

WATER COMMITTEE
JUNE 9, 2004
MINUTES

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

NON-VOTING MEMBERS: **Bill McNally**
 Jim Mallett

STAFF PRESENT: **Russell Ray**
 Ron Salmons

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

I. APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM THE MEETING ON MAY 26, 2004.

 Tony Parrott made the motion and Vice Chairman Dr. George Patton seconded, to approve the minutes from the meeting on May 26, 2004. There was no opposition.

II. DISCUSSION OF RESERVOIR MANAGEMENT PLAN.

 Mr. Parrott presented a list of ten items for discussion by the committee. This list included changes discussed at the last meeting. Discussion followed pertaining to planting grass being better than mulch. Mulch can wash away.

 Chris Cofty stated he had concerns about mowing, the buffers, and pavement. He presented pictures of the park area the County is currently working on. Sod is being laid right up to the water line. There will be pavilions for people to use. If we say you cannot cut within one hundred feet of the buffer then we will have one hundred foot of sod that will ruin. He stated he had the engineering department look at the watershed and the erosion. Mr. Salmons told him that the sod would provide more erosion control than if you just had trees.

 Mr. Cofty stated we make a routine habit of going down to mow regularly because people use it. He expressed concern that if we pass these items and we ask the County not to cut, we have a significant investment and then we will have an eye sore. Then people won't want to use this area.

 Mr. Parrott stated these rules would not apply to the County. The County is exempt. Mr.

Cofty stated this was not what he heard at the last meeting. Mrs. Venice commented that she is concerned if we require the home owners around the lake to adhere to these ten items when we don't.

Mr. Salmons stated there is 150 to 200 foot wide area that is sodded down to the lake. He explained that what they are enforcing as far as development is that any new development that is subdivided is required a 100 foot buffer from the normal pool level plus a fifty foot setback. That is the buffer they are requiring out of the watershed ordinance. All the other properties that are not subdivided, that are not subject to the watershed ordinance only have a 25 foot state waters buffer.

Mr. Parrott stated that he thought we adopted the 100 foot buffer when we built the lake. Attorney McNally stated he thought you would have the 100 feet around the lake. He went on to say that he believes the Watershed Protection Ordinance was in effect at the time. Mr. Salmons responded that it was in effect at the time, but he has only applied the watershed ordinance to properties that changed configurations, not ownership. That is the way they apply it for everything.

A lengthy discussion followed concerning the watershed ordinance and the area that is covered as buffer around the lake. When the County purchased property for the lake, homeowners were informed of the watershed ordinance at that time.

Attorney McNally commented that he thinks we can designate an area that is the park area. We are maintaining it for purposes of putting in watercraft, a picnic area and so forth. The park area is a designated area where children can play. It meets a recreational need of the county which in this case would be exempt.

Further discussion pertained to future plans for fifteen acres that was just purchased. Mr. Cofty commented there will be an additional mile of walking path. They will be pervious surface. Mrs. Venice expressed concern that additional bank area will be mowed, or grassed or trees will be cut down. The shoreline should look much like it is now.

Chris Cofty suggested designating this area as a park. The County will keep the park up. He wants this to be a show place for Fayette County and people to go down there and enjoy it. It is nice, when you are walking, to be able to see the lake.

Mr. Salmons explained that the majority of the last 14 acres was purchased as green space. This limits its use to 5% trails, 5% picnic and 5% access with impervious structures.

The committee further discussed what could be used as mulch close to the lake, and how high the grass should be. Mr. Parrott stated we have to have a buffer around the lake to meet the Department of Natural Resources rules and regulations. They defined it as

natural. We have to come up with something that is more practical for the area. The subcommittee will meet and bring back more information at the next meeting.

III. BOAT LAUNCH AND ENTRANCE FEES TO LAKE HORTON.

Mr. Cofty distributed a breakdown of the actual cost to make the improvements to put a lockbox in to start collecting a daily fee. He proposed to charge non-residents \$5.00 a day to utilize the park. We would use the envelope system that he presented at the last meeting. It has a tear out to hang over the rear view mirror. It would be consecutively numbered with the envelope that would be in the lockbox. The Marshal could check the envelope against the hanger that is on the mirror. He went on to say that if a non-resident wanted to, they could go to Parks and Recreation and buy a \$50.00 annual permit that they could utilize the park as much as they wanted. They would have a sticker on the bumper of their vehicle. It would have a number so we could check when it was purchased to see if it was outdated. He proposed not charging residents anything to utilize the park. He feels like they have supported that endeavor already.

He went on to say the total cost would be \$2,450.00. That would be a 10 X 70 asphalt pad to put the lockbox on, the actual cost of the lockbox itself, the envelopes and to build a shelter over the pay station that would be consistent with the way the pavilions, the bathrooms and the well house look. It would look nice. Mr. Cofty commented that a survey was done of other counties. His proposal is consistent with what they do.

Vice Chairman Dr. George Patton made a motion to recommend to the Board of Commissioners approval of the unmanned parking fee station at Lake Horton and fees. Mr. Parrott seconded and there was no opposition.

RULES FOR OUTDOOR WATER USE.

Mr. Parrott explained that he has a copy of the new rules for outdoor water use. The Board of Natural Resources adopted the rules. The rules apply to any entity and its customers permitted by the Georgia Environmental Protection Division for water withdrawals or for the operation of a public water system. We have until August 1 to fully implement these outdoor water rules which means no watering on Friday. Everybody gets to water three days a week. In the ordinance there is a section that you can apply to be different. He commented that he is working on a response to send in to see if we qualify. From what was adopted, even the section where you can apply to be different - enactment of local ordinance allowing no more than three days a week has to be consistent with the level of drought set forth in the section. He went on to say that he does not have much hope for us. This means in fourteen days, you can water six days. With our ordinance, in fourteen days you can water seven. There is one day difference.

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

Tony Parrott made a motion and Vice Chairman Dr. George Patton seconded to adjourn to executive session for discussion of one real estate item. Attorney McNally briefed the committee on this item. No action was taken.

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

Chuck Watkins

The foregoing minutes were approved at the regular Water Committee meeting on the 23rd day of June, 2004.

Lisa McElwaney