

WATER COMMITTEE
MAY 24, 2006
MINUTES

MEMBERS PRESENT: Dr. George Patton, Vice Chairman
Tony Parrott
Chris Venice
Pete Frisina

NON-VOTING MEMBERS: Bill McNally
David Jaeger

ABSENT: Chuck Watkins, Chairman

STAFF PRESENT: Russell Ray

The meeting was called to order by Vice Chairman Dr. George Patton at 8:00 A.M.

I. APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM THE MEETING ON May 10, 2006.

Tony Parrott made the motion and Chris Venice seconded, to approve the minutes from the meeting on May 10, 2006. There was no opposition.

II. WATERLINE SUBCOMMITTEE REPORT.

Mr. Parrott briefly reviewed the current policy. At this time the customer pays for the waterline extension and gets some reimbursement as other people tie on during a ten year period. This is difficult to administer. He proposed that the Water System finance all future line extensions, rather than having customers finance it. The Water System would get the money back over time, whatever that time period may be. At some point in time, he is making the assumption that we would collect 100%, because everyone would eventually hook onto the line. If the well pump goes out, and County water is available, chances are they would tie on.

We would limit extensions to approximately 2,500 feet. Over 2,500 feet, we have to go through the Department of Natural Resources Drinking Water Program for approval. This gets time consuming on occasion. We would continue to install fire hydrants every 600 feet, and we would still maintain our goal of 1,000 gallons per minute on the flow. If a resident does not initially participate when the waterline is installed, they would have to pay an additional \$400.00 tap fee, because the crew has to go back out to install the tap. We would make an effort to encourage everyone in the neighborhood to hook on in the beginning.

The line extension cost would be based on the front lot footage times \$3.50, with a

minimum extension charge of \$400.00. This is the same cost as the tap fee for someone who has water available in front of their house. No matter what size the lot or the situation, the minimum charge to get on the waterline is \$400.00, plus the cost of the meter. This keeps the cost consistent for everybody. The lines would be installed not to exceed funds budgeted yearly for line extensions and in the order approved, which may not be the order the request was received. There are different things that have to be done to get approval for a waterline installation.

The committee discussed at length the benefits of changing this policy. Does the Water Committee want to make a recommendation on each line extension or continue to handle them through the budgeted money that the Board approves for the line extensions on a requested basis? Emergencies would be handled on the request basis, because most of these requests come in because people have no water for one reason or another. How do you decide whose need is greater?

Mr. Parrott made a motion to recommend to the Board of Commissioners the waterline extension policy as presented. Pete Frisina seconded for discussion.

Further discussion pertained to the wording of the policy. Mr. Parrott agreed to make the wording clearer explaining the \$400.00 fee as a tap fee and the \$400.00 minimum line extension charge.

Vice Chairman Dr. George Patton called for the vote and there was no opposition.

III. DISCUSSION OF BACKFLOW CROSS CONNECTION PROGRAM.

Mr. Parrott explained that we submitted changes to our Backflow Cross Connection Program in February, 2005. They returned it in March of this year. The rules have changed and we need to comply with these changes. Currently backflow protection is installed on every service, no matter what size it is. We now do the inspection and annual testing. The new program requires that everything be tested and if it doesn't pass, repairs have to be completed within 30 days. There are many different varieties of backflows in our system. Thirty days will not be practical with the amount of staff available. We can get the testing done, but we cannot handle the repairs.

Mr. Parrot recommended that we go the same route that Douglasville-Douglas County and Coweta County have gone, and Clayton County is in the process of going. We would notify the customer after we test it that starting next year, it will be their responsibility to test it. This way they get their notification that they have to test the device next year. We would send them notification 90 days ahead to remind them they have to test. We would give them a list of testers that have their certification. The State now has a certification program. We would also provide a form for each one of the assemblies they have to test so they know what they have. We would maintain files on the tests in accordance with the new State regulations.

State regulations say that if the repair is not done within 30 days, the Water System can discontinue the service. Mr. Parrott commented that he has a question as to how this will work. You can order parts, but if they don't come within 30 days, do we shut off a fire line? On each large meter there is a bypass around it so water service can be maintained during testing once a year, that take less than an hour. Under this new rule, this bypass has to have a backflow on it. In the future, any backflow assembly with a bypass has to have a backflow assembly on the bypass. The cost is about \$15,000.00 to install a 6" backflow. This means if you put a 6" bypass around it, you have to put in another \$15,000.00 backflow. He stated he and Mr. Jaeger are going to look at the possibility of being able to install a 2" bypass to maintain water pressure during the one test per year.

Mr. Parrott explained that the purpose of a backflow program is to protect the Water System against what the customer does. Our backflow program is by containment. We put in a double check to keep the water from flowing back into our system. Part of what we will have to do with this new program is determine additional hazards at different places, such as funeral homes. Funeral homes are required to have a separate backflow in their embalming room.

The committee discussed at length their concern about the customer doing the annual testing. The State now has a certification program for backflow testers. It would be the customer's responsibility to hire a State certified person to come out and do the test and submit the form to the Water System. Providing a list for customers to use is a great concern. Mr. Parrott stated we have several Water System employees that are certified. When the service is installed we have to test. Getting repairs done in 30 days is another concern for vulnerability of the system. Enforcement of these State rules and paperwork is all on the Water System. We have to keep records for 3 years.

Further discussion ensued about the failure of one or both check valves in a backflow assembly. Who determines whether it is a low or high hazard? Do we immediately discontinue the water service? While we wait for repairs on one check valve, do we weekly test the remaining valve to be sure it is still operating. There is great concern about a customer's water feeding back into our water system.

This item was tabled for further discussion at the next meeting.

IV. SURFACE WATER WITHDRAWAL PERMIT DISCUSSION.

Mr. Parrott reported that Kevin Farrell, the Program Manager of the Water Withdrawal Permitting System, wants us to get our permit dates closer together. We have six withdrawal permits. To Mr. Parrott's knowledge, no one else has six. The Horton Creek/Flint River permit expires May 30, 2007. Lake Kedron and Line Creek expires January 31, 2008. Mr. Farrell wants us to agree to renew all four permits at one time and get the dates together. This means, with a ten year permit, we won't have the full ten years on Lake Kedron and Line Creek. We also won't have to do the DNR audit on all of our rules and regulations, because we can do all four at one time. During the last audit, two

people from DNR were here a couple of days, then, they came back again. We still don't have the results from the audit. This matter will be discussed again before the next permit expires.

MEETING CANCELATION

Mr. Parrot made a motion to recommend canceling the meeting scheduled for June 14, 2006 due to a quorum not available for the meeting. Pete Frisina seconded and there was no opposition.

There being no further business, Vice Chairman Dr. George Patton adjourned the meeting at 9:00 A.M.

Dr. George Patton

The foregoing minutes were approved at the regular Water Committee meeting on the 28th day of June, 2006.

Lisa McElwaney