

WATER COMMITTEE
MARCH 23, 2016
MINUTES

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

ABSENT: Steve Rapson

NON-VOTING MEMBERS: Patrick Stough
Michael Diaz

GUESTS: Stephen Hogan
Tony Parrott

STAFF PRESENT: Russell Ray

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Pete Frisina at 8:00 A.M.

I. APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM THE MEETING ON MARCH 9, 2016.

Vice Chairman Chip Conner made the motion and Lee Pope seconded, to approve the minutes from the meeting on March 9, 2016. There was no opposition.

II. LAKE PEACHTREE UPDATE.

Mr. Pope reported the contractor is anticipating finishing sometime tomorrow; they only have a very small area that they need to remove of the road bed which is right at the park. He said they should have everything out of the lake sometime during the day tomorrow. Our plans are to close the valve and allow the lake to start to fill. With the inch of rain coming over the weekend, it won't put a whole lot in the lake, but it will help. CH is doing the best they can to get the surveyors here first thing Monday to do the asbuilt survey for the final area. They have already done everything else; they are just waiting on this one small area. For all intents and purposes we are within 24 hours of being complete. He said he thinks we will get that done well before we get any major rain this weekend. He anticipates the lake filling up within a week or two.

Commissioner Oddo mentioned they are talking about rain tomorrow. Mr. Pope said he thinks it will be later tomorrow and he does not think it will be enough to hurt us. We probably won't see that runoff until Friday or Saturday.

III. UPDATE OF WATER TREATMENT PLANTS.

Mr. Pope commented our contractor has done a good job keeping things on schedule. Michael Diaz is the boots on the ground project manager and he has done a good job. Mr. Pope said he appreciates that and we are right on target.

Michael Diaz reported we have a good contractor on site. Allsouth has been closing out the prior project for the Chemical System upgrade at both facilities. That is closing out pretty good. He said the contractor has been making pretty good progress in regards to the filters. The expectation is by April timeframe, they will have the new filters operational and then hopefully start getting ready for the summer period to be able to shut down the other half of the filters and start that rehab process. He said they are doing an excellent job.

Mr. Pope said the filters look good and the new under drains are going in just as they had planned. Mr. Diaz said they have been making some good updates on the other chemical system improvements, the chlorine dioxide and the PAC system.

Russell Ray reported on the Chemical System and Actuator Improvement Project. Demolition has not been done in the last two weeks, but progress has been made on the roof at Crosstown. Although, not part of this specific project, we needed a new roof and it turns out that it was good to get that done before moving the antenna over to the post on the roof.

Mr. Pope commented that the old lime silo will be going away and that is where our SCADA antennae were mounted. We will be moving those to the roof of the filter building. We had to do that before Allsouth can tear the tank down.

Mr. Ray shows pictures of the SCADA system antennae and the roof work. He described in detail the process being used to install the new roof.

Mr. Ray then reported on the Crosstown Water Treatment Plant Improvement Project. He showed a status schedule of the project that was requested by Mr. Rapson. Lakeshore put this together and it gives a full time line of the project. They input dates for a task and the software creates the bars and connects them to the next bars that are critical, adjoining paths, one after another. According to the legend, actual work completed is blue, the remaining is green, and any critical remaining work or critical path item will show up in red. From the start, you can see they went through the procurement that would be at the beginning of this type of project. They were going through the process of working with CH2M doing submittals and getting approval, and then ordering the equipment. He pointed out the filter rehab started in October and they are projecting that will be finished the first part of April. Startup of filters 5 through 8 will be in late April and should be ready to go by the beginning of May. Startup of filters 1 through 4 will be around the beginning of August; we should have all the filters in place and running around the 1st of August.

Mr. Ray said this report is created for every monthly meeting. Mr. Pope explained that one thing Mr. Diaz does is make sure we don't pull something out of service before we have something ready to take its place. There are a lot of things you can't just take off; we have to have a plan in place so that we don't shut the plant down. It is a rolling schedule that changes every time we have a meeting, basically. Mr. Diaz commented that is correct. It gives you a good opportunity to see an overview of how the project is laid out. Mr. Diaz as Mr. Ray mentioned, if there are any critical path items, for example, the blowers at some point looked like they were being delayed in production; you can actually view that and see the constraint at that point and meet that substantial completion date. You can start modifying the schedule and start some pre-planning; it works out for the whole group.

Mr. Pope commented to date we have had no interruptions in service; everything has gone smooth. It is critical when we have half the filters off line, there has been a lot of planning involved that people haven't realized what is going on. Mr. Diaz said Mr. Stevens is doing a good job trying to keep the plant operational even though he only has half the filters.

Mr. Ray presented photos of the filter rehab. Mr. Diaz commented that the beautiful part of the under drain system that the Water System has selected is that you don't have to even out the full bottom of the filters. There is some cost saving associated; all you have to do is put in the short round strips all the way through and that will help bridge the under drain system. Mr. Ray pointed out the stainless steel air blower header that has been installed in the bottom gullet. There will be a hose that runs up to the under drain system from this pipe. That will provide the air for the air scour system. Mr. Ray described in detail the work that has been done on the under drain system. Mr. Diaz explained one advantage of this system is you don't have to have a specialized subcontractor like you may need with Leopold or those types of under drains. These are pretty straight forward; but there are always some challenges for the contractor when he has to go through a repetitive job having to drill those in. Mr. Diaz described the process of drilling and coring the holes. Mr. Ray and Mr. Diaz explained the use of the under drains during the backwash process.

Mr. Ray showed a photo of the compressor that will be used to run the actuators and the electrical conduit that has been installed. This unit runs very quietly; it provides the air required to operate all the valves in the filter system. Mr. Diaz explained it is a critical component of the whole filtration system.

Mr. Ray then showed a picture of the filter console in the pipe gallery. Mr. Diaz said the electrical contractor used the existing electrical conduit that was running in the slab already. That keeps it neat, clean and out of the way; unfortunately because of the addition of a couple of new instruments outside the filters, they have had to do some surface mounts. Ultimately it will be painted and will be concealed then.

Mr. Ray showed photos of the actuators in the pipe gallery. Mr. Diaz commented this system will be a lot cleaner than what was there before. With hydraulic lines there is pressurized water and potential leakage and then corrosion. Now, you are going to a pneumatic system, clean air; it is a lot more efficient, more robust, in the long term. Mr. Pope added with the air in the compressed air tank, once the compressor puts air in that tank we will be able to operator those valves without power several times; because we will already have air stored in that tank and we can manually operate those valves without power.

Mr. Diaz commented with the hydraulic system if you lost power you lost the ability to pressurize that line; with this one you have a little bit more flexibility. You are building a little bit more robustness into the system. Mr. Ray pointed out the compressed air line running through the pipe gallery, with drop legs coming down every so often to serve the valves. There are two drop legs per filter and one drop leg will catch two actuators and the other drop leg will catch the three others. There are five valves per filter. He then pointed out the Filter Magic cabinets.

Mr. Pope announced that both of our plants qualify for the Gold Award from GAWP for 100% compliance. We were actually 100% compliant in 2014 other than the distribution system where our THM's and HAA's numbers ran such a high average it took a full year of numbers within compliance to pull us down. He said he thinks he sent a letter to the Board of Commissioners last year explaining that. In last year's CCR we were still showing a violation in 2014 because the numbers entered the year at such a high number. We were well within those guidelines and still removing about 50% TOC's to date. He said this is great, and he wanted everyone to understand the operators have really worked hard. They have been doing this under construction conditions and still utilizing older equipment. He said Kudos to the operator's team. He said we put a lot into retraining, we have brought them up, expanded their knowledge.

Mr. Pope explained we had a manganese incident a couple of weeks ago; some of the operators were kind of panicky. He said Russell worked about 100 hours, he worked about 90; he explained to them we were not going to put unsafe water that did not meet compliance into this distribution system. Changing the mind set on how we are operating the system, we are refusing to put water out that doesn't meet state guidelines. He said that is how you manage to win these kinds of awards; by putting those kinds of stipulations in place. During that time frame we had to buy some water from the City of Atlanta to maintain our system, but those are the things you have to do. You don't put out water that is not safe. You do what you have to do to be sure the citizens are protected. He said he does not know if they realize that yet. We have been asked to put together some press releases to start educating them on the ten million dollars we are spending to try to improve the quality.

Mr. Pope said his goal as Director is to not only put out water that is in compliance, but exceeds. He wants to put out the best quality water possible. He does not want to just try to meet that minimum; he wants to continue to try to improve it. We

have new regs coming down; THM's and HAA's are probably going to change, they will be a little more stringent. We are trying to exceed those guidelines. The operators are the ones doing that. When we officially get that award, we will do it at the Board of Commissioners meeting. We will want to bring those guys in so you can see the boots on the ground individuals that are really out there working day and night. That was a tough weekend for our operators. They are there 24/7, people realize we have police and fire on call 24/7 but the operators are working 24/7 to make sure our citizens are protected. He said he does not think they get recognition that they deserve for some of the challenges they face. While people are at home asleep in their bed they don't realize there are two or three operators out there running around in the middle of a storm trying to maintain equipment, keeping it online to make sure that our citizens have safe drinking water. He said he wants to make sure those guys get some recognition. We will be reading a proclamation for Water Professionals Week which is coming. We will bring that proclamation before the Water Committee too.

Mr. Pope said Kudos to the operators and Russell and the individuals out there working hard to make sure we are putting out water that meets and exceeds what the state is requiring. These Gold Awards are a big deal. He said he does not know the last time that either plant won a Gold Award and he certainly does not remember how long it was when both plants won a Gold Award. This is a big accomplishment for these guys; he is really proud of everybody. He said he wants the Committee to understand that there has been a lot of hard work these past two years; they have done a good job.

Chairman Frisina asked what creates a spike like that. Mr. Pope responded that it can be raw water quality coming in, we actually had a problem with the old chlorine dioxide system at the South Fayette Water Plant. We were having problems getting it operational. We ended up turning on an old potassium permanganate feed system. He said Mr. Diaz came in and assisted all through the night Saturday night. He was also away from his family. He said what he wants everybody to understand is we are going to refuse to send out water that doesn't meet guidelines. Whatever it takes we are going to bring in Mr. Diaz's team if we have to, call on the City of Atlanta before we put out water that doesn't meet. We knew we had a water quality change and we knew it was coming. But, some of the equipment we use to treat that went out of service, Russell came in to try to help get that equipment back on line with his team. While he was working on that we managed to also get the permanganate feeder on line so both of those chemicals can be used. Mr. Diaz was there to help us make sure we were making the best decisions. It was a team effort that weekend. He added that he thanked the City of Atlanta for helping us; Terrell Gibbs is their Distribution Director and he used to be his Deputy Director with Rockdale. Mr. Pope said he called an old friend and said we need you guys. Mr. Gibbs sent his team out to assist us in the middle of the night to get Atlanta valved on so we could make sure we had plenty of water in this emergency. He said it was a tough weekend but everybody pulled together and he is really proud to see how things came about. The operators were stressing.

Chairman Frisina asked if the Atlanta valve is always open. Mr. Pope said we have to actually go out and manipulate valves on both sides. Mr. Ray commented that we have to manipulate their valves manually, our valves can be controlled through automation. The interesting thing about the City of Atlanta valves, when you turn it right, it is opening instead of closing. You have to remember which way to go. Everything is opposite from what we have.

Mr. Pope commented that we had a major main break during this event; that did not help us at all. The main break was on the north side of town and it depleted what we did have in storage in the tanks. It was one catastrophic failure after another. The thing that is important is the citizens never knew we were having an event. They went to their taps, they had clean safe drinking water and had no idea we were working so hard behind the scenes. That is the sad part is they don't realize when they blog in Facebook, or when they blog in Twitter about how sorry the Water System is, how hard people are working to make sure that they are safe. We are trying to address a few of those issues to make sure citizens understand we have made a lot of changes, personnel wise. A lot of times it is not that we have changed personnel, we have retrained personnel. We have good people, they just didn't have the knowledge they needed to act. We have retrained a lot of people and we have changed some equipment and are still changing some equipment. We will continue to change some equipment but we are improving how we operate altogether. He said he does not think the citizens realize that. He said Mr. Rapson and some of the Commissioners have asked that we draft that up so we can get that out to people; he said he does not think they hear it enough.

Mr. Pope said he went to a Water Loss Seminar yesterday. Jud Turner spoke about how we have got to start talking to the citizens. We used to sit down and be quiet and then we only reared our heads and said something when we have a sewer main break or something. That was the only time you heard from us was when something bad happened or when we did the correction. We really need to let them know what we are doing every day. He said Stephen Hogan works very hard, and his individuals do too, to make sure the sewer is properly handled every day. Every now and then they have an event, but they are working their tails off every day. Nobody gives a care about that. They only want to hear about when something bad happens. We have got to start letting people know how hard we are working. He said he knows the Flint River, Michigan incident that is going on, the first he chastised us about as an industry is we are not telling people what we are doing here. Most of us in the state of Georgia are on reduced monitoring for Lead and Copper. Our citizens don't even realize it, nor do they realize what that means. We need to be telling them.

Mr. Pope went on to say that when a national event breaks or when an event breaks here in the State of Georgia; he said he is sitting on a committee now to change that; we need to immediately respond to our citizens about what is going on in our community. When something happens in the City of Atlanta; when City of Atlanta

went through all their issues with Neptune meters, we were putting in Neptune meters in Rockdale. You can't imagine the frenzy we went through with the media and the local people. There wasn't anything wrong with the meters; they had some installation issues; when something like that happens, the citizen's freak. He said he does not blame them, because they don't have the day to day knowledge. We are not telling them; what we had to do was some immediate press releases to tell them how we were doing the Neptune meter installs. The same thing here; with the things going on in the Flint River we need to tell our citizens what we are doing, what we have done through the years to make sure their water is protected. We are not doing that, we are waiting until we have an event, then when they get panicky and they are blogging on Facebook, then we start trying to catch the snowball from behind, so to speak. That is impossible. We are not building that one on one relationship with our customers. He said we are looking at purchasing Tyler Notify, where we are able to communicate with our citizens on a regular basis. If we talk to our citizens every day about the safety of their water, they are going to get that comfort level just like you do with your friends. If something does go wrong they will feel comfortable coming to us and saying, hey what are we doing? What is going on? Right now we are separated from one another. We have to quit doing that as an industry. It is not just Fayette County, it is nationwide. Water and sewer has always been out of sight out of mind. The only time people felt like they heard from us was when we were adding a pump station or lift station, or when we were building a reservoir. Then it was bad news, it was money we were spending and this and that. They want perfect water quality and they want their sewer collected and treated properly, but they don't want to hear about it and they don't want to hear anything about the cost. Just like any industry out there today, what it cost us to do business every day has gone up dramatically in the last few years. Chemicals have gone up; the delivery of chemicals has gone up. Some of the guidelines, some of the NPDES rules that WASA has to follow are ridiculous, and they are still meeting them with the same rate structure. We have to communicate with our citizens, again when we talk about changing the rates they get panicky. That is because they don't realize what we are facing. He said he thinks as we start to communicate with our citizens on a regular basis, they will be on our team. He said he thinks they are on our team, we are just not giving them the information they need, and we are not talking to them. We need to talk to them on a regular basis because as far back in Bible times as you want to go there has never been a community that exists without safe drinking water. That is the way we have been as a society, we have always had to have safe drinking water to survive. We are a critical part of the safety of our community, so is Stephen, to make sure the wastewater is collected and properly treated before introducing it back into the streams. He said he does not think our citizens understand what we are going through and he thinks if we have that regular communication with them he thinks we will build that trust that we need.

IV. PUBLIC COMMENT.

Stephen Hogan expressed his thanks for Chairman Oddo and Steve Rapson, Lee Pope and the Water System staff. He said a sewer spill is an unfortunate event,

if anybody cares to come take a look at what really happened, it is a text book case of what they are experiencing in their system. He said thanks for the communication; they will continue to do better. If anybody has any specific questions, please feel free to give him a call.

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

Peter A. Frisina

The foregoing minutes were approved at the regular Water Committee meeting on the 13th day of April, 2016.

Lisa Speegle