



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, September 7, 2023
9:00 AM

PRESENT: Chairperson Jim Bojo
Commissioner Craig McDaniel
Commissioner Elaina Beeman
Mr. Sammy Rich, City Manager
Mrs. Meredith Ulmer, Assistant City Manager
Mrs. Toni Rhinehart, Finance Director
Mr. Doug Walker, Public Information Officer
Mr. John Boyd, Assistant Division Director
Mr. Bryan Parris, Customer Service Director
Mr. Jeff Hill, Water Reclamation Facilities Director
Mr. Jacquelyn Turpin, Assistant Water Reclamation Facilities Director

VISITORS: David Crowder WRGA News
Two citizens present

CALL TO ORDER

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

REVIEW OF THE MINUTES

No changes to the August 3, 2023, minutes were suggested, and minutes were approved by common consent.

FINANCIAL REPORT

Minutes prepared by: Bryan Parris, Customer Service Director
Water and Sewer Committee/ Commission Minutes, September 7, 2023

Mrs. Rhinehart reported Operating Revenues in water services were up \$275,000.00 from last year and sewer services revenues are up by \$940,000.00, connections fee up \$126,000.00 and total operating revenue up right at \$1.4 million to date through the end of July. Non-Operating Revenue, this is things such as interest revenue and money we received from the litigation through July that is at \$130 million and interest income is \$934,000.00 versus \$46,000.00 last year so we are earning around 5.2% right now. Total revenues and transfers-in are upright at \$2.4 million when we take out that litigation amount, we also will have a little that will be coming in August and then some more over the next 5 years.

Operating Expenses, we are above where we were this time last year but still most departments are within budget and if not very close. We do not have a lot to report on the expense side, but I do want to talk about one thing. Looking at the end of the expense report you see some transfer out numbers, of course water funds are R&E and you'll see that in that section but you will also see a transfer to General Funds which is made of a couple of things and one of those is retirement, retirement money goes to General Funds and is paid from there and an administrative fee and a payment to cover some of the cost of paving for repairs.

Cash balances are very healthy because we have very little debt right now.

Commissioner McDaniel asked if Floyd County was buying any water from us right now? Mr. Boyd replied for the last few months they have been averaging around 16 million gallons per month. Chairperson Bojo asked how that compared to earlier in the year? Mr. Boyd said it has been as low as 5 million per month.

McDaniel stated he asked because he was wondering how Calhoun was addressing PFAS or if we knew. Mr. Boyd said they have contacted us for some feedback of what we had learned, and they were planning to do a pilot program like we did.

OLD BUSINESS

Highway 411 Sewer

Mr. Boyd presented a map showing the existing sewer lines around Walmart and Tractor Supply on Highway 411 pointing out a proposed car wash development and the Evans property. Saying Mr. Evans had done some preliminary engineering with Southern Engineering, and we took his preliminary work and got a true cost estimate back in March of this year and it's about 3000 feet from his property to the nearest sewer and that estimate was a little over a million. I would say the carwash is working on their sewer drawings now to submit for approval and it seems they are prepared to do the line extensions to get that parcel on sewer. McDaniel, so all that expense is theirs? Boyd replied yes all that would be theirs. Bojo commented, that is not the million though? Mr. Boyd, no that would likely be around half a million. But these estimates were back in March so based on what we saw with the Burwell Creek project I don't think these numbers are high enough anymore. Commissioner McDaniel questioned, between Mathis Dr and Callier Springs Larry Martin owns all that now, is there sewer there? Mr. Boyd, sewer is at end of Mathis Dr. McDaniel, so when they complete the connector that is going to reroute where it comes in to 411, will sewer be moved? Boyd, we will have to work with GDOT on that to make sure we have access and don't lose what we have now. My understanding from latest I saw; everything would shift towards Cartersville. McDaniel but as far as moving sewer will that be a DOT expense, or will we have to spend any money on that? Boyd said when working with GDOT in the past with Floyd County GDOT covered the cost of relocations, but he did not know if that was done the same way with the city.

Commissioner Beeman commented in the past when work was being done in the area the residence in Chulio Hills experienced low water pressure, with all this new development will there be problems with pressure again in Chulio

Minutes prepared by: Bryan Parris, Customer Service Director
Water and Sewer Committee/ Commission Minutes, September 7, 2023

Hills area? Mr. Boyd said the system pressure in the area is around 200 psi. which is very high, and no one should have any issues with low pressure and went on to add if we could get the address of customers who are experiencing low pressure, we would be happy to have someone go out to investigate and it sounded like some customers may be having problems with their pressure reducing valves.

Chairperson Bojo asked if the carwash development pays for the sewer extension to their parcel would that lower the cost of extending the sewer to the Evans parcel? Mr. Boyd and Mr. Rich both said yes it would reduce that cost. Mr. Boyd said his recommendation would be for Mr. Evans and whomever is developing the carwash parcel get together to see if they could work something out.

Mr. Rich reminded the committee in the past there was some conversations with Mr. Evans about donating a 6-acre parcel for building a fire station so the thought at the time was, could we do some in-kind help with sewer, and we would get property out of the deal, unfortunately this was not a good location for a fire station. Mr. Evans has also engaged EXP to get a traffic signal and some funding from the state so there was a possibility of some additional funds we could have received towards building what would have become a city street that would facilitate all this new development in this part of the community on Highway 411.

Mr. Rich informed the committee that we had some residents from Chulio Hills ask to come speak next Monday night about sewer service. We had a talk about setting up a special meeting to have residents come talk to the Water Committee. Chairperson Bojo said he thought that is something we should probably do and ask for a reminder of the cost estimates we had. I recall it was around \$6 million. Mr. Boyd said the estimate being used was about \$3.2 million, this does not include the lower portion on this map. Mr. Rich stated again this is an estimate not a bid number. Mr. Boyd said based on the last bid opening he did not think this was high enough. McDaniel asked with the new development in the area could the sewer come under 411 there. Mr. Boyd said this would not work, it would not gravity feed. Chairperson Bojo asked Mr. Boyd what he would predict the bid to come in at now. Mr. Boyd replied he would suspect \$5-6 million. He also added this number did not include the \$1,800.00 tap fee and tying into the customers plumbing which would likely run another \$3,000.00 to \$4,000.00 per resident. Chairperson Bojo, that's for each individual house and they would be responsible for that? Boyd replied, typically. Chairperson Bojo asked if we could canvas the area and see who would be willing to do this with all this information and the additional monthly charges.

Chairperson Bojo, so where are we, do we call for a special Water Committee meeting or wait until we hear them out on Monday? It was agreed to wait until after Monday's meeting.

NEW BUSINESS

Mr. Hill updated the committee on new projects in the Water Reclamation Facilities, which included a brief history of both treatment facilities. Hill also explained our current permit had expired August 31st, just a few days ago, and we had applied for a new permit at the beginning of the year which is still under review. The state is currently doing some testing on the river related to dissolved oxygen, they are looking at the big picture of everyone discharging into the river. They are working on our limits trying to determine where we are going to land as a group.

De-nitrification- with our current process we cannot meet the likely lower limits of nitrogen. We would have to build another treatment process in the plant, it's not a whole new plant just adding another process where the oxygen would be removed and that allows the nitrogen gas to just release into the atmosphere and we have a cleaner treated water moving to the next process. We are estimating \$10-12 million for this project.

Commissioner McDaniel asked do manufacturing processing and agriculture farmland add nitrates to the river through run off and discharge? Mr. Hill stated there was typically nitrogen and phosphorus in fertilizer, but he did not know the requirements for buffer zones in agriculture, but you are probably going to get some run off with nitrogen making it into the river. Industries are discharged into the sewer systems which we regulate.

Tertiary Treatment-Hill explained right now we are a secondary treatment plant. We have a chemical process we use to help settle stuff out of the water and this would be adding a filter we run through before we discharge into the river which is becoming the industry standard. Hill stated he obtained some budget pricing for equipment back in 2021 of about \$6 million, this figure was only for equipment and did not include everything such as tanks, engineering, and construction just to name a few things, so we are estimating around \$15 million for this project.

Primary Clarifiers- originally built two in 1966 and four built in 1974. We investigated replacing these in the next upgrade at the plant back in 2005. We are estimating this project to be around \$8 million.

Mr. Hill also presented a list of other possible upcoming projects which includes Influent pump station generator at \$2 million, Scada system replacement at \$2 million, Bio solids drying and/or incinerating equipment at \$5 to \$50 million, Maintenance building at \$2 million, Second Coosa WRF aeration basin at \$5 million, and a Septic truck waste receiving station for Rome WRF at \$500,000.00. Total estimated cost of around \$48.5 to \$50.5 million.

Commissioner McDaniel asked if we had anything on SPLOST for sewer? Mr. Boyd said 411 did make the cut.

Chairperson Bojo asked do we not have any money budgeted for in-house to offset and pay for some of this? Mr. Boyd replied that we do carry some of this in our capital, we anticipate for these kinds of things, but our capital is constantly shifting as things progress and change. Chairperson Bojo, do we have a priority list? Mrs. Rhinehart commented we have a five-year plan.

Commissioner McDaniel questioned; with the litigation we are reducing rates but in terms of doing another rate study are we planning on that? Mr. Boyd stated yes, it is time for a rate study, and we have received a proposal we are reviewing. Chairperson Bojo; is this being done by the same gentleman who did the last one? Mr. Rich replied yes, Bill Zieburtz was doing this study as well.

OTHER

LIHWAP

Commissioner Beeman asked if the Rapid Housing Program participants would qualify to receive LIHWAP assistance. Mr. Parris stated LIHWAP was income based for residential customers and he would assume if United Way was responsible for the utility bill, then it would likely not qualify but Tallatoona would determine that.

Adjourn

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

Respectfully submitted.

Mike Hackett, Director
Rome Water and Sewer Division

Minutes prepared by: Bryan Parris, Customer Service Director
Water and Sewer Committee/ Commission Minutes, September 7, 2023

