



Sammy Rich, City Manager
Mike Hackett, Director
John Boyd, Assistant Director
WATER AND SEWER DIVISION
Customer Service Department
Bryan Parris, Director
Operations Department
Brandon M. Cook, Director
Water Reclamation Facilities
Jeff Hill, Director
Water Treatment Facilities
Wayne Stanley, Director

WATER AND SEWER COMMITTEE MEETING
City Hall, 601 Broad Street, Sam King Room
Thursday, March 2, 2023
9:00 AM

PRESENT: Chairperson Jim Bojo
Commissioner Craig McDaniel
Commissioner Elaina Beeman
Mr. Sammy Rich, City Manger
Mrs. Meredith Ulmer, Assistant City Manager
Mr. Andy Davis, City Attorney
Mr. Mike Hackett, Division Director
Mr. John Boyd, Assistant Division Director
Mr. Bryan Parris, Customer Service Director
Mr. Wayne Stanley, Water Treatment Facilities Director
Mrs. Jeff Pope, Water Treatment Facilities Assistant Director
Mrs. Becky Smyth, Purchasing Director
Mr. Doug Walker,

VISITORS: Bryan Pate, Insite Engineering
Jason Ray, Archer Western Contractors
Tom Couch, citizen
Norma Reboredo, citizen
Diana Hopper, citizen

CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson Jim Bojo welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order.

Minutes prepared by: Bryan Parris, Customer Service Director
Water and Sewer Committee/ Commission Minutes, March 2, 2023

REVIEW OF THE MINUTES

No changes to the October 6, 2022, minutes were suggested. The minutes were approved by common consent.

FINANCIAL REPORT

Mrs. Rhinehart reported Operating Revenues were up from prior year by about \$243,000 and only slightly below budget. There was an increase even with water usage down due to weather.

Operating Expenditures were up from prior year by about \$206,000 but significantly below budget.

Current cash balance is up \$5M due to debt payoff and rate increase.

OLD BUSINESS

None

NEW BUSINESS

Water Treatment Overview

Mr. Hackett and Mr. Stanley present an overview of the Water Treatment Facility. Hackett began with the 2022 Sanitary Survey, an inspection performed annually by the EPD. The inspection found the department to be in compliance in all areas in 2021. They found no minor deficiencies, no significant deficiencies, and had no operational recommendations. Hackett also pointed out this was the 18th year in a row Water Treatment received the Platinum Award. Mr. Stanley added the 2023 survey for 2022 had recently been completed and we would again receive the Platinum Award, but it had not been received yet.

Stanley updated the committee on recent projects. The first project discussed was replacement of GAC and sand in eight filters last replace in 2017 at a cost of \$515,000.00. Next was replacement of the last Traveling Screen at Oostanaula. Stanley stated the estimated life span of these screens were about 30 years. The screens are used to remove larger floating objects such as sticks from the water before it enters the treatment plant. Stanley reported the number one high service pump was rebuilt. The final Emergency Power Switchgear was completed. The department worked with Georgia Power on this project to add two power supplies to the WTF. Hackett explained this was a better solution than backup generators, saying a generator of the size needed to run the plant were extremely expensive to purchase and maintain and were also not as reliable to work when needed as you would think.

Commissioner McDaniel asked if there was a traveling screen at the Etowah intake. Stanley said there was only much smaller, and it had be replaced around 2013.

The Final WTF update was cleaning of the Residual Solids Handling Facility, aka “lagoons”. Stanley reported approximately 70 million gallons of water pass through the lagoons each year. The purpose of lagoons is to remove any silt trapped in the water. Hackett stated currently this silt was used for backfill and such but again due to PFAS we will be forced to dispose of this material in some other way soon.

PFAS Overview

Bryan Pate with Insite Engineering informed the committee that new EPA or EPD would release new regulations for PFAS tomorrow. Pate stated the current rate of 70 ppt set in 2016 would likely be reduced to 4 ppt. Pate said that the city was ahead of the game to meet these new lower regulations in that the system we will be installing is identical to the system recently installed in Tennessee. The Tennessee facility has had no detectable trace of PFAS since the day it went into operation.

Commissioner McDaniel asked how smaller communities are coming up with funding for this type of plant. Pate said many are or will consolidate with other utilities, grants, and rate increases. Chairperson Bojo asked how Floyd County will address this. Mr. Hackett stated it will be a problem for them, if they buy water from Calhoun, where they do not have reverse osmosis treatment. Commissioner McDaniel commented that we may need to have a joint city/county water authority. Pate then updated the committee of where the project now stands. He said after much discussion and studies the plan to build the site on top of the current location while remaining in operation would be almost impossible and therefore a new site on Riverside Parkway was decided on. Pate presented a preliminary drawing of the new plant and location. Chairperson Bojo asked how much space would be needed. Pate replied about three acres. He then stated the new plant could produce 30 million gallons of water per day, about four times the amount needed so there was plenty of room for future growth. Pate then explained the procurement options (CMAR) and how these options were chosen. A six-member committee of City personnel interviewed the top two of three contractors submitting bids and unanimously recommended Archer Western Contractors. Pate, Hackett, and Boyd explained the process of merging engineering and construction would ensure the project is successfully completed at the lowest total cost.

Pate wrapped up his presentation with how we would move forward with preconstruction, construction review, cost estimates and scheduling. Then construction, CMAR, -general contractor, start up, commissioning and warranty services. Mr. Rich asked when we could expect a GMP and Pate replied July or August.

Mr. Doug Walker asked the committee if they were expecting stricter regulations on the wastewater side of things as well. Hackett said yes and our current permits were set at the numbers we were getting at the time so we will have a problem with stricter regulations.

Commissioner McDaniel asked if the companies upstream causing the problem had made changes to correct things. Pate said they say they have but studies show the same results as they did 14 years ago.

Chairperson Bojo asked to hear from Jason Ray of Archer Western Contractors. Mr. Ray introduced himself and gave a brief statement of his company's history and recent achievements. Hackett said there would be a full presentation by Archer Western in the coming months.

Mr. Boyd then made the recommendation the committee make a motion to bring this proposal to the full commission to accept this proposal. Commissioner McDaniel made the motion, Commissioner Beeman seconded the motion. Motion approved.

Chulio Hills and Jewel Point Sewer Expansion

Hackett stated the original estimates for this project were around 2.2 million, but a lot has changed since then and now the estimates are around 4 million with the additions. Commissioner McDaniel asked if this was the same sewer expansion, we discussed a few months ago. Boyd said no this was a different project.

McDaniel then asked how many homes would be serviced. Boyd said most of Chulio Hills was already developed with approximately 47 homes already on septic systems. Hackett added building spec sewer often never comes to mean a return on investment, saying existing homeowners are looking at several thousands of dollars to connect to their existing lines to sewer in addition to having to pay for the tap and are either unwilling or unable to come up with the funds to connect. Hackett went on to say developers are looking to us to install infrastructure before they develop which we do not do because this means rate payers would be covering the cost of these expansions.

Commissioner Beeman said there was a meeting held several years ago between the residents and the leaders of the city at the time after many residents started having problems with their septic systems and it was agreed that there could be a sewer expansion if certain criteria was met. It was agreed the Water and Sewer Division and Insite Engineering would investigate this further and get back with the committee for a further consideration.

OTHER

Public Questions

Norma Reboredo, citizen, asked the committee if the public had any reason to be concerned with what countries our water pipes, hydrants, pumps, and the like are coming from. Mr. Boyd stated all our parts used to transfer and treat our water is domestic and perfectly safe.

Diana Hopper, citizen, what was the effectiveness of GAC on PFAS and when would the trails to seek retribution from the companies begin. Hackett said the GAC is very effective at the current levels allowed and the trials were expected to begin in June.

Adjourn

There being no further business to discuss the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted.

Mike Hackett, Director
Rome Water and Sewer Division