



GreenvilleWater

**MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING
COMMISSIONERS OF PUBLIC WORKS
Greenville Water
407 W. Broad Street, Level 2,
Greenville, South Carolina
November 5, 2024
8:30 a.m.**

Commissioners of Public Works in attendance:

Chairman Phillip A. Kilgore, Debra M. Sofield, and John DeWorken. Absent: Vice-Chairman James W. Bannister and Mayor Knox H. White. A quorum was present.

Greenville Water Senior Staff in attendance:

Chief Executive Officer Jeff Boss, Chief Administrative Officer Dr. Bob Schmidt, Chief Operations Officer Jeff Phillips, Chief Technology Officer Kenneth Frazier, Director of Operations and Maintenance Mark Hattendorf, Director of I.T. Brad Treas, Director of Water Resources Elizabeth Pierczynski, Director of Business Services Steve Miller, Director of Human Resources Lisa Bryant, Director of Communications Pam Flasch, Director of Engineering David Niese, Assistant Director of Facilities Maintenance Allen White, Internal Auditor Jacob Polson, and Attorney Adam Bach.

The Regular Meeting of the Commissioners of Public Works of the City of Greenville, SC was called to order at 8:30 a.m. by Chairman Kilgore.

1. WELCOME

Chairman Kilgore welcomed Commissioner John DeWorken to his first official Commission meeting.

2. PUBLIC COMMENT

No comments were presented.

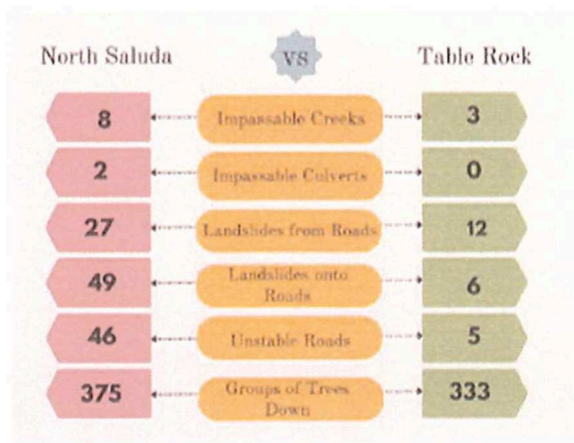
3. CONSENT AGENDA

Chairman Kilgore asked for questions pertaining to the consent agenda items. There being none, he called for approval of the items of the Consent Agenda which were the meeting minutes of the Regular Commission Meeting October 1, 2024, the Water Resources Report, New Development, and New Annexations. Commissioner Sofield moved, seconded by Commissioner DeWorken, to approve the items of the consent agenda. The motion passed unanimously.

4. NORTH SALUDA WATERSHED RESTORATION

Chairman Kilgore called on Chief Administrative Officer Bob Schmidt and Conservation Technician Supervisor Austin Willimas to talk about watershed restoration. As they were moving to the podium, Commissioner Sofield thanked staff for the 319-project public meeting held on October 30, 2024.

Dr. Schmidt presented a summary of damages from Hurricane Helene that were known as of the date of the meeting. Below is the chart presented:



These were representative numbers; they did not reflect the total amount for example of impassable culverts. It was just that two culverts were identified as impassable. Others were out there that are now missing or not visible.

Maps and videos were provided for a closer look showing the damage that is known, which was only about 10% of the damage to roads, access points, and the like. There are still lots of questions such as how much it will cost to repair so that there is survivability within reason, resiliency, and the number of years to determine how much it will cost to make repairs. Some areas are not repairable. Staff is also looking at stream restoration requirements at the same time and how to tie these two together.

Mr. Williams provided pictures of a road that was repaired three to four years ago to where it was stable and passable with gravel. It was one of the better roads and it was destroyed by landslides and trees. There were many other instances of this type of damage. Examples of areas where vegetation was washed away and debris blockage in the river were also provided. Mr. Boss stated before there was a lake that is depended on for drinking water, this would not have been a problem because there was no sediment. However, now there is a lake where all the sediment is deposited which causes the turbidity of the lake go up and down after each rain.

A list of priority repairs was presented, listed as priority A, B, and C. Priority A would restore immediate access so that there is a way to get into the watershed. Priority B includes more outlying sections, roads which will provide redundancy to sites like Hogback Mountain. Priority C would provide sediment transport mediation through diversion structures.

5. 2024 SUPPLEMENTAL WATERSHED BUDGET REQUEST

Chairman Kilgore called on Dr. Schmidt to present the proposed amendment to the 2024 budget for repairs from damage caused by Hurricane Helene. Dr. Schmidt presented the cost placeholders for the best guesstimate of current and future expenses for repairs. Mr. Boss explained the goal will be for Greenville Water to be reimbursed, but the money has to be spent to make repairs and then staff will make application for reimbursement through FEMA, the FEMA Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC) program, et cetera.

The following amendments were proposed for the 2024 budget for the watersheds:

**Request for 2024
Budget Amendment
Watersheds (Hurricane
Helene): \$500,000**

Proposed Amendments to 2024 Budget - Watersheds

Item	Cost
FEMA Category A Response	\$200,000.00
Emergency Services and Supplies	\$200,000.00
Emergency Overtime	\$50,000.00
Professional Services	\$50,000.00
Total	\$500,000.00

Commissioner DeWorken moved, seconded by Commissioner Sofield, to approve the 2024 supplemental watershed budget request. The motion passed unanimously.

6. 2025 BUDGET REVIEW

Chairman Kilgore asked Director of Finance Jacob Polson for a review of the 2025 budget. Mr. Polson reviewed the budget process in which Greenville Water prepares a biennial operating budget. In the November 2023 Commission Meeting, the Commission approved the 2024/2025 Operating and Maintenance Budget and rate adjustments. This review briefly looked over the 2024 year to date through September 30th, the estimated year end budget totals, and an overview of the previously approved 2025 operations and maintenance budget with proposed amendments.

Staff reviewed the 2025 budget looking for omissions or anything unaccounted for and costs due to weather related events. An amendment was proposed to cover the costs of anything that could not be absorbed with the 2024 budget. The proposed amendments were for the technology and watersheds portions of the budget.

7. 2025 BUDGET AMENDMENT REQUESTS

Chief Technology Officer Kenneth Frazier presented the proposed amendments to the 2025 budget for technology. Mr. Frazier explained that most of the costs were approved in the midyear budget update. The amendments presented at this time were operations and maintenance cost of the standard maintenance and support for the phone system, GIS license agreement, software licensing increases, et cetera.

Commissioner Sofield moved, seconded by Commissioner DeWorken, to approve the amendment to the 2025 technology portion of the budget to include the presented maintenance and support items. The motion passed unanimously.

Dr. Schmidt presented budget updates due to repairs necessary in the aftermath of Hurricane Helene. The updates included restoration contractors, equipment, supplies, and additional personnel. Commissioner Sofield moved, seconded by Commissioner DeWorken, to approve the proposed amendment to the watersheds portion of the budget. The motion passed unanimously.

8. 2025 HEALTH INSURANCE UPDATE

Chairman Kilgore welcomed Director of Human Resources Lisa Bryant to present the 2025 health care benefits. Mrs. Bryant presented highlights of the 2025 benefits which included the following:

No change in providers

- ✓ Medical and Vision coverage remains under Blue Cross Blue Shield of SC
- ✓ Cigna Dental will remain the Dental provider

Medical coverage for Team Members will continue to be FREE

- ✓ Only a small (2%) increase in medical premiums for dependent coverage!
- ✓ No increase in premiums for dental or vision.

High Deductible Health Plan (HDHP)

- ✓ Greenville Water will continue to contribute to the team member's Health Savings Account and 401(k).

The only change was elimination of the base medical plan which simplifies the benefit offerings. Team members were advised in 2023 that this would be taking place. Chairman Kilgore commented that while the base plan is being eliminated, the team members on the base medical plan will be migrated to a plan that management feels is actually better. Mrs. Bryant said that was correct. These team members will be migrated to the high deductible health plan which has lots of advantages. It does require that the team members become better consumers and more involved in their health care and the choices they make. There is a cost savings in their premiums. Those with family coverage will be saving \$75 a pay period for premiums and once the deductible is met the coverage is the same as the base plan. There is also the benefit of a contribution to their health savings account (HSA) and 401(k) plan. The HSA contribution by Greenville Water covers the deductible. Chairman Kilgore summed up the details saying the premiums are lower and the deductible is covered. Mr. Boss confirmed. Team members that have switched to the high deductible plan in previous years love the plan.

Open enrollment for the 2025 benefits will be held November 7th through November 22nd. Mandatory team member meetings will be held November 7th.

9. CHIEF EXECUTIVE REPORT

Mr. Boss stated that the scientific data being collected in the watersheds was lost during Hurricane Helene. The conservation technicians will be getting back to data collection setup which necessitates the need for the restoration personnel mentioned in the budget amendment.

Team member retention has improved greatly over the last year and a half. Staffing is down by only 5 team members of the 267 budgeted. New retention incentives have been implemented and appear to be working.

Great news on Phase 2 of the 60-inch main project. The bids came in below budget. The total spend for the project is expected to come in around \$38 million which is well under budget.

Recent Greenville Water public outreach events included A Day without Water on October 17th at Unity Park and Walk for Water on October 26th at Furman University.

Mr. Boss referenced an award placed in front of Commissioners received by Greenville Water in Palm Desert, California. The award was presented by Frost and Sullivan to one water utility who ranked the highest for sustainability and resourcefulness.

Mr. Boss introduced Greenville Water's new Accounting Manager Brandi Cawthorn. Ms. Cawthorn shared she is an active Certified Public Accountant (CPA) registered in North Carolina, currently working on her South Carolina license. She attended the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Prior to coming to Greenville Water, she worked as an assurance manager for a mid-size public accounting firm where she audited non-profits and government entities. Commissioners welcomed Ms. Cawthorn to the team.

10. COMMISSION COMMENTS

Chairman Kilgore thanked staff for being out there in the industry influencing policy and improving best practices to be great practices, not only for Greenville Water's constituents but also for the industry at large.

Commissioner Sofield reminded everyone of the City of Greenville Christmas parade taking place on December 7th. Costumes are being put together and the float is being designed.

Commissioner Sofield thanked Mr. Boss for joining her on a radio show interview, add it is good to get out in the community to let folks know what Greenville Water does and share about partnerships that are taking place.

11. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned 9:40 a.m.


Phillip A. Kilgore, Chairman


Kimberly Haueter, Executive Assistant