

WATER COMMITTEE
JANUARY 14, 2004
MINUTES

MEMBERS PRESENT: **Chuck Watkins, Chairman**
 Dr. George Patton, Vice Chairman
 Chris Cofty
 Tony Parrott
 Chris Venice

NON-VOTING MEMBERS: **Jim Mallett**

STAFF PRESENT: **Dennis Davenport**
 Russell Ray

ABSENT: **Bill McNally**

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Chuck Watkins at 8:00 A.M.

I. ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN.

Vice Chairman Dr. George Patton made a motion that the present Chairman be re-elected by acclamation. Tony Parrott seconded and there was no opposition.

II. ELECTION OF VICE CHAIRMAN.

Tony Parrott made a motion that the present Vice Chairman be re-elected by acclamation. Chris Venice seconded and there was no opposition.

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM THE MEETING ON DECEMBER 10, 2003.

Tony Parrott made the motion and Vice Chairman Dr. George Patton seconded, to approve the minutes from the meeting on December 10, 2003. There was no opposition.

IV. APPROVAL OF 2004 MEETING SCHEDULE.

Mr. Parrott stated the meetings are scheduled twice a month every month, except in November. The Wednesday before Thanksgiving is canceled.

Tony Parrott made a motion to approve the schedule as presented. Chris Venice seconded and there was no opposition.

V. PRESSURE IMPROVEMENTS - HIGHWAY 74 NORTH.

Jim Mallett reported present a report that explains his findings on how to improve the pressure in the north part of the county. The Crabapple tank does not serve this area well. We have to use City of Atlanta water. Mr. Parrott would like to use the booster pump station we installed back in the 80's which was used to increase the flow from Atlanta pumping into the Crabapple tank. This is no longer needed now that we have the new water plant on line. It has not been used in several years. We can modify this pump station, but we cannot re-use the pumps. The pumps are designed for a specific head and flow and that is not what we are trying to do now. We will have to buy new pumps.

He went on to say that one alternative is to put a new elevated tank in the north part of the county. This is very expensive, about two million dollars. He also looked at installing a 10,000 gallon ground storage pressure tank which would maintain pressure. The pumps will alternate and keep the 10,000 gallon tank full with the pressure hydraulics on the system. This will also will help decrease and/or eliminate Atlanta water use for the area. With the rates going up, it will probably be a good thing.

Mr. Mallett estimated the cost to be about \$320,000.00. The Committee further discussed the rate increase and how it will affect the wholesale customers. Dennis Davenport stated what was adopted will be worse for wholesale customers than the first proposal. The rates go up incrementally over time.

Chris Cofty commented that the first plan would have been more than a fifty percent increase for Fayette County. Nearly \$150,000.00 a year for the current usage. Mr. Parrott stated we currently pay \$1.35 per thousand and the rate is going up to \$2.10 per thousand, and then will go up each year after that. He stated he has not seen the final rates yet.

Mr. Mallett noted that the ground storage tank will have to placed on top of the existing vault. The Water System has no more land in this area. It will require an enclosure of some type because of hydraulic lines that will freeze. The original design of the pump station was underground because of aesthetics. The cost of the enclosure is included in the cost estimate. If the Water System wanted to get more land, something different could be done. It would not cut the cost down considerably, it could possibly raise it.

Chairman Watkins asked if we do this, will this stop the water we will need to get from Atlanta. Mr. Parrott stated we have been running about 250,000 gallons a day. After this it would cut the usage down to nearly zero on Highway 74. On Highway 92 we will still be getting about twenty to twenty two thousand gallons a day.

The committee discussed pressure in the area. Mr. Parrott stated there is no problem with pressure operating off the Atlanta system. Operating off our system the pressure would be

lower. The area affected is Highway 74 north of Jenkins Road.

Chairman Watkins questioned whether we might need a water tank in this area? This item was tabled until the next meeting to give the Committee time to review Mr. Mallett's report.

Vice Chairman Dr. Patton asked what the build out for Fayette County is. Chris Venice responded they are looking at anywhere from 160,000 on the low end to 240,000 on the high end. Dr. Patton stated these are potential water customers.

VI. PROJECT UPDATES.

Mr. Parrott referenced a list in the package of projects that were started and/or finished in 2003. With the Lake Horton pump improvement we installed a variable speed pump in the pump house. This has made the operation of the system work much better. When the pump house was built, the pumps were basically four, six, eight or ten million gallon a day pumps. You turned them on and they ran. With variable speed pumps we can adjust it to what is actually needed, whether it is 5 ½ or 6 ½ and actually save electricity. It also means we don't pull off the lake more than we need to. The lake is right at two feet down. We are now pumping out of the Flint River. Lake Peachtree is coming back up after we lowered it for the residents to do repairs. We started filling the lake January 1. They had two months to do their work. Lake Kedron is within a foot of being full. Everything should be full by the end of March. If we start full, we don't have to worry about next summer. Water usage on the system has decreased every year for the last four years. Total yearly sales has decreased. People have been more conservative due to the water restrictions and conservation. This includes adding an average of 800 customers on the system each year.

DISTRIBUTION SHOP

Mr. Parrott reported this project is sixty to sixty-five percent complete. They were finishing the curb and gutter on Monday.

LEGISLATIVE CHANGES FOR WATER CONSERVATION MEASURES.

Chris Venice explained the North Georgia Water Planning District has been meeting for the last several years. They have developed a number of ordinances that the different counties have to adopt. As part of the implementation of the ordinances, they are also coming up with water conservation measures. As part of a legislative proposal they are putting forward, it is to require the retro-fit of household plumbing fixtures; toilets shower heads and automatic sprinkler sensors. All these would have to be changed out upon sale of a residence. When you sell your house, before you can close, you have to prove that all

your fixtures have been changed to low flow fixtures. Fayette County is on record as opposing this proposal for a number reasons. Number one is the cost to the household. Even the North Georgia Water Planning District people estimate it will be between \$285.00 to \$685.00 per house.

Mrs. Venice went on to say this is the only section of regulations that is retro-fitted. All the other, Stormwater, Paving, anything else, there is no retro-fit. We just start from today and go forward with new regulations. This is the only aspect of the legislation that actually goes back and penalizes you for something in the past. It is going to the legislature as one of two different water conservation proposals. This will only apply to the sixteen urban counties. They suggested a home inspector be required to inspect the fixtures, and this is another expense. Mrs. Venice expressed concern about problems that can occur when you start making changes in the plumbing in older homes, by causing leaks.

The committee discussed sending a letter to the legislature saying Fayette County is opposed to these changes. Mrs. Venice stated she would draft a letter for the Water Committee to review that could be sent by the Board of Commissioners.

There being no further business, Chairman Chuck Watkins adjourned the meeting at 8:40 A.M.

Chuck Watkins

The foregoing minutes were approved at the regular Water Committee meeting on the 28th day of January, 2004.

Lisa McElwaney