

WATER COMMITTEE
FEBRUARY 28, 2007
MINUTES

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Chuck Watkins, Chairman
Dr. George Patton, Vice Chairman
Tony Parrott
Chris Venice
Pete Frisina

NON-VOTING MEMBERS:

Bill McNally
David Jaeger

STAFF PRESENT:

Russell Ray

GUESTS:

Lee Williamson
Larry Turner, WASA

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

I. APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM THE MEETING ON JANUARY 24, 2007.

Vice Chairman Dr. George Patton made the motion and Tony Parrott seconded, to approve the minutes from the meeting on January 24, 2007. There was no opposition.

II. LEE WILLIAMSON TO SPEAK WITH WATER COMMITTEE ABOUT POLICY FOR PLUMBERS LEAK CREDITS.

Chairman Watkins introduced Mr. Williamson to the Committee. Mr. Williamson explained that he was here to speak on his individual situation. He had a leak that he was aware of and after a Scout meeting on Sunday afternoon, had a couple of guys come and they dug it up. He found that the polybutylene, which is the blue pipe, which had the Class Action law suit because it split; had split right beyond a joint. He said that he had a joint about ten feet from the house and then right beyond that, there was a little split and he spliced that together, knowing he was going to have to replace that. The guy that was helping him said that he had to do that a couple of years ago.

Mr. Williamson went on to say, then, about two weeks later, Larry, who works for the water department came by and told him that we read the meter yesterday and we are showing you have used 678,000 gallons of water. He said that Larry asked if he has a pool. He said he does not have a pool. He did have a leak, they went to where it was and it was dry. They walked on it and it was good and packed. In the meantime, two other water company guys had evidently heard the radio call and

they came. They looked for probably twenty minutes, so collectively, an hour between four of them. They could find no leak, whatsoever. He said he cannot fix something that he can't find. That was on the 23rd. On the 24th, he said he would just replace the whole thing, if it is spinning out of control while it is on, then it is going somewhere the whole time. He can't run in and out and turn on the water every time somebody wants to use the shower. So, the next morning he called the emergency digging facility and told them that he had some emergency work; that he was going to make a repair after lunch. He did not wait around anytime. At 8:49 A.M. they put in an emergency call for location of basically the gas line. After lunch, he went out and rented a ditch witch, and had some guys come over. They put in a one piece, high density, polyethylene pipe with no joints, two connections; one at the water meter and one at the house.

Mr. Williamson went on to say that somebody mentioned to him that he needs a high pressure regulator to reduce that pressure. If the pressure was high, it could blow out your pipe. He called his plumber, and he said that he has a high pressure regulator right on the hot water heater coming into the house. It is at the house side, it is not on the street side. Mr. Williamson said he is good as far as the house is concerned blowing any pipes. But, he was not good as far as the underground pipe.

Mr. Williamson stated that is his situation, that is where he is, just basic inquiries up the street, he is the second house in two weeks to have the waterline replaced. Then two houses down from that house, the water company was working on the street. He does not know if there was some high pressure in the neighborhood that if pipes were kind of iffy, it went and took them out, or what the case was. But, he does know of three instances within a two week period where they all had water issues. He stated he is basically throwing himself on the table, saying, is there anything we can do for his situation to reduce his bill, because he is just a working stiff like most everybody. He asked if there is anything the Board can do as far as reducing the bill.

Chairman Watkins commented that the only thing they can do is change the policy, as a group, they recommend to the Board of Commissioners, they would have to change the policy. Which he is not willing to do, he has been around here for sixteen years, and we have had about ten of these. He knows this is extreme, a lot of water. It is hard to believe that, not disputing what Mr. Williamson is saying, but it had to go in a hole, had to go in a sewer, somewhere that it could not be seen, for that amount of water to go through a $\frac{3}{4}$ inch meter.

Vice Chairman Dr. Patton asked if the blue pipe came all the way from the meter to the house. Mr. Williamson replied yes and he replaced it.

Mr. Williamson stated that he did not know, he should have asked that question before he started; to keep from wasting everybody's time. He did ask Tony if there was anything he could do, and Tony had told him no, he could not do anything. He needed to talk to the Board; they may be able to do something. But, if you all can't

do something without the county council, and he is one in 26,000, they are not going to do anything for that. He stated further that his appeal to him was the Board put this on as a \$500.00 credit per one time, per household. He is saying this is extreme enough; maybe he could qualify for two households, or something along that line, just a threshold there.

Mr. Parrott commented that he had explained this is not just \$500.00, this is also a plumbers leak credit, so the total credit from both policies that he was given was \$1,884.00.

Mr. Williamson said he appreciates that, he is not discounting that, he should have mentioned that. All things concerned, if he could come before you guys and possibly ya'll can help, then it is definitely worth coming before you.

Chairman Watkins commented that he hated it, but the polybutylene has been breaking for years and years. Years ago, he remembers a bunch of homes on the south side of Peachtree City had broken a line every day. There was a law suit and they paid for the broken lines.

Mr. Williamson commented they have had a settlement, therefore they are not liable anymore.

David Jaeger asked if after he made his initial repair he did himself, before he replaced the entire line, was the meter still turning after that? Mr. Williamson replied no, it was not. That is why he had no idea that he was using water again. He checked it for about three days. He said ok, that is good. He did not see any indication outside because it is near a driveway that he has going around the side of the house, so he goes by and does a visual inspection. He did not walk out to the street and look at the meter. But, when the guy from the county came by, it was going like crazy.

Mr. Jaeger clarified that sometime between his repair and when the county showed up, he had another leak, it was turning again. Mr. Williamson replied yes.

Chairman Watkins clarified the location where Mr. Williamson lives. Mr. Williamson replied that he lives on Fernway Drive off Highway 92 North. His house was built in 1984. He did not try to find the second leak, he did not see any reason to. He fixed the problem. One of the main issues he wanted to stress is that he did not mess around on fixing this.

Chairman Watkins commented that the main thing is it went through the meter. It has to be billed. Mr. Williamson said ya'll did your job, supplied him with the water. He commented that he talked with Tony about it, and he said that is what we do. Mr. Parrott commented that anytime we have a bill that pops up like this, when we read it with radio read, it prints out a report and we go back the very next day to notify the homeowner. We don't want you to wait another seven or eight days for

the bill to show up. We try to immediately handle that. Mr. Williamson said the three day period between the time it was read and the time the guys came over, the next day when he got it fixed was another \$400.00, so he was losing \$100.00 a day; which would be great if he actually had the water, had a use for it.

Chairman Watkins asked if anyone on the Committee wanted to change the policy. No one wanted to change it. He went on to say to Mr. Williamson, that the only thing he knew he could do was go to the Board of Commissioners, and appeal to them. He does not recommend that, but that is the only outlet. We are a recommending body to the Commission. But, they have the final say so.

Mr. Williamson asked if the Committee has any leniency, any authority that we have liberal control with, maybe we can steer to the left or steer to the right. Chairman Watkins commented that he hates, this happened to him, not this kind of money, but it happened to him. He has had problems in Dekalb County and could not get anybody to talk to him. He knows how frustrating it is, but if we change the policy for you, we have to do it for everybody. The biggest thing is; it went through the meter. Once it goes through the meter; that line from there to your house and what is inside your house is your responsibility. Most leaks come up, surface and show that you have a problem. Unfortunately, he had one that did not show its face.

Mr. Williamson asked about extended payment terms. Mr. Parrott said we can do that, he should contact Capri and she would handle it.

Mr. Williamson thanked the Committee for their time.

III. PARKING AT LAKE HORTON.

Pete Frisina distributed photos of the recreation area at the lake. He commented that over a holiday recently we had a problem with over crowding and parking at Lake Horton. He did an inventory, we have three lots for parking down there. We have a total number of parking spaces of around 69 spaces right now. He has broken them down to west lot, east lot and south lot. Some of the spaces in the west and east lot are double sized spaces, so they can hold a car and a trailer. He looked at the standards that we have. We don't have anything, that he thinks, in our regulations that cover the kind of uses we have down here. We have regulations for active recreation, baseball fields and athletic fields; how many spaces you need for an athletic field. We don't really have anything that talks about passive recreation. He did some research on the internet and the only thing he found was one ratio for parking for passive recreation in one jurisdiction, in Nagshead North Carolina. They require two spaces for every acre of passive recreation. For 82 acres that's going to be 164 spaces. That might be a little more than what we are looking for down here. It would be a major undertaking to put another 95 spaces down here. He does not know that we have that kind of need. Anecdotaly, what he has learned from both the Marshal's and from Tony and Anita at Recreation is the main problem that we have is the area at the southern end of the park. It has to do

with the pavilion at the southern end of Antioch Road. We have never really had the problem at the other pavilion at the west boat ramp, because it is isolated and it is not the first place people go to.

Mr. Parrott commented that it is not the first choice and it doesn't have the playground. Mr. Frisina went on to say that what we are really looking at is the southern portion being where we are seeing the most use and the overcrowding. What they are doing, from his understanding from the Marshals is parking along the shoulders of the road. That is tearing up the edge of the road and causing some damage, especially when it is muddy. He suggested, short of trying to figure out some way to cut off the number of people that can go to the park, which has a lot of administrative responsibility to try to figure out, is add another row of parking on the other side of the street. He did some measurements off the GIS system, and it seems like the road is about 24 to 25 feet wide, which is what we require in between two areas of parallel parking, so people can pull in and back out.

Mr. Frisina stated that he had asked David Jaeger if he could us an indication of what another row of equal parking would cost; if we add another 26 spaces, just to get a feel for what it would cost. Mr. Jaeger reported that he spoke with one of our current contractors, and he estimated \$38,000.00. He stated he feels that is a little high. For instance, if we had added this additional paving into the contract when we paved the walking trail down at this park, it would have run around \$25,000.00. Depending on who the contractor is, and the time of the bid we might get it for cheaper than \$38,000.00, but it is somewhere in that ball park, \$25,000.00 to \$40,000.00, maybe. Depending on market conditions at the time we bid the work.

The committee discussed the use of the park, installing signs directing walkers to the other parking lot, and future growth of the county that would put more activity at the park. They agreed that adding more parking spaces would be a good idea. The biggest problems seem to be on three day weekends.

Mr. Parrott pointed out that with adding more parking on the other side of the road, drainage issues need to be addressed. Rainwater flow needs to be considered, we don't need to fill in the ditch to put in parking. Mr. Jaeger agreed to pull some numbers together and report back to the committee.

Chairman Watkins mentioned that fishing might be a good activity for this park for families. He suggested having a creel survey done every three to five years. Passive recreation should be encouraged at this park. Mr. Parrott agreed to do a request for proposal for a creel survey.

IV. SEWER SYSTEM DISCUSSION.

Mr. Parrott updated the committee that the Board of Commissioners approved going forward with providing a policy and ordinance for doing a septic land application type system as part of the County system. The Water Committee

will be receiving more information in the future. The Board members were unanimous and understood that they need to accept the systems, and regulate the systems.

V. DISCUSSION OF MEETING SCHEDULE.

Mr. Parrott explained that there has been some discussion, because of the amount of items that come up, about not having a meeting every two weeks each month. He commented that we have canceled several meetings lately, because there were no agenda items to discuss. Part of the reason is because the bigger projects that we have are all on hold. Lake McIntosh, the water tank projects and even the bigger waterlines, there is nothing happening on any of them right now. He suggested that if the committee does not mind, just having one meeting per month according to what is on the schedule. We will notify the committee a week ahead about the schedule. Even some of the Board meetings have been canceled lately for the same reason. Development and rezonings are less than they were before. The committee agreed to this schedule.

VI. UPDATE ON HOLDING POND AT CROSSTOWN WATER PLANT.

Mr. Jaeger updated the committee on the potential seepage issue at the water plant next to Falcon Field. He received a response back from John Crosby, the Director of the Peachtree City Airport Authority. The proposal by Water Committee was an agreement between the Airport Authority and the County on sharing the cost of the engineering study to do some monitoring wells adjacent to the water plant property on the airport property to determine the relationship between the groundwater levels at the airport property and the water level within the holding pond at the water plant. Mr. Crosby has responded favorably to that proposal. However, his wording is not specific. What was proposed to him by Mr. Jaeger was that if the study shows that there is a direct link between the water level in the lagoon and the water table on the airport property, then, the cost of the study will be paid for by the county. If it shows that there is no link at all, then it would be paid for by the Airport Authority. If it is inconclusive then, it would be a shared cost; a split, 50/50. His wording in the letter states, therefore the Peachtree City Airport Authority is willing to discuss the cost sharing after the tests are complete and the results indicate the problems are caused by conditions on airport property and not by the treatment facility. Mr. Jaeger stated that they are willing to discuss cost sharing, but he has not specifically agreed to what was proposed there. He wanted to bring that back to the committee and have an advisement on how he should reply. Should he try to nail it down specifically to the conditions of the cost sharing before moving forward?

Mr. Parrot explained that the time table on this is important, they have plans for a taxi way. Mr. Jaeger commented that the taxi way project is scheduled for fiscal 2009 with the FAA and Georgia DOT. They are looking to move forward on the engineering and we would like to have a resolution to this. From the county's

position, the sooner we can install monitoring wells, the better. We don't want to adjust the level in the lagoon during the peak season, which is the summer. We would need a period of months to monitor these wells. The sooner it is installed, the better. We would be able to do it throughout some of the spring months and then if we needed to, we could skip the summer peak demand and do it again in the fall. If we wait a couple of months before we do anything, we won't be able to start until the fall. There is an additional item, which he has not specifically addressed in his letter, but he has attached a site visit report from his geotechnical engineer who is stating that they also believe the county should do additional measures to stop surface run off from the plant property. At the time that the plant was built, there was no detention required for that project. That is another thing for the committee to consider, whether the water plant would want to retrofit detention into the existing storm sewer system.

Mr. Parrott commented that part of this area is wet, and they even acknowledge that part of it is wet. They are saying that the area is bigger because of us. Mr. Jaeger stated that we had test borings that were done along the property line prior to the original construction that showed high groundwater. They don't dispute that, but he thinks what we are trying to determine, is the relationship between the water level in the lagoon, which is near this property line and the water table on the airport property. Is there a relationship there that is increasing the level of the water table and bringing it to the surface more easily than would be natural?

Mr. Parrott asked Mr. Jaeger about the estimated cost of lining the holding pond. Mr. Jaeger commented that it is about \$300,000.00; ball park. Mr. Parrott stated you would also take the holding pond out of service during the six to eight weeks it takes to install it.

Chairman Watkins discussed installing a curtain drain to help determine any water that is being lost.

Mr. Jaeger agreed to have Mr. McNally review the letter and he will discuss with our geotechnical consultants what options the county has to proactively address some of the issues.

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

Chuck Watkins

The foregoing minutes were approved at the regular Water Committee meeting on the 28th day of March, 2007.

Lisa Quick