

Minutes

WATER AND SEWER ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Regular meeting

7 p.m. June 6, 2023

Board Meeting Room of Town Hall Annex, 105 E. Corbin St.



Present: Chair Jenn Sykes, Vice Chair Daniel Rawlins, Members Grace Beeler, Mo Rasheed, Steed Robinson and Barry Weston, and Commissioner Robb English

Staff: Environmental Engineering Supervisor Bryant Green; Civil Engineering Technician Tyler Freeman; and Utilities Director Marie Strandwitz

1. Call to order and welcome of guests

Chair Jenn Sykes called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. She took roll and confirmed the presence of a quorum. Members Grace Beeler and Barry Weston arrived during discussion of Item 3.

2. Agenda changes and approval

There were no changes to the agenda

Motion: Member Mo Rasheed moved for approval of the agenda with no changes. Member Steed Robinson seconded.

Vote: 4-0.

3. Minutes review and approval

Minutes from regular meeting on Apr. 4, 2024.

Motion: Rasheed moved to approve the Apr. 4, 2024, minutes with corrections. Robinson seconded.

Vote: 6-0.

Changes: Under Item 6B, change Fred Meyer to Graig Meyer.

4. Updates

A. Utilities status report highlights

Environmental Engineering Supervisor Bryant Green presented the utilities status report. Discussion on presented topics included:

- Triangle West High School water reserve request.
- Updates on the overrun grant, Starfield booster grant.
- Replacement of hydrant valves downtown and related water shut-off notices.

B. Budget and rate model

Utilities Director Marie Strandwitz reported that the Utilities Department had to cut many items from the budget during the budgeting process. She reported on the department's work with Raftelis to develop an accurate rate model. There was discussion of the proposed rate increase and reduction in the minimum volume. There was discussion of leak detection and its impact on water loss due to leaks. Leaks in the town's system have been at a relatively reasonable rate of 8-15%. There was further discussion of the benefits of creating a new rate model. Strandwitz and Environmental Engineering Supervisor Bryant Green reported on the state of the town's debt coverage ratio and its impact on the budgeting process. There

was discussion of future projects that may incur large costs. These projects include water line relocation for North Carolina Department of Transportation projects after FY30 and the operational challenges of providing water service to the growing population. There was discussion of water monitoring and demand and discharge from new industrial projects. There was discussion of monitoring within the region for per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) and it was reported that Hillsborough detected PFAS, but that it was well under the threshold.

C. Member term expirations.

Sykes's and Vice Chair Daniel Rawlins's terms will expire at the end of this year, and they cannot be reappointed. Most members are currently serving their first terms; Weston is serving his second. There are still two out of town vacancies on board, but no applicants.

5. Agenda for joint meeting in August

The August joint meeting with the Board of Commissioners was discussed. The history and necessity of the Water and Sewer Advisory Committee were discussed. Some members expressed frustration that many of the recommendations the committee has made have not been followed by the town board. There was discussion of the committee's limited power in its advisory role. The idea was raised of shifting the committee to serve in an ad-hoc fashion rather than with standing meetings. It was suggested that this topic be discussed at the August meeting. There was discussion about the commissioners' outreach and town communications efforts to educate residents about utilities issues.

6. Reports from Meetings

A. Meeting from April 8

Weston had nothing to report.

B. Meeting from April 22

Sykes reported that the items addressed at this meeting were negated later by the budget meeting.

C. Meeting from May 13

This meeting was discussed in detail during discussion of previous agenda items.

D. Meeting from May 28

Rawlins reported that the numbers reported at the budget meeting, especially the debt coverage ratio, came as a shock to many people in attendance. He said there were many questions from the Board of Commissioners about what items had to be deferred due to the budget constraints. He recommended that everyone watch the recording of the meeting.

E. Meeting from June 3

Rasheed reported that there was a presentation and a discussion on asset inventory management software. Commissioner Robb English added that there has been a request from town departments for more comprehensive asset management software.

7. Assignments for Board of Commissioners meetings

A. Meeting June 10 (Weston/Sykes)

B. Meeting June 24 (Beeler/Robinson)

8. Future agenda items

No future agenda items were discussed.

9. Adjournment

Motion: Robinson moved to adjourn the meeting. Weston seconded.

Sykes adjourned the meeting at 8:33 p.m. without a vote.

Respectfully submitted,

Tyler Freeman
Civil Engineering Technician
Staff support to the Water and Sewer Advisory Committee

Approved: Month X, 202X