

Stafford County Utilities Commission
Meeting Minutes
November 18, 2014

I. Call to order

Chairman Bill Tignor called to order the regular meeting of the Utilities Commission at the George L. Gordon, Jr. Government Center on November 18, 2014 in the Board Chambers.

II. Roll call

Members Present: Joyce Arndt, Jeffrey Dunn, Alan Glazman, John Harris, DaBora Lovitt, and Bill Tignor

Members Absent: Gordon Howard

Staff Present: Mike Smith, Janet Spencer, and Hope Bullard

III. Public Presentations

Mr. Paul Waldowski of 8 Pickett Lane commented about county water and sewer service for the Stafford Meadows subdivision.

IV. Public Hearing to Amend and Reordain Stafford County Code Chapter 25-27 and 25-28

Mr. Smith presented background information about amending and reordaining the Stafford County Code Chapter 25-27 and Chapter 25-28.

Following the presentation, Mr. Tignor opened the public hearing for statements from the public. Mr. Waldowski commented about the absence of literature for the public hearing.

Following the public comments, Mr. Tignor closed the public hearing.

Ms. Lovitt made a motion to recommend approval of proposed Ordinance O14-40. The motion was seconded by Joyce Arndt and passed with a 6-0 vote.

V. Approval of Minutes

The October 14, 2014 minutes were approved as written.

VI. Commission Members' Comments

Ms. Lovitt commented that she would like to review the matter of grandfathering existing customers on subsidized pump and haul at the next meeting.

VII. Director's Report

Mr. Smith distributed the 2015 calendar of scheduled commission meetings for members to review and approve.

VIII. Unfinished Business

Lake Mooney Financial Overview

Ms. Bullard reported that as of October 31, 2014, \$138,308,166 dollars has been spent on the project. The projected total to be spent is \$139,815,824 dollars.

Pump and Haul Program

Mr. Dunn reported the subcommittee's recommendations to the pump and haul program, which consisted of the following:

- Customers currently on subsidized pump and haul would have their property evaluated to see if it met the current guidelines for subsidized pump and haul.
- In order for the property to remain on the subsidized list, it must meet the current guidelines including the owner-occupied provision, as well as permitting a site evaluation by an Authorized On-site Soil Evaluator (AOSE) to determine if there is an alternative or repair for their system.
- The cost for the evaluation will be borne by the Department of Utilities upon the owner's consent. If a repair or replacement is deemed feasible, the County will inform the owner and discontinue pump and haul services after a suitable period, not to exceed 6 months, for the owner to construct the needed repair or replacement. Upon request, any owner whose pump and haul contract is renewed shall be entitled to a refund of the original availability fee paid.
- If the property meets the criteria, and there is no alternative, the owner will be required to renew the pump and haul contract for a period of ten years, after which another site evaluation will be required.
- The owners will also be required to record the pump and haul contract with the Circuit court linked to their property.
- All existing properties on subsidized pump and haul will be grandfathered and allowed to continue with subsidized pump and haul at the rate determined by the Board of Supervisors.
- All future applicants will be subject to a hardship criteria.

Discussion ensued about the subcommittee's recommendations.

Mr. Harris proposed several items for consideration, which were in concurrence with the subcommittee's recommendations.

New Business

Authorize Amendment to the Virginia Resources Authority Water & Sewer 2009A Bond Financing Agreement

Ms. Bullard reported the Department of Utilities requested and received approval for a loan in the amount of \$9,606,484.21 (the "Loan") from the Virginia Water Facilities Revolving Fund from Virginia Resource Authority (VRA) in 2009 for upgrades to the Little Falls Run Wastewater Treatment Facility. The loan was established for a period of twenty (20) years with a rate of interest of 3.35% annually.

On August 8, 2014, the VRA submitted a request to amend the original agreement based on a reduction of the existing rate from 3.35% to 2.72% per annum on the remaining balance of the loan. The first payment at the reduced rate will commence on March 1, 2015 and continue semi-annually thereafter every March 1 and September 1 of each year.

The Administrator of the VRA, acting with consent of the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ), has set forth terms for finalizing the Amendment. In order to complete this process approval from the Board of Supervisors and a positive opinion from our Bond Counsel is required. Staff has consulted with McGuire Woods (the County's bond counsel), and they have provided a letter that recommends proceeding with this action.

Mr. Smith informed the Commission that due to time constraints and because the Commission's meeting was held after the Board's meeting, this item was presented and approved at the November 13th Board meeting. Therefore, a vote is not required by the Commission.

Authorize a Comprehensive Plan Review to Consider the Embrey Mill Water Tank as a Site for a Verizon Cellular Telecommunications Antenna

Mr. Smith reported this item was also presented and approved at the November 13th Board meeting. The Department of Utilities is considering the Embrey Mill Water Tank as a possible site for a Verizon Cellular telecommunications antenna lease agreement. Before negotiations can begin on an agreement for the use of the tank, the site must be evaluated for compliance with the Comprehensive Plan.

In order to begin the process of a Comprehensive Plan review, the owner must sign a Statement of Understanding to allow the review. Resolution R14-275 authorizes the County Administrator to sign the Statement of Understanding to allow the Comprehensive Plan Compliance Review.

If the review finds the site is in compliance with the Comprehensive Plan, the County will work with the Telecommunications and Utilities Commissions to develop an agreement which will be brought back to the Board for their approval.

Mr. Harris informed the Commission that he is interested in all activities and applications regarding cell phone tower usage because he has several properties in Stafford County which are under consideration to potentially have cellular power communications.

Consider a Short Sewer Extension Project for 558 Telegraph Road

Mr. Smith reported the Department of Utilities has received an application from three property owners on Telegraph Road for a Neighborhood Project to extend low pressure sanitary sewer to their residences. One of the properties had a failed septic tank and is located inside the Urban Service Area (USA), but sewer is located near the property. The property can be serviced with temporary pump and haul and connected to public sewer once the project is completed.

The project meets the Neighborhood Sewer Policy criteria. The total cost of the project, to include connection to the existing Manhole at Brighton Way, a 1-1/2" Low Pressure Sewer main and three house connections is \$30,500. Additional costs include \$15,000 for engineering, surveys and plats. The total not to exceed estimated cost is therefore \$45,500.00

Mr. Dunn asked how long would the homeowners be on pump and haul. Mr. Smith responded they would remain on temporary pump and haul until the spring of 2015, which is the projected completion date of the project.

Ms. Lovitt asked if other homeowners in the area could connect to the sewer system. Mr. Smith responded any homeowner within 300 feet of the USA of the low pressure sanitary sewer line is eligible to connect to the system. If the homeowner is beyond 300 feet, then it becomes a sewer line extension project.

Mr. Glazman asked about the cost for connecting to sewer. Mr. Smith responded the sewer availability fee is \$3,500 and the connection fee is \$2,100.

Mr. Dunn made a motion to recommend approval of proposed resolution R14-289. The motion was seconded by Mr. Harris and passed with a 6-0 vote.

Authorize Contract for Purchase of Vehicles

Ms. Spencer reported the department needs to replace two aged daily-use vehicles, a closed-circuit television (CCTV) inspection van and a dump truck. The current inspection van has over 100,000 miles of service. The camera head and crawler are over 25 years old and the computer video system is over 14 years old. The camera reel and computer have been returned to the manufacturer twice in the past year and each time it was six weeks before the item was returned. A new CCTV system can be purchased using the Houston-Galveston Area Council Buy Program.

The dump truck has been in service since 1988. It has been sent or towed to Fleet Services 12 times in the past three years for electrical issues. The last time it was towed, it was deemed unrepairable due to a fire behind the dashboard. Staff proposes riding an Arlington County contract for a new tandem-axle dump truck.

Mr. Harris made a motion to recommend approval of proposed resolution R14-92. The motion was seconded by Mr. Dunn and passed with a 6-0 vote.

IX. Adjournment

Mr. Tignor volunteered to step down as Chairman, due to his belief that at least one Commission member had “lost confidence” in his ability to lead. After discussion, it was decided that Mr. Tignor would remain as Chairman.

There being no further business, Mr. Tignor adjourned the meeting at 8:15pm.

Minutes submitted by:

DaBora Lovitt
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Recording Secretary