

WATER COMMITTEE
FEBRUARY 10, 2016
MINUTES

MEMBERS PRESENT: James K “Chip” Conner, Vice Chairman
Commissioner Charles Oddo
Steve Rapson
Lee Pope
Jimmy Preau

ABSENT: Pete Frisina, Chairman

NON-VOTING MEMBERS: Dennis Davenport
Alan Bowling

STAFF: Russell Ray

GUESTS: Stephen Hogan
Bishop Lionel Catchings

The meeting was called to order by Vice Chairman Chip Conner at 8:00 A.M.

I. APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM THE MEETING ON JANUARY 27, 2016.

Jimmy Preau made the motion and Lee Pope seconded, to approve the minutes from the meeting on January 27, 2016. There was no opposition.

II. CUSTOMER APPEAL FOR RELIEF OF HIGH WATER BILL.

Mr. Pope explained about a church that is located in a strip mall; the strip mall gets a bill and their bill was extremely high; about \$1,600.00 high. It was brought to their attention they might have a leak on site. They paid a Leak Doctor company to come in and they found a running toilet in the church. They fixed it, of course the bill that month immediately went back down to a normal bill of a hundred and something dollars. They are asking for something similar to the Leak Protection Program to give them some sort of assistance for their extremely high bill. He said he does not have anything in his authority to approve that. The Leak Protection Program is for residential, and can apply to churches, but this church is located on a commercial property. He said he does not think he has anything legal that he can do.

Mr. Rapson questioned if churches fall under residential. Mr. Davenport commented it is not a leak. Mr. Pope stated this is clearly an error on their part, they utilized the water.

Mr. Davenport explained they were in full control of what happened. He said their inability to acknowledge the issue when it occurred, or very soon after resulted in a very high water bill which we had no control over.

Mr. Pope said the gentleman has been very honest, he has been very up front, he has been very nice, but with all that set aside, removing the emotion from it, there is nothing legal he can do for him.

Mr. Rapson commented the only thing we can do is offer him the same thing we offer any other commercial business at this point which is take what the bill is, normalize what the bill would have been and then put the rest of it on a payment plan.

Mr. Pope stated they have paid the bill. We could do a payment plan, but they have paid the bill already. What has happened internally is the church has agreed to take ownership of the problem, since the problem was found on their property. That is between them and the property owner of the mall. He went on to say that he does not think there is anything he can legally do, nor do we really have any plans at this time to do anything for commercial properties like the Leak Protection Program. He does not know that would be beneficial to us.

Mr. Davenport said, even if they were residential and even if they were part of the leak protection program, you still could not give them any relief because it is not a leak. If you recognize this as something that you want to help remedy because of who it is, the next person that comes with a leaky toilet... Mr. Pope agreed you set a precedent. He said these people have been very honest and we know the whole story. He thinks they have told us nothing but the truth, but he does not see where there is anything in his power to assist them; outside of this Board and the Board of Commissioners who is a higher authority than him. He said he guesses they could do something, but he would not recommend it because again, he does not think it would be fair for other customers.

Mr. Rapson said he thinks it is bad policy; we don't want to initiate or move the bar in regards to a policy that is working just fine. Mr. Pope said the customer wanted it brought before the Board, and you have the information to look at in detail. He thinks our answer back to them should be we have reviewed it and we don't feel like there is anything we can do. Mr. Rapson said we certainly sympathize with it.

Mr. Davenport asked about the Leak Doctor; was there any opinion from the Leak Doctor that the running toilet was the cause of the overage. Did he say that or do we know. Mr. Pope said we have not seen a full report, but Customer Service was told that was the only thing the Leak Doctor found that was continuing to use water on the property. Mr. Davenport said the last time he was involved with one of these types of issues it was a running toilet issue and we determined what the flow was based upon the calendar month and it was clear to us that was the problem.

Mr. Pope said he would check to see if an Orion profiler report had been run on this account. The following month the bill went back to normal. It dropped to \$110.00.

Mr. Rapson said, unfortunately, even if they had a leak, because they are a commercial property there is really nothing we can do. Even if we wanted to start doing something now for commercial properties we can't walk that policy back in time.

Mr. Davenport suggested because they have requested some relief, he thinks the Committee should at least do something officially to say either we are going to grant or no, we are going to deny relief. You would need to do a motion in order to make that happen.

Mr. Rapson made a motion to send them a letter that we certainly empathize with their situation but it does not fall under the existing policy. Mr. Pope seconded and there was no opposition.

III. LAKE PEACHTREE UPDATE.

Alan Bowling updated the committee on this item. He said no work has occurred at Lake Peachtree. We had a rain January 21; the lake level needs to be at a minimum below 777 in order to even hope to work. The rain on the 21st raised the level of the lake to 781.5. By the 30th it drained to below 777 and it rained again on February 4; and it went back up to 780. On the 9th it got back down to 777; if we start the 9th as the starting point where it is starting to drop down right now it is about 776, starting the 9th is where it is starting to dry out; and we need it to dry out a bit. Essentially since Halloween the site has been under water probably 4 out of every 5 days. It is in a tough spot.

Mr. Bowling said he talked with Massana as far as doing accelerated, double, or maybe even triple hauling. Mr. Rapson said he has gotten Peachtree City to agree that the day we can start we would run as much 24/7 as we can to try to get out of there as quickly as we can. When he talked to Massana's superintendent he said he needed roughly about a week and a half to do everything he needed to do within the confines of the lake. If he runs 24/7 we might be able to cut that down to 3 to 4 days. We are trying to get in and out of there as fast as we can, once we can.

Mr. Bowling said in talking to Massana, he thinks they are open to running as many crews as they can, but until they really know when that is, they are not committing to that. They are motivated to be out of there as well.

Mr. Bowling explained that Mr. Rapson asked him to pull the rain records from last year. He said there was 68 inches of rain last year at the lake; a typical year is 48. Coming into March last year we were behind, about 3 or 4 inches behind typically. In April we caught up; from April until December we had about 24 inches more rain. Mr. Rapson said we have had 20 plus inches more of rain since; the last year

that was even close to that was 2009. Mr. Bowling said since 1996, 2009 is the only year that is even close to what happened last year. Mr. Rapson said on average it looks like it is between 30 and 40 inches and we are at almost 70. Mr. Bowling commented it is just a wet year. Good for lots of folks, but not for us.

Commissioner Oddo commented there is a positive take on all of this. He met Tom Fulton yesterday at Fayette Visioning. Mr. Fulton said he has been thinking about this, on the bright side, with all of this rain we have had, if we weren't dredging and the lake was full, they would probably have had flooding.

IV. UPDATE ON WATER TREATMENT PLANTS.

Russell Ray presented photos of the Chemical System and Actuator Project. He showed a photo of them pulling the liquid lime tubing. The liquid lime was delivered; he explained how the truck delivers the liquid lime and then uses water to wash out the hoses they use to push the liquid lime into our tank from the truck. The silo for the dry lime will come down once we have finished using the last of the dry lime. He then showed inside the vault that was installed for the injection points for the liquid lime, chlorine, and fluoride.

At the Lake Horton pump station the old actuator system has been removed, leaving the ball valve that is the control valve for the pump. He showed photos of pump 1 and 2. He then showed the electric actuator that has been installed on the adapter. The control cabinets have arrived and the electrician has started doing the connections. He described the electronics inside the cabinet which includes a battery backup system with 12 volt batteries, a charging system and the power is converted. This system is replacing the older hydraulic system.

Mr. Pope commented these actuators control the valves for the raw water pumps. We will now be able to do all of this remotely. Mr. Ray said we could control them before, but now with the new actuators it will work more consistently and more reliably. These pumps pump to the pond at Crosstown Water Treatment Plant. Mr. Pope said that is the key, this plant is halfway across the county. We have had to call somebody in from Maintenance or the South Fayette Plant to go down there. Mr. Ray said we were solely dependent on that until Lake McIntosh came on line.

Mr. Ray said we are processing Pay Request #11. They did submit a request because of the control cabinets that were required. The contractor wanted to recover their value. A final pay request is still to come.

Mr. Ray talked about the filter project being completed by Lakeshore next. Mr. Bowling asked if Mr. Ray felt like AllSouth overall, would we work with them again, were we happy with their performance. Mr. Pope said they were very easy to work with and very flexible. Mr. Ray said they were very good to work with; they have done several projects at Crosstown.

Mr. Ray showed the pads that had to be reconfigured at Crosstown for the filter console to sit on. He also showed the pads for the blower next to the filter wall for the filter backwash (scouring system) the new electrical panel, the control center that provides power for the blower and a few other electrical items. The contractor went back into the filters and cored each area around each protrusion of metal and topped it off. Now you can see they are forming up to do some other curb work they have to do.

Mr. Pope commented we thought that was kind of labor intensive and wanted to discuss it in detail with Lakeshore; he said he felt like he needed to do that to insure we got the best install possible. That lets you know his integrity for his work. He could have probably just covered these over, or put grout over the top of them. He said he wanted to make sure these under drains are installed properly. He is planning to bid on more jobs; these under drains are coming. Mr. Pope said we are going to have the first set, but other plants are looking at them, they are being built, and he wants to be able to say I put those in and put them in right and hopefully that will help him with future jobs.

Vice Chairman Conner asked if the filter bottoms have been put in yet. Mr. Pope said no, AWI will have to be here to oversee that, so they have to schedule with them. Vice Chairman Conner asked when that will happen. Mr. Ray said he has a meeting with them Thursday and will get more information on the date then. They are getting very close. Mr. Pope said they don't want to schedule AWI to come in until all the prep work is done; they have a lot of grouting and stuff to do to make the bottoms ready. Mr. Ray said it won't be next week, but will be very soon. It does not take long to do the installation once they get started.

Mr. Ray then showed photos of the pipe gallery. All the valves have been installed, he pointed out the actuators and the flow tube for filter #8, valves on the back side, and the compressed air line. The compressed air line will run the whole length of the pipe gallery. That will provide the power for the pneumatic actuation of the valves.

V. PUBLIC COMMENT.

Bishop Lionel Catchings entered the meeting after the discussion of the customer request for relief of high water bill. Mr. Rapson updated him on that discussion. Mr. Rapson explained that we have a leak detection program, but it is only for residential customers, not commercial customers. Unfortunately, they are in a commercial aspect, even under the leak protection program it does not sound like this was really what he would call a true leak. It was really a running commode. There is really not a whole lot we can do in regards to providing any relief other than setting up a payment plan. He said his understanding is the bill has already been paid in full by the property owner.

Bishop Catchings stated the property owner paid it and the church will reimburse him. Mr. Rapson said the committee talked about how much they sympathize with them. We have a lot of folks that have that same type of an issue. Now that we have the leak protection program, which protects you from that type of a leak for residential customers that is something we can offer, but we do not extend that to commercial businesses.

Bishop Catchings said thank you for hearing the request. Commissioner Oddo commented that he was in the same position with a \$400.00 water bill from the City of Fayetteville, with a running toilet.

Dennis Davenport asked if Bishop Catching had anything to add. Bishop Catching said that he appreciates the committee looking at it. Even with the residential, he can inform his parishioners. He said he did not know that prior to this event. That was good information to know. Mr. Rapson said we have many customers use this program. The folks that opted out of the program are typically the ones we hear from. Mr. Pope said most of the time they opt in after they have an event.

Mr. Rapson said he tells folks this is a very cheap insurance policy for that type of an event. If you have something like that occur. If you have a bill that is \$400 or \$500, take what your charges are on your water, times it by 12 and divide that by that number. As long as you have an incident within a 4 or 5 year period, it pays for itself. Just like car insurance, if you don't have a wreck you are just paying for insurance.

CLAIM FROM LISTON GARLAND

Mr. Davenport asked about the issue with the claim from Mr. Garland. Mr. Pope said we have not heard back from him. We have not been able to make contact with him. When we heard back from him he said that was not everything that he was trying to claim. Mr. Davenport said he would wait until we heard something from Mr. Garland.

CASTLE LAKE

Mr. Rapson reported they met with the lady from Tyrone that had the issue on Castle Lake. He said we have some quotes from landscaping that he thinks are pretty excessive from what she would like to get done. We are going to try to work out a resolution with her. He said when they do; they will bring it back to the Board for final approval. The resolution for her should be less than \$5,000.00. If it is less than \$5,000.00 he thinks they would like an approval of the Board to move forward with resolving it. We had a main burst at the very top of the property where she is and it ran through her creek into Castle Lake; it happened on December 28 which was the same time frame we were getting 16" worth of rain. He said he told the property owner while he does consider some of that to be some of our responsibility; you can blame Mother Nature for the majority of it. There is some compromise we are going to have to reach versus what she wants to be done versus what we want to be done. There is also an ongoing dispute with Castle Lake

and the Town of Tyrone in regards to siltation of Castle Lake as well; which she brought to our attention to which he assured her was not our responsibility either. He said we are trying to be a good willed water department to our customers of the water department. But we have to do that in such a way that it is consistent with our policies and what our responsibilities and liabilities are in this situation. He said he does think there was some siltation that occurred because we had that leak that ran down there, so we do have some responsibility but not nearly the amount of responsibility that she would like us to assume. If we can work out a compromise, what he would like is Board approval to go ahead; what he is thinking needs to be done is we may have to put some grass down, clean sand along her creek up and some residual sand towards the tail end before it goes into Castle Lake. We are not talking about doing anything in regards to siltation within Castle Lake.

Mr. Pope commented there is a lot of alluvial sand out there that clearly wasn't us. That was moved with storm flows. It is very crystal clear what that looks like as compared to we had a main break and it was our muddy water coming down through there. It is pretty clear there was damage there before we got there.

Mr. Rapson said he thinks Mr. Pope has the authority as the Water Director with his budget to solve these type of problems, but typically these problems aren't in those dollar ranges, which is why we are advising the Board of what the situation is and this individual has contacted other folks, including Virgil Fludd who just happens to be the HOA president for Castle Lake. When things start getting elevated and involving those types of folks, we think the Board ought to hear what is going on. He said he has not heard personally from Mr. Fludd, and if he had a problem he knows his number. He does not think Mr. Fludd has directly gotten involved, but it is something we want to try to resolve if we can, so we are working towards that.

PRIVATE WATER SYSTEMS

Mr. Rapson explained there is an issue; in the state of Georgia there are private water systems that have permits through EPD throughout the state. We have 2 or 3 in Fayette County. Some of those folks that run those water systems, they are primarily run through wells; have approached Mr. Pope to sell their customers. For us to be able to enter into that type of an arrangement we would have to do some analysis in regard to what their existing system is, what their pipe structures are, all those type of things so we would know is this a system that we want to acquire; because if you acquire it, you acquire all of its assets. Those are very difficult systems, he thinks, for water departments to enter in to. Our points of view are a little different. Our view would be what is the infrastructure, what are the pipes worth, what is the value of that, what has to be replaced, what are the repairs and maintenance, what is the structure, how do I tie into my system. Those are the things we look at. From their perspective it is all a revenue, customer perspective. I get this many customers at this revenue, therefore it is worth this much. You have to balance those two things. You can't have that conversation without having some

type of analysis done. Ch2M, our engineer of record will be more than happy to do analysis on those systems for us. He said his point of view is he does not want to enter into a task order for them to do that type of analysis so that we can get to the table. He said he is just throwing these numbers out, completely fictitious; if he says the system asset wise is worth \$100,000.00 and they want to sell it to us for \$250,000.00 we really need to have this analysis of the systems cost so we can have those discussions. He said what he did not want to do is spend any money having him do an analysis on a system to acquire if this Board was not interested in acquiring the systems.

Mr. Rapson commented it is almost a philosophical discussion. The other side of the story is some of the reasons the systems are being sold is the wells are failing. If the wells fail, then they are not talking to the Water Board, they are coming to the Board of Commissioners saying our water has failed and you need to hook us up to your system. There are also some health department regulations associated with that if they have a system and they can't provide water to their customers, and they are in the county and all of a sudden somebody walks away from a permit. For us to be able to do that type of transaction we would have to have a cost analysis, and have discussions with EPD because there is a permit involved. He said he guesses what EPD would do is dissolve the permits. Further discussion pertained to the size of the systems, one is over 300 customers.

Mr. Bowling stated technically there are 4 permits, 4 systems, 2 property owners, but one of the systems is 3 separate subdivisions that have different entrances but they all connect in the back end through the woods. Some are between 500 and 600 customers total. Mr. Rapson said if we are going to do this he would like to start with the smaller system or the best system. Mr. Bowling stated Mr. Padgett's systems are the highest quality, so it would be most interesting to take on in terms of the highest quality. Mr. Rapson asked Mr. Bowling what it would cost for him to do that analysis.

Mr. Bowling said the whole thing for 4 systems is around \$50,000.00. He said he had not really split it, so it would probably be \$30,000.00 because it is not 50/50 because he is not already doing the work with EPD.

Mr. Rapson asked if the Board is interested in spending \$30,000.00 in professional engineering to be able to have this discussion. Commissioner Oddo asked how long it would take to recover that \$30,000.00. Mr. Rapson said it depends on what it sells for, what we find, it would not be unusual to say we spent \$30,000.00 with him, and get the system in; it is \$30,000.00 in repairs, or \$40,000.00 or so for the system itself and then there is going to be a cost to run a line to connect to the system. You may be \$100,000.00 in it in addition to what you write a check for. Once you do that, then we turn around and look at the billing rates because they would be the same billing rates and the number of customers. We could probably tell the break even at that point.

Mr. Pope stated we would qualify for a block grant if we brought the system in house. Mr. Bowling said his gut, just from some of the work he has done historically would be somewhere between 3 and 7 years to break even. There are expenses associated with repairs and extending the connection and what not. One system, we have a waterline right there; it is 50 feet of pipe and another system we might have to run 300 feet of pipe. There is some grant money available that we certainly would go after that would significantly decrease that time frame in terms of payback time. Part of the answer on the payback would be him actually doing that analysis; he has not done it yet, he has just walked it. He said 3 to 7 years is his gut feel.

Mr. Rapson said philosophically speaking his point of view would be we probably ought to pursue looking at this because it is good information for us to have whether we buy the systems or not, number one. And number two is well water is extremely hard to treat, which is one of the reasons why we dissolved ourselves from well water and why most folks are capping them and not using well water. It is not a matter of capacity issues for us. In his mind if there are Fayette County residents on a system that at some point will be a problem; the question is at what point. He said he does not know either one of these owners and he is not trying to disparage them at all; but the folks that have these systems typically will continue to treat the water and continue to get paid, but they are not huge into repairs and maintenance and those type of things either. At some point those pipe become aged. He said he thinks we probably need to move forward with having that analysis done.

Mr. Pope said he thinks it would be proactive for us to, he thinks at some point in time they will become part of this water system. Whether we are forced by the state because of issues with their wells or because they decide to get out of the business; one way or another we are probably going to be taking them on.

Mr. Bowling mentioned that with every one of these systems it will be a different answer, different circumstances, and different assets. Mr. Rapson said we would start with one owner, do the easiest system first and then we would go to the other aspect of whatever permit he has.

Mr. Pope said he thinks it is safe to say they are not in terrible condition. They are pressure systems; a developer in the 1980's built their system so they could build a subdivision, because water was not available at that time. Mr. Rapson commented some of the hard cost we would have is we would want those systems to come up to the same standards we have in regards to the size of pipes, we would want to put in our meters at each location. Those are the things you have to work through. Vice Chairman Conner mentioned fire protection; Mr. Pope stated they have hydrants.

Mr. Bowling said it is interesting some of the larger systems have hydrants, it is a smaller hydrant. Part of his cost is to do some very quick and dirty hydraulic modeling to determine what kind of fire flow you could anticipate to come out of that existing system and whether it would be reasonable. It may be a staged thing;

you may choose to take this one and step 1 we are just going to connect to the system. Over a period of years we are going to replace out that system and bring it up to fire code. You have other parts of the county that are not quite, yet have fire protection.

Mr. Pope said this is part of why we would qualify for the block grant; making those adjustments. Mr. Bowling said, from the states standard they would love you to do this. They trust you more than they trust the average property owner.

Mr. Rapson made a motion to authorize the Water Director to enter into the contract with CH2M for the purpose of evaluating the systems; and then bring back a recommendation to the Board after they finish with that evaluation as well as pursuing other revenue sources that may be available to make that transaction occur; not to exceed \$50,000.00. Mr. Pope seconded and there was no opposition.

Mr. Bowling said it should be less than \$50,000.00; he just needs to look at it on paper before he puts those numbers out. Mr. Rapson said we might as well have them look at all the systems at one time; at that point we have a better knowledge of which one to go after. He has some economies of scale working them all at one time rather than doing 2 task orders. Mr. Bowling said doing 4 systems is probably only 20% more money than doing 1 system because it is all the leg work and he has to do multiple meetings with EPD to go through the process.

Mr. Bowling explained their task order are terms not to exceed, when they make a decision not to do a part, they just don't do that work and we don't bill you for it. It is not a lump sum.

There being no further business, Vice Chairman Chip Conner adjourned the meeting at 8:45 A.M.

Chip Conner

The foregoing minutes were approved at the regular Water Committee meeting on the 24th day of February, 2016.

Lisa Speegle