

WATER COMMITTEE
MAY 26, 2004
MINUTES

<u>MEMBERS PRESENT:</u>	Chuck Watkins, Chairman Dr. George Patton, Vice Chairman Chris Cofty Tony Parrott Chris Venice
<u>NON-VOTING MEMBERS:</u>	Bill McNally
<u>STAFF PRESENT:</u>	David Jaeger Russell Ray
<u>ABSENT:</u>	Jim Mallett

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

I. APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM THE MEETING ON MAY 12, 2004.

Vice Chairman Dr. George Patton made the motion and Tony Parrott seconded, to approve the minutes from the meeting on May 12, 2004. There was no opposition.

II. DISCUSSION OF RESERVOIR MANAGEMENT PLAN.

Mr. Parrott explained that he, Mr. McNally and Chris Venice met and discussed the restrictions within the hundred foot buffer at Lake Horton. He presented nine items for the committee to consider. Vice Chairman Dr. Patton questioned removing dead trees. Chairman Watkins mentioned people trying to pump water out of the lake by boring underground or using a submersible pump.

Vice Chairman Dr. Patton discussed wells being dug near the lake.

Attorney McNally suggested separating number 7 into two parts. One part for leaving a five foot path for access and the second part being to launch the boat.

Vice Chairman Dr. Patton asked if a weed eater is included in number 4. The committee agreed it should be added to the list.

Mr. Parrott explained the items on this list will be included in the Reservoir Management Plan and Attorney McNally will write an ordinance for the Marshal's office to be able to enforce.

A lengthy discussion ensued about the height of the grass being a habitat for snakes. Mr. Parrott stated that we are trying to protect the water quality by management of a buffer around the lake. Protecting water quality, protecting the buffer and allowing public access are not very compatible to enforce.

Attorney McNally stated this lake was created for drinking water purposes. Everybody knew this lake was not created for recreation. We told folks that they could carry little boats and put them in the water. They could not have docks, no skin contact, and they could not ski. He went on to say that he thinks this is in keeping with what we said and what we are now doing to try to comply with the State water quality regulations. Allowing a five foot access path gives a view down to the lake, and gives people the pleasure of being on a lake side lot that was not designed for them to have high intense recreational uses from the very beginning. He commented that they tried to keep the door open for people to use it realistically and at the same time achieve water quality standards with the buffers.

Further discussion pertained to treated sewage that goes into Lake Lanier in Gwinnett County. Vice Chairman Dr. Patton referred to an article in a National Wildlife magazine that points out the treatment process has not taken out all the antibiotics, the birth control pills, the statens, or any thing people take as prescription. The article talked about fish that are beginning to show signs of these things in them. Over a period of time this will be a problem. Mr. Parrott agreed to ask Mr. Turner about this situation.

Mrs. Venice mentioned that the regulations should apply to County property on the lake as well as residents living on the lake. The County is exempt, but we always try to follow our own rules. She stated we have been good about it in the past. Mr. Cofty expressed concern about the sod being planted. The committee discussed the pavement for parking that is in the public use areas.

Mr. Jaeger asked about existing structures that are in the buffer. There are some lots that have pools and things that were put there previous to the lake. Attorney McNally stated that we need to chart and photograph those that exist now. They are grandfathered. At the time the County purchased the property, the owners were advised that the flood easement was their property. If they wanted to put something in the flood easement, they were doing it at their risk. Since that time, some regulations have changed. The County only has rights to flood that area. Whatever regulations were in effect at that time, whether County or State, they have to abide by them. There are no septic tank leach fields in the buffer.

Chairman Watkins discussed trimming of trees that could be done by a tree expert. Some limbs could become a danger to people.

The committee agreed to table this item, discuss it again at the next meeting and then send it on to the Board of Commissioners.

III. BOAT LAUNCH AND ENTRANCE FEES FOR LAKE HORTON.

Mr. Parrott presented examples of the Georgia Park passes. They have a place to pick them up, you put your money in the envelope, stuff the envelope in the container and tear off the flap to put on your mirror. He referred to other types that were in the

committee packets. Some containers are very expensive. One type has a drop box that could be taken out by the Marshal and replaced by an empty one. This way you have a steel container that can be unlocked in Finance. There are many choices to be able to make the money secure. The money could be picked up daily, since someone is down there every day. DNR also has a yearly park pass that can be purchased.

Discussion followed about charging County residents less or not at all, people that walk the trails will not want to pay a fee. Water customers are paying for the lake now. Attorney McNally stated when this concept first came about, it was to give Fayette County residents passive recreation. We are getting intensive use from other places. We have to police the location, the Marshal's have to go down, we have to clean up, and cut grass. The way to offset the cost is to collect a fee for parking.

Chris Cofty suggested polling other counties and bringing this back at the next meeting for a recommendation. The Committee agreed and this item was tabled until the next meeting.

IV. HIGHWAY 54 PEACHTREE CITY - WATER LINE RELOCATION.

Mr. Jaeger reported that he met with the annual water line contractor to come up with a budget estimate for this project. They came up with \$380,000.00. The current contract was for \$792,000.00, and we have spent about \$350,000.00 of it so far. There are a few small water line extensions that are pending. If all of it were to happen on this contract we would be very close to the contract amount. It is likely that we will be under. We may not need to go to the Board to get approval for a change order to increase the contract. We are also running out of time on the contract. It goes through June 30. The likelihood of all this work being initiated before June 30 is small. The contractor will not be able to finish the work, but we will have to give him the notice to proceed while this contract is still in effect and the completion time would extend into the next fiscal year.

There being no further business, Chairman Chuck Watkins adjourned the meeting at 8:55 A.M.

Chuck Watkins

The foregoing minutes were approved at the regular Water Committee meeting on the 9th day of June, 2004.

Lisa McElwaney