WATER COMMITTEE
FEBRUARY 11, 2004
MINUTES

MEMBERS PRESENT:	**Chuck Watkins, Chairman** **Dr. George Patton, Vice Chairman** **Chris Cofty** **Tony Parrott** **Chris Venice**
ABSENT:	**Bill McNally** **Jim Mallett**
STAFF PRESENT:	**Dennis Davenport** **David Jaegar**

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

I. APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM THE MEETING ON JANUARY 28, 2004.

Tony Parrott made the motion and Vice Chairman Dr. George Patton seconded, to approve the minutes from the meeting on January 28, 2004. There was no opposition.

II. PRESSURE IMPROVEMENTS - HIGHWAY 74 NORTH.

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

Tony Parrott made a motion and Vice Chairman Dr. George Patton seconded to adjourn to executive session for discussion of one potential real estate item.

David Jaegar discussed one potential real estate item with the committee. No action was taken.

III. LEGISLATIVE CHANGES FOR WATER CONSERVATION MEASURES.

Attorney Dennis Davenport stated that he performed a search under conservation and water. He found a House Bill, that if you didn't know any better, looks relatively harmless. The Bill starts out saying, as used in this chapter the term, environmentally sound, means constructed in keeping with practices designed to reduce or minimize pollution of air, earth, and water, etc., etc. This is how the first paragraph reads, just generally saying what environmentally sound means. It follows up by saying the department is authorized and directed to promulgate rules and regulations defining construction requirements. If this general law passes, that says we are going to do a better job at constructing things to use less water, the rules and regulations are going to come out saying retrofit old homes, etc., etc. You won't see that language in the bill, that's going to be in the rules and regulations. He went on to say this is all he could find that even touched

on the subject. The Department of Natural Resources will be the ones to promulgate the rules and regulations.

Attorney Davenport stated the Bill has been through the first reader, through the second reader on February 17th, 2003 and is probably in committee as we speak. It is subject to be voted on and passed in this session. If it does, that's the framework of the foundation for the rules to be promulgated by the department. If this is passed, we need to be in touch, on a regular basis, with the Department of Natural Resources. They have to send out public notice when they put these rules together. Those rules will include retrofitting the older houses. This is where the problems will develop.

Chris Venice responded with answers to the questions the committee had at the last meeting. Outside faucets are exempt from the retrofit. The rain sensor gauges are for residential and non-residential, and the retrofit is also for commercial property on resale.

Attorney Davenport commented this is a Bill that has been pending for a year. They did not pass it last year, but they could pass it this year. It is sponsored by Buckner, Dodson, Barnes, and Hill.

Mr. Parrott commented on Columbus and their water allocation on the Chattahoochee. He stated that he did not know how much on the forefront we would want to be in opposing the State on this. The only part that really hurts people is the retrofit. New installation is not near as costly. The Water System has over 200 customer changes each month. This does not include the City of Fayetteville.

The committee further discussed trying to do house closings, people not being aware they have to do it, and when this could go into effect.

Mrs. Venice commented that it all goes back to water conservation, which everyone is in favor of. As she said in her memo, Fayette County is on record as suggesting that each jurisdiction be able to choose among the measures that work best for them to obtain the eleven percent goal. Unfortunately, that was not endorsed by the District. They have chosen this retrofit as a way to speed up the water conservation process. She added that there may be more publicity on this topic once the public is aware of the regulations.

IV. DISCUSSION OF OPTION OF REDOING FILTER #7 AT CROSSTOWN WATER PLANT.

David Jaegar remarked that he is currently putting together a bid package for repair to one of the filters at the Crosstown Plant which has had some problems with the filter bottom. He is recommending that we take this opportunity to investigate replacing the filter media with a newer type of media called GAC (Granular Activated Carbon). He is hearing that GAC is showing improved water quality on some pilot programs that are

currently underway. They are improving total organic carbon removal and improving the disinfection byproducts in the filter effluent. He met with representatives from Calgon, which is the supplier of GAC. They told him they are actually doing tests with filter media as shallow as ten inches right now. The major problem with GAC is that it is recommended that it be put in at a depth of four feet, so that it has as much surface area as possible for the filtration process. In older water plants like Crosstown, that technology wasn't available at the time they were designed. Therefore, the filters themselves are not as deep as the newer filters are. You cannot get that four feet of filter depth for the GAC media. He went on to say that what they have found is that at Crosstown we have the availability for two feet of GAC. When the filter is repaired it can be repaired with a shallower bottom to it, which increases the depth. That gives us two feet that we can put back in with the granular activated carbon. The cost differential between the GAC and the regular anthracite media is probably going to run in the neighborhood of $5,000.00. What they are recommending is to bid both. Bid it to repair the bottom and put back what we have now and also to repair the bottom and put back the GAC media. If the cost makes sense, then we have the opportunity to put back a newer media. We can run that filter and test it independently from the other filters and see how much improvement we are getting. What is really driving this recommendation is that the word we hear is the regulations are going to be changing, specifically by disinfection byproducts in the future. In order to meet that, the additional measures will need to be taken. If we already know, by doing this test, that we are going to meet these new requirements, then it is a matter of retrofitting the other filters to do that. This repair situation gives us the opportunity to put back a newer media, and test it for a while. We can see if we like it, see if it does the trick, see if it improves the water quality. Then go forward from there.

Mr. Jaegar went on to say the down side to GAC is that it expires over time. The ability of it to absorb contaminants is used up. It is very difficult to pin down the vendors on how long the life span in a filter is. It depends on the water quality of the water coming into the plant, and the general practice of the operation of the plant. He said when he pushed them hard to give him an answer, what they were comfortable with was saying two plus years and most likely three to five years of filter life, before you have to take out the GAC and put in new. They would actually be involved in taking the old GAC back to their plant, disposing of it so it meets federal guidelines, and that kind of thing. There is a total circular process of getting rid of the old GAC and putting in new. With anthracite, you have a much longer life expectancy of the filter.

Mr. Parrott commented that we add anthracite to all the filters every other year. Every other year, we have to add additional anthracite, because you lose part of the anthracite with backwashing. Also, one of the advantages of bidding this both ways is that we have to have State approval. If we send it in with just GAC and they turn it down, it comes back and we have to go through sending it back in both ways. This speeds up the approval process.

Chairman Watkins asked if we already have approval to put half the media in. Mr. Parrott responded that we have to send in plans and they will review it.

Mr. Jaegar said the submittal has not been made yet, but based on what the vendor has told him, they are running operations currently as low as ten inches in Alabama. He went on to say that when you decrease the depth you end up having less time between filter backwashes and less life expectancy of the GAC. As long as you are meeting the effluent guidelines, then the issues become economic.

Chris Cofty asked what it would cost to change the GAC out. Mr. Jaegar stated he had asked if you put GAC back, what is the cost going to be? They told him, something less than $20,000. He asked how much if we just go back to the anthracite, and the answer was somewhere in the $15,000 range. The differential is in the $5,000 range and probably in three to five years you would be looking at $20,000 or less per filter. It may come down if you did more than one filter at a time.

Chairman Watkins asked if this will give the Water System a cheaper operating system if we go to this type of filtration. Mr. Jaegar responded it will improve the water quality and reduce the disinfection byproducts, which is what the regulation change would be. Chairman Watkins asked if this new filtration system will cut down on sludge removal.

Mr. Parrott commented we are dealing with Trihalemethanes, organics that combine with the chlorine that goes through the filtering process. The testing of Trihalemethanes is done in parts per trillion. Right now, they are looking at going down from .8 to .6.

Tony Parrott made a motion to recommend to the Board of Commissioners to proceed with the project and bid two options for the filter media. Chris Cofty seconded and there was no opposition.

There being no further business, Chairman Chuck Watkins adjourned the meeting at 8:45 A.M.

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Chuck Watkins

The foregoing minutes were approved at the regular Water Committee meeting on the 10th day of March, 2004.

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Lisa McElwaney