

**WATER COMMITTEE**  
**FEBRUARY 24, 2016**  
**MINUTES**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Pete Frisina, Chairman  
James K “Chip” Conner, Vice Chairman  
Commissioner Charles Oddo  
Steve Rapson  
Lee Pope  
Jimmy Preau

**NON-VOTING MEMBERS:** Dennis Davenport  
Alan Bowling

**GUEST:** Tony Parrott

**STAFF PRESENT:** Russell Ray, Matt Bergen

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

**I. APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM THE MEETING ON FEBRUARY 10, 2016.**

Vice Chairman Chip Conner made the motion and Lee Pope seconded, to approve the minutes from the meeting on February 10, 2016. There was no opposition.

**II. LANDSCAPE NOTIFICATION TO WATER SYSTEM CUSTOMERS.**

Matt Bergen explained that we have run into an influx of a lot of large projects; it is mostly subdivisions. There are some that are down Robinson Road, but it does not affect as many meter boxes as inside the subdivisions. Currently we have a NuLink project that is in south Peachtree City and the AGL large project that is in the middle of Peachtree City. We have about six people working Saturdays trying to clean out these boxes, and clear things back so the locator can actually access the locate piece. He said we started off marking everything according to the drawings; and did not get too far into the project before we realized the drawings weren't accurate enough. We had damage; it was our fault, from that point we had to make the decision that we have to clean out all the meter boxes on the long side, hook to them and physically trace every one of them back for these projects. Otherwise, we will be in deep trouble with the Public Service Commission for all the damages.

Mr. Pope commented that since he has done that we have not had any issues. Mr. Bergen said they went through Aster Ridge with zero damages for all the utilities. That has been the positive part of it. The damage was to one of our service lines when we marked it according to the drawings. Since we have been doing this we

have not had any other damages. Mr. Bergen showed an example on Lanyard Bend of a bush that covers the meter box. He explained about 10:30 in the morning they went to spread this bush to get access and a fox came out the back side. Seeing that at that time of day, he got concerned. This is one of the reasons we are looking at starting to clear these and notify people; ask them to clear the bushes ahead of time before we get there or clear them when we get there. We don't want to add to the workers comp cases because we have animals in there that we can't see. On the photo of Lanyard Loop he pointed out the magnetic locator, and the top of the meter box within the bush. They have to try to crawl through and underneath to get to the meter box.

Steve Rapson asked how much is he talking about clearing. Mr. Bergen replied just enough to access the boxes. Mr. Rapson asked if he has had any discussions with Peachtree City about any of that. Mr. Bergen said he did talk with David Rast, David Borkowski and Scott Hicks; they don't seem to have a problem with it. Mr. Rapson asked if they have communicated this to the leadership of Peachtree City. Mr. Bergen said they are waiting for us to give them our recommendation for passing out notifications, once he gets approval on the hand out, he can send it to them and then they will send it to their leadership. Mr. Pope explained this is all about reaching out and educating people first. We really don't have to do this, but it is a nice courtesy to do that to prevent calls and complaints. He said Mr. Bergen has talked to Peachtree City and they all agree, too. This is not one or two bushes at one or two houses, this is ongoing. Mr. Bergen said this is huge, especially in the older neighborhoods, it is worse.

Mr. Rapson commented Georgia Power has the same issues, so does AT&T and everybody else. Mr. Pope said we are not going in and tearing people's bushes out; we are just going to trim them where we have safe access.

Mr. Rapson asked if we are going to put this in the water bill. He said he thinks that is fine, we just need to make sure we let Peachtree City leadership, the Mayor and Council, know this will be in the water bill, before we send it.

Mr. Pope asked if Mr. Rapson could email this to them after the meeting today. Mr. Rapson said to send it to him and he would send it.

Further discussion pertained to the aesthetics concerns, knocking on customer doors and giving the home owners the chance to cut the bushes first. Until the notice is inserted in the water bills, Water System staff will hand it out at the houses before we come into the neighborhoods. They will know we are coming and that gives them the opportunity to take care of it before we get there.

Dennis Davenport asked if he is finding any trees or things that could have roots that damage the waterline, potentially. Mr. Bergen said we have, we have cut some roots out of the meter boxes, but we have not cleared anything back, yet. Mr. Davenport asked what we do in those instances as far as notification is concerned.

Maybe the homeowner should know that the presence of this tree could cause them to be liable for damage to our waterline, because their tree is in the right of way, generally speaking. Mr. Bergen said we have not done any notification; the telecommunications have the same issue with the root system. Unless we are going to dictate what they can and can't plant in the right of ways, all we can do is educate them.

Mr. Rapson commented they can't plant in the right of way is what needs to be communicated. Most of this problem we are talking about is the fact we have 30 to 40 year old established neighborhoods in Peachtree City. They planted landscaping around their boxes to make it look nice. Part of the aesthetics in Peachtree City is you typically don't have telephone poles and the lines above ground. Everything is under ground; so the problems we are having are the same problems Atlanta Gas has, AT&T has, Comcast and Georgia Power. People are covering those boxes up; because most of them are electronic reads, it is not an issue until you need to get to the box. He said he thinks as long as we communicate what we are doing that is really the only thing we can do at this point. Other than go in and provide the access we need and then if you have people that are doing things that are going to negatively affect our line in the future, that requires another step; which is a notification to them that they may be damaging our property and will be held liable for it.

Mr. Davenport said he thinks the presence of roots in the meter box should be a different level of notification. At that point, send them another notice, but it would have a different tone. The fact of the matter is you have a root system of your tree that is invading our meter box, which could potentially damage our water line. Should you choose to leave that tree in place and it damages our water line you will be responsible for any damages. Something along those lines; that gives them the option of cutting the tree back or not. They should not put the tree there to begin with. We understand that they probably are not the ones that did that, but once we tell them that this is a problem and they have the ability to do something about it before the damage occurs, if they choose not to, they have been put on notice. Mr. Pope said he would draft something separate from the notice about trimming the landscaping for these instances.

Mr. Rapson made a motion that we send the Public Advisory notice after we notify the City of Peachtree City that it is going out. He said he would do that notification later today. Vice Chairman Conner seconded and there was no opposition. These notices will be inserted in the water bills in June or July.

### **III. FAYETTE COUNTY BUFFER BROCHURE.**

Mr. Pope explained we are trying to do some education. We have a lot of activity going on in our buffer. He thinks the homeowners need something to let them know what a buffer is; and he thinks we have a lot of people living in buffers who don't have a clue what it is there for. The first thing for this brochure is just to

educate, what the buffers are, why they are there, why they are required, what they can and cannot do; they can contact us for specifics. Our buffer ordinances vary from lake to lake; the ones in Peachtree City and those in the rural part of the county. Rather than try to go with a 9 page brochure with every single ordinance dictated out, he said we just put together a basic education brochure to educate about what buffers were there for and what homeowners can and cannot do. Then they can call us for specifics on the areas they live in.

Mr. Rapson clarified that the notice they talked about before is for everyone. This one is just going to be sent to just those folks that are adjacent to a reservoir. Mr. Pope said it will be sent just to the homeowners around the reservoirs.

Mr. Davenport asked if we are not sending it to anyone with streams, just reservoirs. Mr. Pope replied just our reservoirs; that is what has been brought to our attention. Mr. Davenport said he is asking the question because the whole thing is focused on the stream buffer. The people that live on reservoirs may look at this and say "I don't have a stream" and not read the rest of it. A stream buffer is part of a set of all buffers. You are looking at the buffer around the reservoir and not the stream, per say, although there are some people around reservoirs that have streams. Further discussion pertained to the title and the information within the brochure. Mr. Davenport said whoever did the brochure did a very good job. Mr. Pope said Bryan Keller pulled this together for us.

The Committee agreed to add reservoir to the title on page 2. Mr. Rapson said he would forward a copy of the brochure to Peachtree City and Coweta County and it will be going out in July. He will ask Coweta County to do the same type of notification for their residents on their side of Lake McIntosh. He said he thinks this is a good educational first step in regards to trying to maintain the buffers. Copies will also be distributed to the Library and the Recreation Department.

Alan Bowling commented he is very cautious about this. The third column refers to "what can I not do in my buffer area". EPD allows for homeowners to have a hundred square foot exemption for building. Mr. Pope stated ours is different by reservoir. Mr. Bowling said that EPD actually trumps county policy in this case. He said he has dealt with this before, they allow for a hundred square foot which is 25 foot deep, 4 foot wide for people to build walkways or pathways to water bodies. He said he is not sure it makes sense to put that sort of random exception. He is just mentioning it because if someone calls or complains, just be aware.

Mr. Rapson explained that we have had EPD look at this and sanction this. We also had the Stormwater folks look at it and tweak it. They are ok with it. He said he agrees there will always be exceptions and we just need to be aware that they do exist. When the brochure was first done, there was some language in there in regards to the buffer to get down to the lake and that is not always true depending on where you are. He said we decided to take that particular thing out because, otherwise, everybody would be building a path down to the lake because now they

think they can. A better stance is you can't do anything in the setback and if you want to do things in the setback, then here is what you can and here's what you can't do. Mr. Pope said there are certain things you can apply for variances for, so they see they can't do this building, then they are going to call and that is when you can discuss it.

Mr. Bowling said you have been very gentle in here, but recognizing the actual nuances of law can get very specific. Mr. Rapson said, in our particular agreement, when you look at Lake McIntosh and you look at the Coweta side, now you are looking at a different jurisdiction, different codes, and different ordinances. He said the whole point of this document is not to be a legal document, it is to be kind of a heads up, if you live next to a lake, there are certain things you can and cannot do; to provide some type of educational oversight.

Mr. Pope commented we have had a lot of activity in the buffer that we have had to go door to door and talk to people. Mr. Rapson said there will be people that we knock on their door and say "we know we sent you a brochure, but you appear to be doing activities that are not sanctioned". We are trying to handle it gentler than citations. Mr. Pope said everybody has been good, we have just found when we went to the door and knocked on it, they did not know. They did not realize.

Mr. Pope said he would get the changes made and bring it back to the Committee at the next meeting.

#### **IV. LAKE PEACHTREE UPDATE.**

Mr. Rapson reported that Friday they met with the contractor. It was supposed to rain a little bit on Sunday and light rain on Monday. He said he was there with Phil Freeborne and John Rorie; they had agreed to work dusk to dawn, which is the same thing we have had, as soon as they can, get in the lake when everything is dry. They were gearing up to be out there Monday, given the weather on Sunday, if not Tuesday. Then, this is what we have today. Mr. Rapson showed a picture of the lake this morning after last night's rain. The next picture he showed water has filled the area they were standing in and was dry on Friday. Six feet of water was not there Friday. He said now, instead of trying to explain the situation, he shows the picture Friday and this is what it looks like today. It is not so much that it is over the road, it is when the water is completely saturated, and you can't put a car or truck on it. One of the things they asked this past week was if we could put lighter equipment on it. He said we could put lighter equipment on it, but it does not change how much the rock and the dirt weigh. What we have agreed to do is pull out a small amount of sedimentation and the roads; that is all that is left. You can't do when it rains. There is no way to put extra equipment in there, you can't get out. The whole point of this is you go to the end of the road and you start scooping out the rocks and the dirt, putting them in the dump truck. That is really a one cat, dump truck operation. He said when the contractor was working at it full blast he had 3 excavators and about 9 dump trucks running, but there is nothing

**you can do when it is too wet. He said he has a USGS chart that shows since August of last year, it has rained significantly about 2 to 3 inches every 2 or 3 weeks. What we need is about a 2 ½ to 3 week period. We only need about a week to be out of the lake. Every time we get to the point where we can just about start excavating, it rains.**

**Mr. Bowling said we had 68 inches of rain last year. We were behind the yearly average by 4 inches when we started. We finished the year 20 inches ahead of the yearly average; the second half of last year we had 24 additional inches of rain.**

**Mr. Rapson commented that we have a situation at Castle Lake where a water line had ruptured for about 6 hours on December 28. There is a lot of sedimentation down along the creek and between 2 property owners. He said we are meeting with them later today.**

**Mr. Rapson said he tried to explain to the property owners while he does think the fact is our pipe ruptured and maybe some dirt went down through their creek, it doesn't reflect the 9 inches of rain, it rained before December 28<sup>th</sup>, and then the 11 inches it rained the week and a half after December 28. He said he thinks that 16 some odd, plus 8 inches of rain had more to do with the sedimentation rushing down your creek than our water line being ruptured for about 6 hours.**

**Mr. Pope commented all the sediment on the outside of the creek bank is alluvial soil, you can tell it is clean; it is not red clay like what we would have in a main break. Mr. Rapson explained we are dealing with multiple issues associated with that.**

**Mr. Rapson commented the contractor was at Lake Peachtree Thursday and on the edge of the road he was digging in the ditch to have it adequately drain. There is actually a pipe underneath that road that connects the two. He pointed this out on the photo. He said a pump has been running since Thursday.**

**Mr. Rapson stated there is nothing the county, nor the contractor has not thought of or has not tried to implement in order to fill this lake back up. Mr. Pope agreed everybody has been pretty creative to try to get this project completed.**

**Mr. Pope reported on the spillway; he will have Golder come out and help us identify the few trees that need to be removed. The reason for that is to prevent any roots from protruding into the spillway itself and creating further damages. He said he sent him an email yesterday, and hopefully later this week will be meeting with them; to flag the trees and then decide if they can be just cut down and keep the underbrush cleaned up, have the root balls removed and something compacted back in its place. That will be decided, hopefully by the next Water Committee meeting.**

**Mr. Rapson said we sent the final report for the spillway to Peachtree City, as they requested, this past week.**

## **V. UPDATE ON WATER TREATMENT PLANTS.**

**Russell Ray presented photos of the Chemical Systems and Actuator Improvement Project. Demolition started this week on the lime system. The electrician came in and demoed the electrical controls. Allsouth started yesterday to demo the actual feed units and that is underway now. We are on the liquid slurry lime now, full time.**

**Mr. Ray showed photos of the Lake Horton pump station actuator improvements; he showed the existing system and then showed the new system (actuators and control cabinet). They powered the system up last week and were successful in getting both pumps running. It took a couple of days to work through the details, but everything worked out. They are now using Lake Horton because of the high turbidities in Lake McIntosh. He also showed a picture of the control cabinet for the SCADA system that is inside the Lake Horton pump station.**

**The next photos Mr. Ray showed were of the Water Treatment Plant Improvement Project being completed by Lakeshore. He showed photos of the work in the filter hall, the new filter consoles, the pipe gallery, a pneumatic actuator, where the new electrical came in and the new conduit. He also showed the filter rehab in process.**

## **VI. PUBLIC COMMENT.**

**Tony Parrott commented he looked at the action agenda from the last meeting; you talked about private water systems. It appears pretty detailed, but it was not an agenda item. It was just added. He said he would have come had he known that you were looking at purchasing private water systems. He said it is not a good investment, but you will figure that out after you spend \$50,000.00.**

**Mr. Parrott went on to say years ago we did a reservoir and wound up with a lot of artifacts. We were going to donate the artifacts to a college so they could archive them. But the Commission Chairman at the time would not sign the paperwork and he had sole control over signing the paperwork. There are 16 boxes more or less of the artifacts sitting in the storage room. He said we should consider getting them to a college. They are artifacts from Lake Horton; pottery shards, arrowheads and all such as that.**

**Commissioner Oddo asked if there was anywhere we could display them here in Fayette County. Mr. Parrott replied there was a discussion about doing it at the library, and we even looked at doing display cases. There is no room at the library, no interest at the library. They even did away with the Georgia room in the library, over the years.**

**Mr. Rapson suggested the old courthouse, at least some of it, obviously not all of it. Mr. Parrott said there might be interest in some of it. There were a hand full of trade beads that are the most valuable. They are in the safe.**

**Mr. Rapson asked if we have the original recommendation, who wanted them. Mr. Parrott said that is what was supposed to have been done with the permit on the lake. Again, if the chairman won't sign the paperwork you can't transfer anything. That is why it is just sitting back there in a room; this was in 1991 or 1992. Mr. Rapson commented that is something we can certainly look at. He thinks it is something this Board would certainly consider.**

**Mr. Parrott said there are several copies of the Archeological report, 4 volumes; there is more than one copy. He said he would like the Historical Society to get one copy, if you all decide to do something with the stuff. Mr. Rapson asked for a copy to be sent to him for review.**

**Mr. Parrott said some items from one project went to Alabama.**

**Mr. Rapson explained with the private systems we typically don't budget to look at private systems, but we were asked by 2 of the private parties who are trying to sell to someone else to evaluate it. He said he just had a long discussion with Randy yesterday; and the Chairman; in regards to those types of systems is something you have to look at. Our perspectives are totally different. From his perspective he is assuming if we own these pipes, what is the liability of the pipe, what is the condition of the pipe, what type of meter readers do they have, what would that cost. To him there is a bunch of cost associated with it. Then that cost is offset by bringing in new revenue customers. The question is where my breakeven point is in the future. As opposed to their perspective which is I am bringing you revenue customers and it is worth millions of dollars. He said he thinks you have to have both of those numbers or at least have that analysis conducted so you can figure out whether it makes any sense or not. He said if there is an analysis we have already done, he is not about to spend \$50,000.00 for something we already have.**

**Mr. Parrott said it is fairly simple; if somebody puts in a subdivision they donate a hundred percent of the infrastructure to the Water System. Why would you let somebody else build a water system in a subdivision and then purchase theirs? Then, the next thing you know, you have all these developers wanting to get them a permit and then just sell you the infrastructure.**

**Mr. Rapson commented most of those developers don't have any interest in maintaining...you have to have a water source to be able do that, and a permit with EPD to do it. He does not think EPD would allow those types of things to happen anymore, but the problem is there are three or four private systems in the county that way back when, they did allow them to do it. He said he thinks EPD would rather us take ownership of them and give us the permit, but he is not willing to assume that risk until he knows what the actual cost is.**



**Mr. Pope commented there is block grant funding that becomes available for the county if we take those on. EPD is motivated to get those systems into a public system. Mr. Rapson said we would treat the system very similar to the way we would have evaluated the City of Fayetteville if they decided they wanted to give us their water system. Mr. Parrott said that would be different. The Water System did end up with two well systems, Westbridge years ago in the 80's when their wells went out and he had no water. He had 147 customers with no water. Then the county wound up picking it up. Then the other was Cedar Tree, the Homeowners Association transferred it over and we picked it up. There was no cost on them.**

**Mr. Rapson said that is his concern, if these owners decide they want to give it to someone who may be are not maintaining their systems or if the water in the wells gets to the point where it is not cost prohibitive for them to stay in that system. EPD may turn around and mandate that we take over some of these systems. He said his philosophy is we ought to have all those numbers in front of us and do that analysis. The recommendation is to evaluate all 3 of those systems. One system, he is being told, is in fairly decent condition as best we can tell; the other one; maybe not as much. He said he has to have those numbers to be able to make a recommendation to the Board in regards to is this something we want to do or not. We did not start this year wanting to expand our system by buying private systems, but you have to evaluate those when they come up, which is why we are doing it. That is why it was not on the agenda, we didn't budget for it, we weren't planning on doing it, but then when they requested it, they came unsolicited to Mr. Pope and asked if we wanted to buy their system. That is why we reacted the way we did.**

**Mr. Parrott said he was just questioning it because it just popped up.**

**Vice Chairman Conner made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Lee Pope seconded and there was no opposition.**

**There being no further business, Chairman Pete Frisina adjourned the meeting at 8:45 A.M.**

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**Peter A. Frisina**

**The foregoing minutes were approved at the regular Water Committee meeting on the 9th day of March, 2016.**

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**Lisa Speegle**