



GreenvilleWater

**MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING
COMMISSIONERS OF PUBLIC WORKS
407 West Broad Street
Commission Room, Level Two
Greenville, South Carolina
December 5, 2017
8:15 a.m.**

Commissioners of Public Works in attendance:

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

Greenville Water Staff in attendance:

Chief Executive Officer David H. Bereskin, Chief Financial Officer Phil Robey, Chief Operations Officer Rebecca West, Controller Jondia Berry, Director of Engineering Michael Sharpless, Human Resources Director Richard Posey, Water Resources Director Rick Pfeleiderer, Business Process Analyst Jane Arrington, Manager of Field Operations Wayne Benson, Communications Manager Olivia Vassey, Facilities Maintenance Fleet Manager Allen White, Field Services Supervisor Jan Tinsley, Billing Supervisor Jennifer Meek, and Commission Attorney David Ward.

The Regular Meeting of the Commissioners of Public Works was called to order at 8:15 a.m. by Chairman Kilgore.

1. WELCOME

Chairman Kilgore welcomed visitor Danny Ware, Vice President at Davis & Floyd, to the meeting and then invited Chief Executive Officer David Bereskin to welcome Jan Tinsley as the new Field Services Supervisor and Jennifer Meek as the new Billing Supervisor. Commissioners congratulated Ms. Tinsley and Ms. Meek on their new positions and Chairman Kilgore nominated Ms. Tinsley to be the Chair of the Greenville Water Christmas Float Committee. Mr. Bereskin also volunteered CIP Engineer Mark Hattendorf to assist Ms. Tinsley on the Float Committee. Commissioner Bannister moved, seconded by Commissioner Sofield, to amend the budget to include the Greenville Water Float to be entered in the Greenville Poinsettia Christmas Parade. The motion passed unanimously.

2. PUBLIC COMMENT

No comments were presented at this time.

3. CONSENT AGENDA

Chairman Kilgore listed the items of the Consent Agenda which were the meeting minutes of the Regular Commission Meeting November 7, 2017, the Water Resources Report, the Financial Update, New Development and New Annexation Covenants. There being no questions or comments regarding the consent agenda, the items were deemed approved.

4. STRATEGIC PLANNING FOR 2017

Mr. Bereskin commenced the Strategic Planning Update for 2017, reminding the Commission of the three focus areas: Operational Excellence, Longterm Viability and Corporate/Social Responsibility. Each department presented their accomplishments on their strategic goals as provided in the Commission agenda package.

5. SET OFF/GOVERNMENT ENTERPRISE ACCOUNTS RECEIVABLE REPORT

Chairman Kilgore welcomed Controller Jondia Berry to report on the Set Off report and the Government Enterprise Accounts Receivable program. Ms. Berry reviewed the definition of uncollectible accounts, the current collection tools used by Greenville Water and the process for collection of debt. Write-offs have been trending down over the last five years, however write-offs still total greater than \$200,000 annually.

In an effort to improve collections Staff looked into the Government Enterprise Accounts Receivable (GEAR) program where The Department of Revenue directly works as a collection agency working on Greenville Water's behalf to recoup owed monies. The GEAR collection efforts include:

- Setoff of state taxes
- Wage garnishments
- Tax liens
- Bank account levies
- Revocation of business licenses.
- GEAR also permits debtors to set up payment plans to satisfy claims
- It will be Greenville Water's decision on which tools are used on its behalf

Mr. Bereskin asked the Commission to keep in mind that the current Greenville Water Set Off Debt program only includes residential accounts. The GEAR program will allow recovery of bad debts from residential, commercial and industrial accounts. Also, new debts can be added monthly in the GEAR program versus the current annual process in the existing Setoff Debt program. Chief Financial Officer Phil Robey added that before an account goes into collections the parties are notified so they are aware of what will happen. Commissioners directed Staff to remove the wage garnishments tool.

Mayor White left the meeting at 9:16 a.m. Before leaving, he announced George Fletcher has been appointed to be on the Commission as a member of City Council, filling Commissioner Sudduth's vacant seat.

6. ENFORCEMENT OF METER TAMPERING LAW

Chairman Kilgore invited Mr. Robey to present on the enforcement of the meter tampering law. Mr. Robey explained not only does Greenville Water have customers that do not pay but there are people who procure water illegally. Unauthorized usage is triggered on a "finalled" status account reflecting over 500 gallons of water. This usage triggers an unauthorized usage service order. The meter is turned off, and a cap and tag are installed by a Field Service Representative. The tag explains it is against South Carolina State Law to tamper with the meter. Billing then reviews the account to determine if the customer has taken responsibility of the account. If the customer has not taken responsibility of the account it is activated as an unauthorized usage customer. Billing monitors the account on a monthly basis. If additional usage is detected, another order is created to turn off and install a lock and bonnet on the meter. Customer Service then adds the appropriate Unauthorized fees.

In 2013, S.C. Code of Laws – Sec. 16-13-385 was updated to add a third tier of offense. Since this update Greenville Water has worked with Commission Attorney David Ward and other law enforcement agencies to develop an understanding of the law and the best

approach for enforcement. Enforcement experience to date includes three cases with two guilty pleas and one upcoming bench trial.

7. CONSUMER PRICE INDEX

Chairman Kilgore welcomed HR Director Richard Posey to present on the latest Consumer Price Index (CPI) in consideration of changes to Greenville Water's pay plan. In 2015 Staff recommended to the Commission that Greenville Water should review the cost of living and other economic indicators each year to ensure pay ranges remain competitive. This is a best practice to review the pay plan because it helps improve recruitment and employee morale.

In 2015 no changes were needed. In 2016 the pay grades were increased by 1.6% based on economic indicators and the Bureau of Labor Statistics – CPI. In 2017, the current trend is 2.0%, but Staff will use the CPI data effective December 15th. Staff's recommendation is to implement a 2.0% increase to pay grades on January 1st. This will not change employee pay rates at that time, just the pay plan. Mr. Posey presented an example of the recommendation.

Commissioner Bannister moved, seconded by Commissioner Sofield, to approve the increase of each Pay Grade by 2% effective January 1, 2018 as presented. The motion passed unanimously.

8. LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

Chairman Kilgore invited Government Liaison Bob Knight to present a legislative update. Mr. Knight presented information on several items for the upcoming session, including an anticipated Duke Energy rate increase. Also, a bill was passed last year to start the process of Pension Reform, but due to distractions momentum was lost to solve the problem. A Tax Reform Study Committee met to discuss stream of revenue in State Government and possibly propose a biennial budget. The Department of Health and Environmental Control (DHEC) requested two additional staff people for Groundwater Resource Assistance. DHEC has lost several staff members and needs more resources. Two Surface Water Amendment bills on the calendar are being monitored. The Plastic Pipe Bill passed the House of Representative last year and will be monitored as it is presented to the Senate.

9. CHIEF EXECUTIVE REPORT

Greenville Water's Water Resources Department received the Department of Health and Environmental Control Area Wide Optimization Program Award for the Adkins and Stovall Plants for the sixteenth year in a row.

Staff met with Gary Hutcher, Construction Manager for Centennial American Properties, regarding the project on Falls Street at Camperdown. Both parties came to an agreement that Greenville Water would pay for the oversizing of the water line to serve the fire protection requirements of the complex which is roughly \$16,000. Mr. Hutcher will be seeking a \$40,000 contribution from the City of Greenville Economic Development Funding program.

Chief Operations Officer Rebecca West announced a prescribed burn in the North Saluda Watershed, which will include approximately 2 acres. This is to be the beginning of the prescribed fire plan.

Minutes – Commissioners of Public Works
December 5, 2017
Page 4

The Woodvale Ave/Rock Creek Drive project completed almost a year earlier had reports of a leak on one of the brand new service lines. When making the repair, crews noticed the tracer wire placed over the plastic pipe used to locate the pipe had burned into the pipe creating the leak. Another leak appeared near this location, so staff decided to use the leak detection equipment to check the neighborhood to ensure there were no other leaks. Maintenance Staff were also called in to check for electric currents coming in on the meters. While trying to determine why these two houses were the only ones involved, a call was placed to Duke Energy to see if there were any electrical issues during this time period. Duke reported two transformer problems in this area during this time. It is believed that power ran from the transformer down to these two particular services.

Communications Manager Olivia Vassey attended a recent Pickens County Water Authority Meeting where a study, not included on the agenda, was presented regarding options for building a plant by putting an intake into Lake Keowee or buying into Greenville Water's system. Staff just recently obtained the study and will be reviewing it.

An agreement has been entered into with a mechanical contractor to replace the current HVAC system in the main building. The replacement will take place over the next three to four months. This will help to stabilize the heating and cooling climate in the building. As soon as the mechanical replacement is complete, the building will be painted and the carpet will be replaced. Commissioners expressed an interest in security updates and best practices for employee safety be included in a discussion regarding updating of the main building and instructed Staff to perform due diligence prior to the discussion. Chairman Kilgore asked that Commissioner Sofield be involved in the building update discussion and then a follow-up presentation will be given to the full Commission after Staff researches safety practices.

10. COMMISSION COMMENTS

No comments presented at this time.

11. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:58 a.m.



Phillip A. Kilgore, Chairman

Kimberly J. Haulter, Executive Assistant