

Water Committee
Action Agenda
June 9, 2021
8:30 A.M.

Committee Members Present: Pete Frisina, Chairman
Frank Destadio, Vice Chairman
Steve Rapson, County Administrator
Lee Hearn, Commissioner
Vanessa Tigert
James Poff

Absent: Jimmy Preau

Committee Non-Voting Members: Dennis Davenport, County Attorney
Other Staff: Commissioner Charles Oddo, Jeff Hill, Russell Ray, Anita Godbee, Harold Myers, Lem Miller, Emily Larrimore, Susan Lee, Carrie Gibby, James Munster, Capri Reeves, Lindsey Choisnet

Public: John Cable, Gary Mercer, Steve Ritter

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Pete Frisina at 8:30 A.M.

1. Approval of Minutes from the April 14, 2021 meeting
Vanessa Tigert made the motion and Frank Destadio seconded to approve the minutes from the meeting on April 14, 2021. The motion passed unanimously.

2. Environmental Compliance
Emily Larrimore has been working on an Environmental Compliance spreadsheet. The sheet gives a complete guide for Water System compliance, highlighting who is responsible for submitting each report, what the guidelines are, where to send the reports, and when they are due. A calendar has been set up to send alerts to the person or people responsible for each report, providing enough notice for the reports to be completed on time. The spreadsheet also provides references to where additional information can be located, if needed. In the past, we had a list of who was doing what report, but we hadn't pulled all our environmental compliance information in one place. When Emily came onboard, she really polished this up for us. This is also part of cross-training; if somebody is gone or somebody leaves, we won't have to scramble to figure out what was sent where and when. For example, some people are responsible for maybe one report, while Emily is in charge of 15. Some reports have to be submitted monthly, others are every three or five years. This spreadsheet ensures nothing will fall through the cracks.

James Poff asked about online submissions because he knows, on the wastewater side, EPD is requiring online submissions and he believes it's coming for drinking water, too. Some of our reports are submitted online through EPD, and it's safe to assume more and more reports will be submitted online.

Mr. Destadio asked about the alerts for the different reports, wondering how far in advance staff is given notice that these reports are due. How much notice is provided depends on the specific report; standard monthly reporting is given a weeks' notice, while something like an Emergency Response Plan is given several months' notice.

3. System Updates

Anita Godbee advised there have been complaints and concerns regarding the overcrowded conditions at our lake reservoirs. Staff has been trying to figure out how to accommodate and help this situation, and one of the things we've noticed is an increase in non-residents at our lake reservoirs. In 2011, this Water Committee instituted parking fees for non-residents. At that time, it was a \$10 fee for Lake Horton. When Lake McIntosh came onboard in 2015, we instituted the same parking fee. Shortly after that, the Board of Commissioners reduced the \$10 parking fee to \$5, plus an annual pass for \$50. We've noticed that during the pandemic, when everybody was wanting to get outside and be safe, not only did our park usage increase but so did our reservoir usage.

In 2019, fees collected at Lake Horton and Lake McIntosh from non-residents were \$17,656 and \$13,216, respectively. In 2020, fees collected for Horton increased to \$29,576 and fees for McIntosh increased to \$19,763. The average number of annual parking passes distributed from 2015 - 2020 was about 72. This year alone, we've increased to 122 and we're only halfway through the year. The numbers are continuing to increase with our non-resident usage. Our reservoirs operate differently than other Parks & Recreation parks because they are subject to state environmental regulations.

After considering all the data, Ms. Godbee and Chief Myers are advocating that the annual passes increase to \$300 per calendar year and that we do away with the daily park passes, effective January 1, 2022. It takes the Marshal's office a lot of time to travel to the reservoirs to collect and deliver the money to the Water System, who then has to use two employees every day to count the money and ensure its accuracy. By increasing the cost of the annual pass and eliminating the daily pass, we're hoping to still accommodate some of our non-residents but also deter some non-residents.

Chief Myers advised this has been an ongoing issue that we kick around every year. What is being proposed does not eliminate out-of-county residents, it only makes them pay a higher fee to participate and it does not restrict or change anything for Fayette County residents. All the systems of Fayette County will have the same rights as they do today. This proposal just addresses out-of-county residents when it comes to our parks. This also does not affect the Rowing Club whose fees will still be the same. For residents who reserve our pavilions - if they know a non-resident will attend their gathering at the pavilion that was rented, they can still buy daily passes from the Parks & Rec office so that their guests can still access the reservoir during their picnic or what have you.

Kedron will now be included with this implementation. Currently, Kedron is not

included in the \$5 parking fee because Kedron parking lot is part of the cart path, so we have no way to secure the parking lot after hours or install a pay station. This \$300 annual pass will include Kedron so we can enforce it at Kedron like we do at Horton and McIntosh.

As a reference for what our neighbors are doing with their reservoirs – Clayton County charges their residents a \$5 fee to get in. Coweta County reservoirs are not open to non-residents and they charge a \$25 annual permit to their residents. Carroll County residents must purchase a special license. Douglas County reservoirs are open to residents only. Henry County allows only residents and property owners. Our neighbors are charging their residents access to their reservoirs, but Fayette County will only be charging non-residents.

Corporate passes will stay the same, a \$1 pass is good for two years but only during the hours of 8am – 5pm, Monday through Friday. Also, if businesses in Fayette County have non-resident employees, they can still get a maximum of two free passes to hand out to their employees. This was initiated mainly for the people around McIntosh, for those businesses around the TDK Blvd area to use for their lunch breaks.

Chief Myers advised the citations will work the same way they work today, if we see a non-resident tag without a pass, a citation will be issued. There is no first-time warning and these are not passes that can be transferred to different people. This pass will be a sticker on the vehicle that will be tied to the tag. That information is sent to the Marshals so they can verify the tag with the number on the park pass. This promotes efficiency and security.

Lee Hearn made the comment that Henry, Clayton, Coweta, Carroll don't let anybody but residents visit their reservoirs, and they charge their residents. The only way he can go to those reservoirs is if he knows somebody who lives in those counties. Ms. Tigert added that's probably why we have so much out-of-county traffic. Mr. Rapson noted in order to enforce that, somebody has to be parked, that sort of regulation isn't going to happen on its own. Mr. Hearn stated he understands that, but he's saying the non-residents have contributed nothing to the building of our reservoirs, they don't pay water bills, and they don't help with recreation fees or the Marshals except for the fees we're collecting, which is pretty small. He doesn't know what the right answer is, but it seems all our neighbors are doing it a different way than how we're doing it. Mr. Rapson agreed, but added that some of those counties are authorities, which aren't part of the government. Water Authorities and Water Systems are distinctly different, they are not the same thing.

Mr. Rapson made the motion and Mr. Poff seconded to forward staff recommendation to the Board of Commissioners for consideration to do away with daily reservoir passes for non-residents and to raise the cost of annual reservoir passes from \$50 to \$300 for non-residents, effective January 1, 2022. The motion passed unanimously.

Susan Lee advised we're halfway through lagoon dredging at our Crosstown plant. They finished up the north lagoon at the end of last week and they'll be done with the south lagoon by end of the fiscal year, then they'll move onto South Fayette. The new Filter Magic install at South Fayette is complete. Water savings have not yet been tabulated but we're wrapping up that contract this week.

James Munster reported that everything is going normally, operations-wise. There have not been any major main breaks in recent past and everything seems to be going well as far as our infrastructure at the moment.

Carrie Gibby provided an update regarding compliance requirements. One of the things that is required per the American Water Infrastructure Act is to do a Risk and Resilience Assessment along with an Emergency Response Plan. We completed the Risk Assessment in December 2020 and had six months to complete the Emergency Response Plan after that; the due date is at the end of this month. We've been working on that diligently, as we decided to take these two compliance requirements on in-house. Staff has been working on this for over a year now. The Emergency Response Plan covers a lot of system information, communications plans, core responses, and a lot of incident-specific response procedures. It's been a benefit to staff going over this type of information as it really prepares us for incidents that could potentially happen. If we had out-sourced these two compliance requirements through a third party, it would have cost \$200,000 - \$300,000. This has been a learning experience for a lot of staff which is great because it's not just a book sitting on a shelf that a vendor completed for us. We've invested close to 1000 hours in this whole process. Next step is doing some exercises with Emergency Response, EMS, and the Commissioners to determine how we're going to communicate any kind of specific incident to the public.

Capri Reeves advised we're in the process of upgrading our phones in the customer service group. We do have our new phones but we're still working on getting them programmed properly. Once they're set up, we can start loading our new software which will give us reporting data.

Russell Ray updated that the pumps are ready to go at Lake Peachtree, it's just a matter of when the plant is ready to turn them on. They're watching the algae closely, we have equipment that allows us to do that so it's just a matter of time to start using those pumps again. We've got about 28 pumps in our system but we're doing our best to stay on top of it. Also, we recently had a Risk Management inspection for South Fayette and it went very well.

4. Director's Report

Ms. Tigert demonstrated the new dashboard put out by the United States Geological Survey (USGS). This dashboard is a GIS software and has all the gauges that the USGS runs in the United States, therefore it has our seven gauges. We are required to have these gauges and they monitor specific parameters for us, which is setup in our Surface Water Withdrawal Permits. The gauges show information such as water levels, discharge, and elevation. We pump from the Flint River into Lake Horton; our permit allows us to pump as much as we want until we reach 30 cubic feet per

second (cfps). Once it reaches 30 cfps, we are required to release that water downstream. This is tied to our reservoir level. Full pool at Horton is 780 ft, so anytime we're not at 780 ft, we should be pulling from the Flint. The watershed for Lake Horton is so small, it was never meant to supply all our water so it has to work in tandem with the Flint River to pump that water over to Lake Horton, which is our pump storage. Not every system has pump storage.

One of our requirements as a public water system is to publish annually our Consumer Confidence Report (CCR). Because we recently had change in staff resources, we had a lot of people putting hands on this year's CCR so it was a learning experience for everybody. It is being distributed this month in all the bills.

All of our new meters from our AMI project will be surveyed into our GIS record, meaning we'll have a layer in our GIS map of all our meters. A new draft of the Task Order for the AMI project will be reviewed and then pushed onto the Board of Commissioner's for approval.

The Water Generator Grant Task Order has been approved and we have matching funds. It's part of the pre-hazard mitigation grant. We're going to apply for a grant to replace the Crosstown and South Fayette generators. In the American Recovery Plan Act, there is language that says they will waive the match, so we're hopeful but also understand there have been a ton of applications for generators so we'll just have to wait our turn on that.

The Crosstown Yard Piping Task Order has been approved. We're looking at making sure the hydraulics are optimal for pumping from Lake Peachtree into the holding ponds. Right now, Lake Peachtree raw water pumps directly into the plant for processing. We would like that, for various reasons, to pump to the Crosstown holding pond.

Mr. Destadio asked about the Pressure Model from the previous meeting. Mr. Rapson advised we had a preliminary meeting with Coweta and they have given us their rates. They're going back and looking at what their contracted rates are. We have what our recoverable rates are and then we'll evaluate what Fayetteville's rate is. We'll put all that together and decide as a staff what we think the rate is that we should go with. We'll then have a follow-up meeting with Coweta, then come back to the Water Committee and say this is what we think our wholesale rate is. Then we'll start talking with the City of Fayetteville, because Fayetteville is our only wholesale customer as we sit here today. Mr. Destadio asked if we're having a contractor look at building a model for how much loss we have on treated water. We already keep track of leaks and breaks in a management software, which we have to report every year to EPD, but having an actual model to see where the leaks are at will be part of the Pressure Model. We'll have more data points when we replace 32,000 meters for AMI, which will eliminate a large part of water loss.

5. Public Comment

Citizen Steve Ritter stated that he believes the cost increase in our annual reservoir passes is on the path to the right direction. He's out there every day and the feedback he gets from out-of-county residents is that Fayette County has almost been made a joke in how we're only charging \$5 for other people to visit our trophy lakes. He likes the fact that we're upping the charge. We can reevaluate to see what the capacity is after we raise it to \$300, which will be pretty punitive for some people.

6. Adjournment

Mr. Hearn made the motion and Mr. Poff seconded to adjourn the Water Committee meeting on June 9, 2021. The motion passed unanimously.

There being no further business, the Water Committee was adjourned at 9:25a.m.



Peter A. Frisina

The foregoing minutes were approved at the regular Water Committee meeting on the 11th day of August, 2021.



Lindsey Choynet
Water Committee Clerk