

WATER COMMITTEE
OCTOBER 25, 2006
MINUTES

MEMBERS PRESENT: Chuck Watkins, Chairman
Dr. George Patton, Vice Chairman
Tony Parrott
Pete Frisina

NON-VOTING MEMBERS: Bill McNally
David Jaeger

ABSENT: Chris Venice

STAFF PRESENT: Russell Ray

GUESTS: Larry Turner, PTCWASA

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

I. APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM THE MEETING ON SEPTEMBER 27, 2006.

Vice Chairman Dr. George Patton made the motion and Tony Parrott seconded, to approve the minutes from the meeting on September 27, 2006. There was no opposition.

II. DISCUSSION ABOUT SEWER TREATMENT OPTIONS.

Mr. Parrott explained that the Water Committee made recommendations about septic and land application systems. He presented this to the Board of Commissioners. The Board was interested in a recommendation about types of treatment systems. The different types of treatment systems for these drip systems or a community septic system are broad ranging. Each system will have to be approved individually to meet a standard. Mr. Jaeger, as our engineer, will be the one to review these systems.

Mr. Jaeger commented that the State has separate standards for each of the different types of land application. Any system submitted for review would have to meet the performance criteria the State requires for particular effluent levels. Instead of pre-approving XYZ manufacturer of the system, it would be more of a performance review. Previously we talked about the potential for having a track record for a system that has been on the market for three to five years. It has a proven performance record. They have installations that are in service and perform well. Therefore, if it meets the criteria for performance and effluent level, it meets the criteria, then, it is not the first time it has ever been used and has a good track record. Those would be the things he would review. In lieu of saying the County requires the use of XYZ sewer system.

He went on to say that he thinks this is the best approach, because as we move forward we will have new technologies and continue to have new players in the market. They will be allowed as long as they have proven they have a product that is performing well and meets the standards required by the State.

Chairman Watkins asked about requiring a certain amount of history. Mr. Jaeger replied that he uses the same criteria on other projects that the County does. If the Water System is installing a new telemetry system to remotely control pumps and valves out in the system, then our practice is to require that the system has been on the market place for enough time to prove that it is a reliable system. This has never been challenged. He realizes this could be challenged, but he thinks it is in the best interest of the County to try to protect itself from being the first application of a system that is not proven. Theoretically, it may mean State guidelines for discharge for effluent levels, it would be his recommendation that we have some track record that a system is installed and has shown that it meets what we want to see.

Mr. Parrott stated that we will have them submit the information to us. We will review it and send it to the State. We will send to the State what we want. Whoever is building the development will have to comply with what our regulations are. Our regulations are stricter than the State and the State will honor our standards. They will not be approving them for the developer, they will be approving them for the County. The permit will be issued to the County. It gets even more complicated, with some of the same filter systems for the land application. Then they use three or four different types of emitters for the spray field. Parts of each system are the same. It just depends on where they get their pieces from.

Mr. Parrott described a community septic system to the committee. An individual homeowner will have a septic tank. The water will flow from it to a gravity system down to another tank. Then from that tank, it will go to a drain field that is designed to handle that type of flow. All systems will meet the gravity sewer standard.

Mr. Jaeger stated urban reuse water is safe for interaction with people using that ground versus a restricted area.

Mr. Parrott stated he would take this before the Board of Commissioners for further discussion.

III. WATER CONSERVATION DISCUSSION.

Mr. Parrott stated that water conservation is one of the biggest things that we have to deal with in our recent audit to get our permit on Line Creek, which we did receive. We are currently working on renewing our permit for our groundwater system. Having to go through the same type of thing, he is hoping that the State, since we just finished an audit in June, won't have us do another one for the groundwater system. And then have to do another one for the other water

withdrawal permits that are coming up. There is a list of items that we have to deal with that has to do with the North Georgia Metropolitan Water Planning District; there are twelve different water conservation items that we have to address. One thing they want is a rate study. We put that off until we do a bond issue for Lake McIntosh. It would not be practical to do a rate study right now, and then do a bond issue next year. They seem to be in agreement that our three tiered rates that we have right now are sufficient to meet that. The Board adopted a multi-unit individual metering policy that took care of one of the items. The new code calls for shut off devices for sprinkler systems to stop in the rain is taken care of. They want a leak detection and repair plan. We have always been aggressive in this area. This is something that when you run out of water, like we did in the 1980's, people get excited when water is running down the curb. Other items include having residential water audits. We have to target the top 25% of our residential customers with residential water audits. Lisa and Debbie have been working on a way to pull this information out of our billing system, so that we can notify those 25%, which is right at 7,000 customers. We need to make them aware of the fact that we have information and they can do a self check on their water usage in order to comply. This is not a very big problem. The big problem is the mandatory 2007 commercial and industrial water audits. They want us to have someone available to go do these audits. Their water usage varies from a customer like Photocircuits who used a million gallons a day depending on what they were doing, to businesses that don't use a thousand gallons a day. We don't have staff trained to do a commercial water audit. A commercial audit, going in to tell somebody they can do certain things with their equipment and save 10% of their water, is something that we don't have staff to handle. Mr. Parrott recommended hiring someone to be available. We have 62 industrial accounts. He thinks we would be better off to find somebody that has the background to do these types of audits. Get a price to do the audits, and fund it with the money we take in on the third tier of the water conservation rate. This would be the easiest way to handle it.

Chairman Watkins asked how far Mr. Parrott thinks the State wants us to push this audit. Do we offer it, and if people reject it, document it and that is all? Mr. Parrott replied that with the self detection, we have staff that can follow up if a customer needs help. The residential audits are no problem. We are already doing it. If somebody has a water bill that is a thousand gallons higher than it was, then we send someone to help. But, the industrial accounts are more difficult. He went on to say he would be bringing a recommendation back to the Water Committee in the near future. The bottom line is we have to reduce our water use over the next five years by 12%. We have to show that we are doing something on each audit requirement. Even with public education, he recommended putting a note on the back of the water bill envelope. We have different choices, water saving tips that can be printed each billing. Mr. Parrott distributed examples to the group for review.

Mr. Parrott went on to say that we have to have an inter-connection reliability target. How much water can you get from your neighboring water systems, if you

did not have any, or did not have as much? The City of Fayetteville has a contract with us and we provide them with water. Last month we provided them an average of 60,000 gallons a day. This month we are averaging 600,000 gallons a day. This has to do with how much water is in Whitewater Creek. The Town of Brooks has the same type of system. We can get water from the City of Atlanta and from Clayton County, but neither source will handle 100% of our needs. One of the selling points we will have to make on this program is how much of a percent of our water do we have to look for from somebody else. Can we get by, if we are doing 10 million a day, do we know that we will have 5 million a day every day and we just need 5 million from our neighbors. At that range, we can get that from Clayton County and Atlanta, currently. Since we have two plants, two different sources, we can depend on 50% of our water being available. The two plants even have two different power sources, EMC and Georgia Power. Our in house reliability is pretty high. But, they are going to want to see contracts. We don't have a contract with Clayton County Water Authority. We have actually sold Clayton County more water in the past five or six years than they have sold to us. But, we don't have a contract right now. We need to work on this. All this is related to renewing our permits. Every time one of our six withdrawal permits comes up, or a groundwater system permit, or our overall system permit comes up, we will be eligible to be audited. He is in hopes that we won't get audited each time, because we have discussed getting some of the permits coming up on the same date. Currently, all eight permits are due on different dates in different years.

IV. RESCHEDULE NOVEMBER 8 MEETING TO NOVEMBER 15.

Mr. Parrott explained he will be out of town for the November 8 meeting. We won't have a meeting the following two weeks because of Thanksgiving. He asked if the committee would be interested in one meeting in November, on the 15th?

Mr. Parrott made a motion that the committee meet November 15 instead of November 8. Mr. Frisina seconded and there was no opposition.

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 15th day of November, 2006.

Lisa McElwaney