and interior finishes are almost complete; there is a little bit of tidy up work left to do. The pumps and motors, and the electrical equipment have not been shipped yet; so the equipment is not yet installed. The exterior of the building is basically finished. He pointed out in the photo, looking back toward the Fayette County side; you can see where we added onto the existing structure, built it up ten feet, the retaining wall system (the rock gabion system) allowed us to improve the access, and raise the grade to access the front door. One window is on back order and the doors will have decorative veneer to resemble carriage doors.

Mr. Parrott commented that Strack has the waterline work for the park. Mr. Jaeger said the contracts have been sent to them, they are executing them; when they return them with the bond and insurance, they will be forwarded to the county attorney for review. The contracts for work at the park have been executed; they will be submitting to Peachtree City and the State for the NPDES permit. The drawings will be sent either today or tomorrow morning. That work can be kicked off within two weeks.

Mr. Parrott stated we will have a public meeting in Peachtree City at the end of the month, just to let everybody know that the project is almost finished. We will discuss the lake and the park.

III. LAKE PEACHTREE DREDGING.

Mr. Parrott reported that he provided the city engineer with the survey showing the amount of silt. He and Mr. Jaeger have a meeting scheduled with them for this afternoon; we cannot bid the project without having a place to mobilize.

IV. WATER RESTRICTIONS.

Mr. Parrott commented that we are in a drought, even though it rained yesterday and today. Lake Horton did not recover, Lake Kedron did. We cannot pump out of Lake McIntosh/Line Creek right now because we don't have the pumps and the water. He said he wanted to discuss this with the Committee. The Corp of Engineers are actually going into their drought plan that the dry weather triggers the start of drought operation at Lanier. They are starting to get concerned.

Mr. Parrott went on to say that his understanding from reading the Governor's Water Stewardship Act is that we don't have much leeway. We have to wait for them to tell us what we need to do, unless we decide that we have an emergency. He added that we do not have an emergency so there is no reason to be concerned. He said that he is going to try to figure what kind of timeline it takes to get changes made. He said that he is not willing to go into a summer season with the biggest reservoir we have already starting below the high point. He repeated that he is not willing to go through the summer without having some discussion about conserving our resources more than allowing everybody to water every day. Mr. Parrott said the difference between our average of nine and the days that usage will hit sixteen million; this is 100% outside irrigation. He said that he wanted to go on record that we are looking at it all the time. He said that he is reviewing the Water Stewardship Act for the options. There are triggers for going into different levels, but those triggers are not what he views that our system needs. Our system would work great if we could go back to the odd/even which does not appear to be an option unless we actually have an emergency. He said that he does want to get to an emergency to go to odd/even. He does not understand why we cannot be proactive because we already know that we are getting in the same shape that we did in 2007/2008. Even the Corp is acknowledging that and going into their routine on Lanier; so they don't wind up in the shape they did.

Mr. Parrott said he is trying to get an answer from the State. This is part of the last rendition and nobody has played with it yet. Every time they have to make a decision, it is a new decision. Further discussion pertained to how many irrigation meters are installed in the system. Most separate irrigation meters are owned by businesses, only a few by residential customers.

Mr. Krakeel suggested that Mr. Parrott schedule a workshop meeting with the Board the first Wednesday in June to brief them on potential actions that he may be asking them for. Get on the record with the Board about getting ahead of the drought.

V. RADIO READ METER READING DEMONSTRATION.

Mr. Parrott commented that every now and then you do something that winds up to be so much better than what you were doing in the past. The Trace Radio Read system that we had was a meter, a register that goes on the meter, and a transponder that gives the signal; they are all wired in together. We would have customers that cut the wire and we would have to put the wire back together; winds up being a nuisance. They think if they cut the wire that takes care of the reading. The register is what has the reading. The transponder is just telling what the reading is, just like the meter reader reading it. All you have to do is go back and read the register to get the reading. It did not do any good, just because they cut the wire. It just winds up being a nuisance.

He went on to explain that you can crimp the wire with the lid; put the lid down on the wire and that messes it up too. You then have a tamper; some have been hit by lawnmowers. The new technology is Orion; it fits on the meter base. It replaced the Trace and that is what gives the signal. Mr. Parrott showed the various Trace transponders that had been spliced and then he point out the difference in the Orion transmitter where the wire is hidden. The Orion Profiler will give hourly readings for months on the water flow; you can access this information with the lap top, get a report and be able to tell what the customer's usage has been for certain hours.

He demonstrated the breakaway option on an Orion meter that is used if you have a meter pit that is deeper; you can pull the wire out and to make the installation work better. The technology for this is so much better than what we had in the past. The maintenance of the radio read system is now going to be much less than what it was. The meter readers don't have to go put the wires back together. We have a couple of areas where the wires have come apart more often than other areas.

Mr. Parrott stated that we are doing this project in house and the goal is to do 490 per week. At that pace, we will have them changed out ourselves, this year. Meter Readers, Field Customer Service, Water Distribution and Water Plant Maintenance on the weekends are all involved in the installation of the new meters.

FISH KILL AT LAKE HORTON.

Mr. Parrott reported that we had a fish kill at Lake Horton; DNR came down and looked at it. It appeared to be caused by stress because of the warmer early spring weather while they were spawning, and the water going down at the same time. They were not concerned with the amount of fish that were dead; it was not that big a deal for the size lake. We had several fishermen calling in a panic that dead fish were floating around.

CITY OF FAYETTEVILLE

Mr. Krakeel commented that he has had three or four different meetings with the City of Fayetteville on the potential merger of the water systems. It now appears that a merger is not in the making because of their debt structure, in terms of their bonds. They have bonds that are water and sewer bonds; there are bond covenants that restrict the approach they were looking at taking, a merger or a consolidation of the systems. He went on to say that he had a discussion yesterday with Joe Morton; the direction he would like to proceed in and have a discussion is an outright purchase of the water system by the county as opposed to a merger. That is a permissible process. Part of the issue has to do with valuation of their system. He said that he will be approaching the Board of Commissioners, probably within the next couple of weeks to see how they would like to proceed with that particular initiative. It is probably a cleaner way to do it than try to merge, just do an outright purchase. He said that we will see if it makes financial sense for the county

to do that or not. He said he does not think there will be any resolution of this before July 1.

Mr. Jaeger asked if the sewer services would come with it. Mr. Krakeel said no, just a purchase of the water. Mr. Jaeger asked if the revenues to cover the bonds were tied to the water and sewer both. Mr. Krakeel said they have been advised that a direct purchase would allow them to pay down their debt. It would retire the debt. For us it would probably mean that we would have to bond the purchase; issue debt to acquire the system and then use the revenues that are generated from the system to maintain our bond coverage ratios. There will be quite a bit more financial analysis that will need to be done before we get to that point. The first step will be, does the Board have any interest in pursuing that direction. He asked for the committee's thoughts on this issue.

Mr. Parrott stated that he likes outright purchase; it does not come with as many strings attached. He said that he believes that part of their financial problem with the City is the fact that they have a senior discount that affects almost 25% percent of their base, they not only give a discount on the minimum bill, they also give them a discount on 3,000 gallons. He said he can understand why they have trouble generating the revenue.

Chairman Frisina asked if the purchase is everything tied to water or just the infrastructure. Mr. Krakeel commented that he suspects it would be all of the stuff that is in the ground, the water tank, but he does not know about the wells or the treatment facility. Whether there would be any interest or need for that, he thinks that would require a lot more input from Mr. Parrott. Chairman Frisina asked if the treatment plant could be retro-fitted or used for more sewage treatment. Mr. Parrott said no, it is a package plant, just a water plant. It would be part of the purchase because it is part of what you have to acquire to pay off their bond issue, because that is the type of bond issue; whether you use it or not, you would be buying it because it is part of that asset that made up that value. Chairman Frisina asked if part of the distribution center is in the treatment plant, too. Mr. Parrott said it was just water treatment; they pumped the wells to the clear well, mixed it with water they treated to dilute the hardness.

Chairman Frisina asked about the control of the system from the treatment plant. Mr. Parrott said the only outside portion of the SCADA system they have is that they could read the water tank; we can read the City tank and cut those valves on an off to the City. Mr. Parrott commented one thing about getting the City system is the customer would never know the difference other than the fact that the bill would come from a different address. The pressure and flows, nothing changes.

Mr. Krakeel said that he thinks the potential positive aspect is if the State would agree to increase our withdrawal capacity from Starr's Mill equal to their withdrawal permit that they have on Whitewater Creek. It allows us to pump back to Lake Horton and to Peachtree City so that we could have both withdrawal from

Whitewater and withdrawal from Flint River going into Lake Horton. Mr. Parrott said it would make a difference, especially since we are going to be operating the Crosstown Plant off Lake McIntosh next year. Mr. Krakeel said we would not have to feed Starr's Mill off of Lake McIntosh, we could send that over to Lake Horton.

Stephen Hogan asked if there was any consideration for the treatment plant; moth balling it or just holding it for whatever emergency or catastrophic purpose, or is the plant self-sustaining unto itself? Mr. Parrott commented as so many things like that are wet, you turn it off and leave it off for a while, and it does not crank up easily. He said that we try not to ever turn off one of the water plants, because something that had been running for 60 days will take a notion, once it cools off not to start back up without having to tinker with it.

Mr. Krakeel commented the clear well does not impact the withdrawal. Mr. Parrott said that he thinks the City has a permit for 4 MGD. They were going to put in the off stream storage on Pelham Creek, he thinks they got 4 for that. It renews on a ten year cycle. Our withdrawal at Starr's Mill is 2MGD. Mr. Parrott commented that we have a place to put in a pump. Mr. Jaeger said that the line between Starr's Mill and Lake Horton is already big enough to handle the flow.

There being no further business, Chairman Pete Frisina adjourned the meeting at 9:35 A.M.

Peter A. Frisina

The foregoing minutes were approved at the regular Water Committee meeting on the 23rd day of May, 2012.

Lisa Quick