

**Middle Chattahoochee Regional Water
And Sewer Authority Meeting**

August 11th, 2026 @ 7:00 PM
City of Union City- City Hall
5047 Union Street, Union City, GA. 30268

- I.** Chairman Tony Phillips called the meeting to order at 7:00 P.M.
- II.** Roll Call was taken by Secretary Jessica Davis with the following board members present:

The Honorable Chairman Tony Phillips	
The Honorable Mayor Vince Williams	The Honorable Mayor Teresa Thomas Smith
The Honorable Vice-Chair Brian Jones	The Honorable Councilwoman Jessica Wilbanks

The following board member(s) were absent during roll call:
The Honorable City Manager Jamila Criss and The Honorable Mayor Hattie Portis-Jones (Arrived at 7:10 p.m.)

The attendance of the board constituted a quorum, and the meeting proceeded.

III. Approval of Water Authority Minutes:

The motion to approve the July 14th MCRWSA meeting minutes (Union City, GA) was made by Mayor Vince Williams and seconded by Vice Chair Brian Jones. **Vote: 6-0; Motion Carried**

IV. Presentation:

▪ Regional Water Partnership Discussion

Fulton County

Chairman Tony Phillips advised the Board that, after consultation with Board members, he would move the discussion regarding the Regional Water Partnership to the beginning of the agenda. He recognized Mr. David Clark, Director of Public Works for Fulton County, and stated that the adjustment would allow the Board to receive an update on recent regional discussions and hear Fulton County's perspective.

Chairman Phillips reported that, over the previous several weeks, discussions had taken place between the Authority, the mayors of the three member cities, and Fulton County regarding a potential regional water partnership. He noted that the Authority had already been exploring opportunities to expand its regional footprint, including discussions held during the Georgia Municipal Association Conference.

Chairman Phillips explained that Fulton County had expressed interest in exploring a potential partnership with the Authority that could assist in advancing the Authority's water initiatives and expanding its regional reach. Preliminary discussions had been held with several Fulton County officials, including the Chairman of the Fulton County Board of Commissioners, County Manager Dick Anderson, and Mr. David Clark. Mr. Danny Johnson of the Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC) had also included in the discussions. Chairman Phillips stated that he believed the opportunity warranted serious consideration by the Board and could provide a path forward that had previously been challenging for the Authority.

The Project Manager stated that the potential partnership could take several forms and that the parties were still evaluating the available options. Possibilities included adding members to the Authority, sharing infrastructure costs, and establishing shared distribution responsibilities. Any future arrangement would also need to account for the City of Atlanta, which currently supplies water to two of the Authority's three member cities.

The Project Manager described the discussions as a significant opportunity and outlined a preliminary timeline. Over approximately the next two months, the parties will continue internal discussions and potentially conduct preliminary engineering analysis. Additional meetings and negotiations would then be necessary to develop an intergovernmental agreement. The goal would be to substantially complete the necessary agreements by December so that the agreed-upon structure could begin moving forward in the new year.

Attorney Davenport explained that while the concept of adding participation to the Authority may appear relatively simple, implementation would be more complex because of the number of governmental entities involved. The Authority currently consists of three independent cities, Palmetto, Fairburn, and Union City, with the Authority operating through agreements among those cities. Adding Fulton County would require careful consideration of the interests, responsibilities, and rights of each entity.

Attorney Davenport recommended that each city first conduct internal discussions to determine its individual interests and priorities. Those positions could then be considered collectively by the Authority before negotiating the terms of a potential partnership with Fulton County.

He further advised that the proposed timeline would be aggressive if the goal is to have legislation presented to the Georgia General Assembly in January. To meet that goal, the proposed structure would need to be in substantially final form within approximately 90 days, with the November meeting serving as an important deadline for providing direction on the legislative proposal.

Attorney Davenport noted that legislative action would be necessary regardless of the final partnership structure because the Authority's existing service area is limited by its current enabling legislation. Expansion beyond the jurisdictions presently authorized would require legislative approval. He emphasized that meeting the proposed timeline would require significant commitment and timely input from each member city and the Authority.

Chairman Phillips welcomed Mr. David Clark, Director of Public Works for Fulton County, and invited him to provide Fulton County's perspective regarding the potential partnership.

Mr. Clark explained that the discussions developed in part from Fulton County's plans to expand the Camp Creek Wastewater Treatment Facility. The facility currently has a capacity of approximately 24 million gallons per day, and the County is considering increasing capacity to approximately 30–36 million gallons per day.

As Fulton County reviewed future wastewater projections, County staff began discussing planned developments with staff from the surrounding cities. Those conversations raised concerns regarding whether sufficient water supply would be available to support anticipated development, particularly in areas currently dependent upon the City of Atlanta for water service.

Mr. Clark stated that these concerns prompted Fulton County to consider whether it could assist in addressing the region's water needs. He emphasized the importance of the Authority's existing withdrawal permit, which allows for approximately 13 million gallons per day from the Chattahoochee River. He described the permit as an important regional asset and stated that failure to utilize it could ultimately place the permit at risk of reassignment by the Georgia Environmental Protection Division.

Mr. Clark stated that Fulton County began considering the possibility of becoming a member of the Authority. He noted that the County could potentially bring additional capital resources to the partnership. Fulton County is

currently conducting a rate study, with existing rates fixed through November 2027 and anticipated new rates beginning in January 2028. The County is also evaluating several major capital projects, including the Camp Creek expansion, and a regional water project could potentially be incorporated into that planning.

Mr. Clark outlined a preliminary phased approach:

1. **Phase 1A – Water Treatment Plant:** Develop the infrastructure necessary to produce and deliver approximately 13 million gallons of water per day.
2. **Phase 1B – Reservoir:** Continue development of the proposed reservoir. Expanding the potential service area to include a larger portion of South Fulton County, including areas such as the City of South Fulton and Chattahoochee Hills, could help demonstrate the regional need for the reservoir during the permitting process.
3. **Long-Term Distribution and Capacity:** Once the treatment plant is operational and generating revenue through water sales, revenues could potentially be reinvested into distribution infrastructure. This could support future discussions regarding the acquisition of existing infrastructure or development of a separate distribution system. Longer-term planning could also include pursuing an increase in the Authority's withdrawal permit to accommodate anticipated regional water needs over the next 40–50 years.

Mr. Clark further reported that he had held preliminary discussions with the Commissioner of the City of Atlanta Department of Watershed Management regarding the possibility of producing water in South Fulton and introducing that water into Atlanta's existing system through a wholesale arrangement. While the details would require further negotiation, he stated that Atlanta had expressed interest because an additional 13 million gallons per day could help address some existing pressure and flow limitations affecting development.

Mr. Clark concluded that Fulton County's participation in the Authority could create opportunities that have not previously been available and could strengthen the region's ability to address long-term water needs.

Chairman Phillips asked Mr. Clark to provide an overview of Fulton County's experience with water service in North Fulton as a possible point of comparison.

Mr. Clark explained that North Fulton is served by the Tom Lowe Water Treatment Plant, which is owned and operated by a Water Resources Commission. The Commission includes three members of the Fulton County Board of Commissioners and three members of the Atlanta City Council, along with an additional system representative. The Commission produces water that is sold primarily to Fulton County and the City of Atlanta. Fulton County receives approximately 65–70% of the water produced, while the City of Atlanta receives the remaining approximately 30%. Operating costs are allocated based upon water usage, with Fulton County paying approximately 70% and Atlanta approximately 30%.

Mr. Clark explained that although the Water Resources Commission is not structured as an authority, it operates in a similar manner because it functions separately from the day-to-day operations of Fulton County and the City of Atlanta while allowing the two governments to share resources.

Vice Chair Jones thanked Mr. Clark for the presentation and asked whether development of the reservoir would require the Authority to deepen the proposed reservoir or acquire additional property in order to accommodate the anticipated 13 million gallons per day.

Mr. Clark responded that the engineering analysis had not progressed far enough to make that determination. He acknowledged that the Authority owns parcels designated for the proposed plant and reservoir and that conceptual plans exist; however, additional engineering analysis would be required as the partnership discussions progress.

Vice Chair Jones also asked about the length of intergovernmental agreements and whether Fulton County's participation could provide greater flexibility for long-term bond financing.

Attorney Davenport advised that an intergovernmental agreement may extend for up to 50 years. However, the term of any bonds issued would depend upon the useful life of the infrastructure being financed. The size of the governmental entity's budget would not, by itself, determine the allowable bond term; rather, the financing period must correspond appropriately with the useful life of the capital asset.

Vice Chair Jones then asked whether the State was involved in establishing the North Fulton Water Resources Commission and whether the Authority would need to dissolve its existing structure to establish a similar arrangement.

Mr. Clark responded that the North Fulton arrangement was established as a separate joint venture between Fulton County and the City of Atlanta and did not involve the State in its formation.

Vice Chair Jones expressed interest in the North Fulton model and indicated that the structure may warrant further consideration as discussions regarding the regional partnership continue.

Chairman Tony Phillips reiterated that the proposed 90-day timeline for developing the regional partnership is aggressive and would require significant work within a short period. He advised that the Board would continue to receive updates as discussions progress. A tentative meeting was planned for later in the month to bring the parties involved together and begin developing a more defined framework.

Chairman Phillips identified three primary areas that would need to be addressed: operational structure, financial considerations, and legislative requirements. He emphasized that each area contains significant details that must be resolved quickly if the parties intend to have an agreement substantially developed by November and pursue necessary legislative action in January.

Chairman Phillips asked Mr. David Clark about his preliminary discussions with City of Atlanta officials and whether Atlanta appeared receptive to the concept. He noted that Atlanta's involvement would likely be important to the success of the proposed partnership, particularly considering the number of entities involved, including the three member cities, the Authority, Fulton County, and the City of Atlanta.

Mr. Clark reported that preliminary discussions with Atlanta officials had generally been receptive to the concept of water being produced through the proposed project and sold to Atlanta. However, a primary concern was whether the discussions would extend to the purchase or transfer of Atlanta's existing distribution system.

Mayor Hattie Portis-Jones asked for clarification regarding Atlanta's concerns. Mr. Clark explained that Atlanta appeared comfortable with the concept as long as its existing distribution system and retail customer base remained intact. The concern was that the partnership could potentially reopen previous discussions regarding the purchase or transfer of Atlanta's water distribution infrastructure.

Chairman Phillips acknowledged that Atlanta would likely want to protect its existing customer base. He stated that, at the current stage, the proposed effort is not intended to remove Atlanta's existing customers in the southern portion of the region. Any future discussion regarding changes to the distribution system could be addressed at the appropriate time.

Vice Chair Brian Jones suggested that a future intergovernmental agreement could potentially establish a structure similar to the North Fulton model, in which Atlanta retains an agreed-upon percentage or interest while allowing sufficient capacity for future growth.

Mayor Teresa Thomas-Smith stated for the record that she had recently spoken with Atlanta Mayor Andre Dickens and had advised him that representatives involved with the regional water discussions would be reaching out to him.

Mayor Portis-Jones asked for clarification regarding the next steps, including who would be responsible for moving the process forward.

Chairman Phillips stated that the next working meeting was tentatively scheduled for the 17th and would include representatives from Fulton County and staff. The meeting would focus on developing a path forward within the three primary areas previously identified: operational, legislative, and financial.

Chairman Phillips stated that the goal of the meeting would be to establish an aggressive timeline leading to the Authority's November 10 meeting. The parties would begin identifying specific tasks, responsibilities, and work groups necessary to advance each component of the proposed partnership.

Mayor Thomas-Smith emphasized that, before moving too far into the process, the Authority needed a clear understanding of what Fulton County's participation would look like. She raised questions regarding Fulton County's potential level of ownership or influence, representation on the Authority, voting interests, and expectations as a prospective partner. She recommended that preliminary discussions regarding these matters occur early in the process.

Mayor Vince Williams noted that these issues had been contemplated during the previous meeting and understood that they would be part of the upcoming discussions.

Chairman Phillips explained that, following the previous meeting with the mayors, additional discussions had occurred among staff and regional representatives, including Authority staff, Fulton County representatives, and Mr. Danny Johnson of the Atlanta Regional Commission. Those discussions began framing many of the detailed issues that would need to be addressed.

Chairman Phillips assured the Board that the partnership structure would not be developed without careful consideration of the details. Potential work groups would be established around the major areas of concern, including governance, engineering requirements, infrastructure, and costs. He stated that the purpose of the current discussion was primarily to make the Board aware that the regional partnership effort was underway and that more detailed information would be presented as it becomes available.

Attorney Dennis Davenport agreed that internal discussions among the Authority and its member cities would be necessary before finalizing a position with Fulton County. He stated that Fulton County would need to determine its own objectives while the Authority and the three member cities separately identify their needs and

expectations. Those positions could then be brought together to determine whether a mutually acceptable partnership structure could be developed.

Vice Chair Jones requested clarification regarding the significance of the November 10 target date.

Attorney Davenport explained that November 10 had been identified as the goal for substantial completion of an intergovernmental agreement (IGA) that could serve as the foundation for any required legislation.

Chairman Phillips clarified that the goal was to have a document by that date that all parties had substantially agreed was workable. The agreement would still require formal consideration and approval by each participating governmental entity.

Chairman Phillips emphasized that even completing the framework by November 10 would leave an aggressive timeline for obtaining formal approvals before the end of December. Each participating city, Fulton County, and potentially the City of Atlanta would have its own meeting schedules, agendas, and approval processes. For that reason, substantial progress would need to be made before November.

Vice Chair Jones stated that the clarification was helpful, as he initially understood November 10 to mean that the entire process had to be completed and ready for legislative prefiling by that date.

Councilmember Jessica Wilbanks asked whether meetings involving Board members would need to be publicly advertised because of quorum requirements.

Chairman Phillips explained that the Authority must remain mindful of the Georgia Open Meetings requirements during working group discussions. If four Authority members are present, a quorum would exist and applicable public meeting requirements would need to be considered.

Because the preliminary work sessions are intended to function as working group meetings rather than regular Authority meetings, Chairman Phillips stated that participation would need to be structured to avoid inadvertently creating a quorum. Regular monthly Authority meetings would continue to include substantive public updates regarding the progress of the partnership discussions.

Mayor Thomas-Smith questioned how the Authority could ensure that all key participants were involved while also avoiding quorum concerns.

Mayor Portis-Jones noted that Fairburn currently has two representatives involved in the discussions. She stated that she could step back from certain working group meetings, allowing Chairman Phillips to represent Fairburn and provide her with updates afterward.

The Project Manager emphasized that the proposed partnership remains fluid and involves numerous interconnected issues. In addition to determining the Authority's collective position, each member city would need to communicate with its respective council and determine its individual priorities before negotiations with Fulton County could be finalized.

The Project Manager explained that the proposed phased approach would also require substantial engineering analysis. Previous plans contemplated a treatment plant and distribution infrastructure designed around the Authority's three member cities. A regional partnership involving Fulton County and the City of Atlanta could

require a different engineering concept, including the possibility of connecting the proposed treatment plant directly to Atlanta's existing distribution system.

Questions would need to be answered regarding which existing water lines could accommodate additional capacity, where connections could be made, and how the system could serve the three member cities while continuing to serve Atlanta's existing customers.

The Project Manager referenced a previous agreement recognizing the Authority's member cities while allowing Atlanta to retain its existing retail customers. Maintaining transparency regarding those existing arrangements was identified as important to providing Atlanta with assurance that the current regional discussions are intended to expand water availability rather than immediately displace its customer base.

The Project Manager also identified the regional Service Delivery Strategy as an important consideration. Current service designations limit where the Authority may provide service, while Atlanta presently serves other areas within the region, including portions of Chattahoochee Hills and the City of South Fulton. Those existing service arrangements would need to be considered as the regional partnership develops.

The Project Manager advised that Krebs Engineering previously completed engineering and cost assessments for the Authority and prepared the professional engineering report approved by the Georgia Environmental Protection Division (EPD).

The Authority continues to have an agreement with Krebs Engineering that allows certain work to be performed on an hourly basis. Updated hourly rates are available, providing the Authority with flexibility to obtain preliminary engineering assistance without first developing an entirely new scope of services for limited, short-term questions.

The Project Manager stated that, at the direction of the Chairman and Board, Krebs could potentially begin addressing immediate engineering questions before the Authority's September meeting. If the upcoming discussions identify the need for more substantial engineering work, a more detailed scope of services could then be developed and presented to the Board for consideration.

The Project Manager emphasized that the regional concept being discussed differs from the engineering work previously completed. In particular, the possibility of constructing a distribution connection from the proposed water treatment plant directly into Atlanta's system has not previously been analyzed. Therefore, the Authority does not currently know the infrastructure feasibility or estimated cost of such a connection.

Krebs Engineering could assist in evaluating those issues and provide information necessary to understand how the various partners could fit into the overall structure.

The Project Manager cautioned that the engineering analysis would also depend upon accurate information regarding Atlanta's existing infrastructure. Some information regarding the location and capacity of Atlanta's water lines may not be readily available, and previous projects have required developers and other parties to independently identify infrastructure information. Accordingly, additional coordination with the City of Atlanta may be necessary before a complete engineering assessment can be performed.

Mayor Hattie Portis-Jones asked what immediate question needed to be answered in order to move the regional partnership discussion forward.

Chairman Tony Phillips responded that the effort could not be meaningfully evaluated without initial engineering analysis. He stated that the Authority first needed to determine whether it would be technically feasible to introduce water from the proposed system into the City of Atlanta's existing distribution network. Although there was an assumption that such a connection may be possible, he emphasized that an engineering evaluation was necessary to confirm feasibility, identify a preliminary framework, and develop initial cost projections.

Chairman Phillips explained that the Authority could direct Krebs Engineering to begin preliminary work immediately. That initial analysis would allow the Board to return at the following month's meeting with a clearer understanding of what a larger engineering scope might require. At that time, the Board could consider a more detailed scope of services for additional study.

The Project Manager cautioned that the engineering work would also need to be considered within the broader context of the Authority's long-term interests. The Authority and its member cities would need to determine whether the proposed partnership with Fulton County provides sufficient value and preserves an appropriate level of control. The Project Manager noted that the Authority has invested more than 20 years in developing its structure, plans, and water withdrawal permit and should carefully evaluate any proposed arrangement.

Chairman Phillips agreed and emphasized that the Authority's prior investments are precisely what make the current regional discussions possible. He noted that obtaining the withdrawal permit required substantial time, financial investment, and coordination. He further stated that the Authority had already identified a desire to pursue a regional approach before Fulton County expressed interest, including prior discussions held during the Georgia Municipal Association Conference.

Chairman Phillips stated that he viewed the Fulton County concept as worthy of further exploration but emphasized that no final decision had been made. Additional due diligence would be necessary before the Board could determine whether the proposed partnership is in the Authority's best interest.

Mayor Vince Williams made a motion to authorize Krebs Engineering to move forward with preliminary engineering work related to the regional water partnership. Mayor Hattie Portis-Jones seconded the motion.

Vote: 6-0; Motion Carried

Mayor Teresa Thomas-Smith asked whether the Authority knew how much Krebs Engineering would charge for the preliminary work. She expressed concern that, although the existing agreement provides hourly rates, the Authority did not yet know how many hours would be required. She requested greater clarity regarding the anticipated budget so that the Authority would not proceed without understanding the potential cost.

The Project Manager explained that the existing Krebs agreement establishes hourly rates, but the specific amount of work could not yet be determined because the Authority had not finalized the questions or scope to be assigned. She recommended waiting until the upcoming meeting with Fulton County before defining the preliminary engineering tasks, as that discussion could affect the information and analysis needed. The Project Manager further explained that some of the work may involve updating previous engineering and cost estimates already completed by Krebs, which could limit the number of hours required for the preliminary phase.

Mayor Portis-Jones asked what work the Board had just authorized if a specific scope had not yet been established.

The Project Manager clarified that the motion authorized Krebs Engineering to perform work related to the regional partnership, while the specific scope would be determined following the upcoming meeting. The Chairman would then be able to provide direction regarding the immediate engineering questions requiring review.

Chairman Phillips stated that the Authority could not afford to wait until the next monthly meeting before beginning the engineering process because of the aggressive overall timeline. He explained that the immediate goal was to allow Krebs to begin framing the engineering considerations while a more defined scope was developed.

He stated that he did not anticipate the initial work resulting in a substantial expense prior to the next Board meeting. Once the upcoming meeting clarified the specific questions to be addressed, Krebs would be in a better position to provide an estimate regarding the work required.

Mayor Thomas-Smith requested that Krebs provide an estimated number of hours or anticipated duration for the work once the preliminary scope was developed.

Chairman Phillips agreed that such an estimate would be reasonable once the scope had been sufficiently defined.

Vice Chair Brian Jones asked whether the estimate could identify anticipated hours by personnel classification.

The Project Manager stated that the estimate could be developed as part of the scope, but cautioned that some variables remain unknown. In particular, the ability to evaluate a connection to Atlanta's system will depend on the availability of accurate infrastructure information from the City of Atlanta.

She noted that access to such information had been difficult during previous projects. However, given the recent indication that Atlanta officials are interested in further discussions, she expressed hope that the City would be more willing to provide the necessary information during the current process.

Chairman Phillips stated that the upcoming meeting should provide enough information to begin developing a preliminary scope of work. He acknowledged that the eventual execution of the work may change as additional information becomes available and unforeseen issues arise.

He reiterated that the regional partnership is operating within a very limited timeframe and that significant work must be completed quickly if the Authority is to fully evaluate the proposal and maintain the possibility of pursuing legislative action.

Chairman Phillips stated that the Authority should have significantly more detail available by the next regular meeting, including a clearer understanding of the engineering needs and potential scope of work.

Mayor Portis-Jones emphasized that, because of the pace of the discussions, the Board could not rely solely on monthly meetings for updates. She requested frequent communication regarding ongoing discussions, emerging issues, and any decision points that could require Board action. She further stated that the Board should remain open to making time-sensitive decisions between regularly scheduled meetings when necessary.

Chairman Phillips agreed and stated that the Board would be kept informed as the discussions progressed. He noted that the Authority may need to schedule a special called meeting if an important issue requires Board consensus before the next regular meeting.

He further stated that a special-called meeting could potentially be held if appropriate, allowing the Authority to address urgent matters in a timely manner while ensuring that significant decisions affecting the Authority's future remain before the full Board.

V. Discussion & Approval:

1. RFP Accounting Services-

Vice Chair Brian Jones presented the results of the Board's evaluation of proposals received in response to the RFP for accounting services. He explained that the proposals were first evaluated based on technical criteria, with cost subsequently incorporated into the final scoring in accordance with the RFP.

Vice Chair Jones reviewed the leading technical scores and explained that the lowest-cost proposer received the maximum points available for the cost component. KRS Accounting submitted the lowest proposed cost at approximately \$30,000. After incorporating the cost evaluation into the overall scoring, VAAS Professionals received the highest overall score of 79.21, with a proposed cost of \$53,222. RTW was identified as the next highest-ranked proposer based on the Board's completed evaluations.

Vice Chair Jones noted that, because the procurement was conducted as an RFP, the Authority retained the ability to negotiate the proposed pricing and contract terms with the selected firm.

Councilmember Jessica Wilbanks raised a concern regarding RTW's location and the potential additional costs associated with mileage and travel time. She noted that although RTW's proposed fee was lower, those additional expenses could increase the Authority's overall cost.

Mayor Hattie Portis-Jones agreed and questioned whether other à la carte or additional charges could arise beyond the amount included in RTW's proposal.

Vice Chair Jones noted that RTW's proposed lower cost improved its overall ranking once cost points were applied, despite its technical evaluation being lower than some of the other leading firms.

Councilmember Wilbanks also requested clarification regarding VAAS Professionals' previous work with the City of South Fulton. She expressed concern about a potential future conflict if the City of South Fulton were eventually involved with the Authority and wanted confirmation that VAAS was not currently providing accounting services to the City.

Chairman Tony Phillips confirmed that VAAS had previously performed work for the City of South Fulton but was not currently engaged by the City. He further noted that prior municipal government experience was generally beneficial when evaluating firms for this type of engagement.

Councilmember Wilbanks stated that VAAS was her preferred firm based on the proposals and that her primary concern had been confirming its current relationship with the City of South Fulton.

Mayor Portis-Jones also expressed support for VAAS and noted the firm's additional expertise in areas such as grants, auditing, financial analysis, and long-term planning. She stated that this broader experience could be

beneficial to the Authority, particularly as it considers potential future arrangements involving Fulton County and other regional partners.

Chairman Phillips summarized that VAAS was the highest-scoring responsive proposer based on the Board's evaluations and requested a motion regarding the selection.

Councilmember Jessica Wilbanks made a motion to move forward with VAAS Professionals as the recommended vendor. Mayor Vince Williams seconded the motion.

During discussion of the motion, Vice Chair Jones recommended establishing a not-to-exceed amount of \$60,000.

Mayor Portis-Jones asked whether the RFP required a multi-year contract, noting that VAAS had provided pricing based on a three-year engagement.

Attorney Dennis Davenport recommended negotiating the agreement as an initial one-year term with two optional one-year renewals, rather than committing the Authority to a three-year term at the outset.

Mayor Teresa Thomas-Smith requested that the agreement also include language allowing the Authority to terminate the relationship if the arrangement did not meet expectations.

Vice Chair Jones noted that Authority contracts typically include a termination-for-convenience provision, and Attorney Davenport confirmed that appropriate termination language could be incorporated into the agreement.

Chairman Phillips summarized the proposed terms as follows: selection of VAAS Professionals; compensation not to exceed \$60,000; an initial one-year contract with two optional one-year renewals; appropriate termination language; and an anticipated September commencement date consistent with the proposed schedule.

Councilmember Wilbanks amended her motion to incorporate the stated terms. Mayor Williams seconded the amended motion.

Vote: 6-0; Motion Carried

VI. Reports:

1. Water Attorney Report-

▪ Raymond James Municipal Advisory Agreement

Attorney Dennis Davenport reported that he had recently spoken with Mr. Tom Owens of Raymond James regarding the Authority's existing financial advisory relationship.

Attorney Davenport explained that Mr. Owens has served as the Authority's financial advisor since approximately 2020 and that Raymond James' existing agreement provided for compensation primarily in connection with a bond issuance. Because the Authority has not issued bonds during that period, Mr. Owens and Raymond James have provided financial advisory services to the Authority without compensation under the current agreement.

Attorney Davenport presented a proposed Municipal Advisory Agreement for the Board's consideration. The agreement generally maintains the existing scope and terms of the advisory relationship but provides for compensation at a rate of \$350 per hour for services performed.

Attorney Davenport stated that Mr. Owens has been a valuable resource to the Authority and has provided significant financial and financing-related guidance throughout his service.

Councilmember Jessica Wilbanks asked whether Raymond James was owed any back pay for services previously provided.

Attorney Davenport responded that the current agreement does not guarantee compensation unless a bond issuance occurs. Therefore, there is no obligation to compensate Raymond James retroactively. He explained that the proposed agreement would establish a compensated advisory relationship going forward.

Mayor Teresa Thomas-Smith asked for clarification regarding the distinction between the roles of Mr. Tom Owens and Mr. Dan Post.

Attorney Davenport explained that Mr. Post functions as the Authority's financial manager and handles matters such as payment of bills, while Mr. Owens serves as the Authority's financial advisor and provides guidance regarding financing and related financial matters.

Mayor Thomas-Smith thanked Attorney Davenport for the clarification.

Mayor Vince Williams made a motion to approve the proposed Municipal Advisory Agreement with Tom Owens/Raymond James at the rate of \$350 per hour, noting the value of the financial advice that had previously been provided to the Authority. Vice Chair Brian Jones seconded the motion.

During discussion, Councilmember Wilbanks asked approximately how many hours the Authority typically utilizes the financial advisor on a monthly or annual basis.

Attorney Davenport explained that Mr. Owens' services are generally provided on an as-needed basis. He may attend Authority meetings when available and would likely devote additional time when the Authority is preparing for financing or a bond issuance. He further noted that the agreement contains separate provisions regarding compensation associated with bond transactions.

Councilmember Wilbanks asked whether Mr. Owens needed to attend every Authority meeting or only meetings where financial advisory services were necessary.

Chairman Tony Phillips stated that the Authority could determine the appropriate level of participation moving forward. He emphasized, however, that Mr. Owens would be particularly important during the ongoing regional water partnership discussions with Fulton County and potentially the City of Atlanta.

Chairman Phillips explained that Mr. Owens' expertise would be valuable in evaluating debt service, existing financial obligations, previous investments made by the three member cities, and the financial implications of potentially adding another governmental partner to the Authority.

Chairman Phillips also noted that the Authority and its member cities would need to conduct internal discussions to ensure that their financial interests are protected as negotiations with Fulton County and other potential partners progress.

▪ **Consumption and Contribution Reports**

Attorney Davenport continued his report by presenting updated information regarding water consumption and financial contributions by the Authority's three member cities.

He advised that the consumption charts had been updated to reflect each city's current consumption compared with the previous month. The report also included a comparison covering the preceding six-month period. Attorney Davenport stated that, as additional data becomes available, the reports will eventually allow for year-to-year comparisons.

Attorney Davenport then presented the updated contribution report. He explained that, rather than continuing to add additional months to an increasingly lengthy report, the new format begins with May 31, 2026, and provides a more manageable snapshot of the current financial position of the member cities.

The report identifies invoices, deposits, balances, and outstanding contribution amounts for each of the three cities. Attorney Davenport noted that the Authority typically meets early in the month, which may result in the report reflecting payments as outstanding even though a city intends to make payment shortly thereafter.

He advised that Union City had contacted him and indicated that a payment would be made the following day.

Attorney Davenport further explained that Union City's reported balance included approximately \$35,000 carried forward from a previous period. Because of the existing credit or balance, Union City was able to reduce its normal contribution amount from approximately \$139,000 to approximately \$103,000 in order to reconcile the account at the next scheduled payment.

Mayor Teresa Thomas-Smith asked whether the report showing no June or July payment for Palmetto meant that the City had not made separate contributions during those months and later caught up through a consolidated payment in August.

Attorney Davenport confirmed that this was correct.

He explained that one purpose of the contribution report is to ensure that each member city is aware of its payment status and can identify any missed or delayed contributions.

Attorney Davenport emphasized that the Authority must monitor both consumption and financial contributions, particularly because of its debt-service obligations. He noted that one six-month payment period generally involves an interest payment, while the subsequent six-month period includes both principal and interest.

2. Financial Manager

Attorney Davenport presented Requisition #295 for the Board's consideration in the amount of \$16,933.04.

A motion to approve Requisition #295 was made by Mayor Vince Williams and seconded by Councilwoman Jessica Wilbanks

Vote: 6-0; Motion Carried

3. Project Managers:

▪ Royalty Payment Update

The Project Manager provided an update regarding royalty payments previously discussed with the Board. The Authority is expected to receive approximately \$165,000 in royalty proceeds.

The payment had initially been expected by the current meeting; however, an invoicing issue caused a delay. Staff followed up regarding the matter and confirmed that the payment is being processed. The funds are anticipated to be received by the end of the month.

- **Georgia Tech Capstone Program**

The Project Manager provided an update regarding potential programs with Georgia Tech. While some of the previously discussed opportunities are currently on hold, the Georgia Tech Capstone Project remains available.

The Project Manager explained that Georgia Tech had issued solicitations for potential projects. To participate, the Authority would be required to submit approximately two to three presentation slides describing the proposed project.

The program has become more engineering-focused and requires a project substantial enough to provide approximately 400 total hours of engineering work, or approximately 100 hours per student for a four-member student team. Work would begin in September, with the students presenting their completed project in December.

Participating projects must involve an actual engineering design component. The program also requires an engineer to serve in an advisory or supervisory capacity for approximately 30 minutes per week.

The Project Manager noted that the developing regional water partnership with Fulton County could potentially produce a project appropriate for the Capstone Program; however, the Authority may not have a sufficiently defined project in time to meet the current August 31 submission deadline.

The Board was advised that the Capstone Program is offered each academic term and accepts projects involving areas such as environmental, civil, structural, and transportation engineering. Accordingly, the Authority could consider participating during a future term if an appropriate project is identified.

- **Water Loss Control Project**

The Project Manager reported that all required materials for the Water Loss Control Project were submitted to the Georgia Environmental Protection Division (EPD) by the applicable deadline.

The Project Manager thanked each of the member cities for timely providing the necessary information, which allowed staff to compile and submit the required materials on schedule.

- **Urban League Update**

The Project Manager provided an update regarding discussions with the Urban League. Representatives have continued to follow up regarding potential involvement with the Authority.

Staff has advised the organization that its continued interest is appreciated; however, the Authority is currently at a critical point regarding the overall direction and structure of the project.

The Project Manager explained that the Authority is considering whether aspects of the project may need to be modified or restructured. Any such changes could affect the types of services or assistance that may ultimately be needed from the Urban League.

Once the Authority determines how it intends to proceed, staff will reconnect with the Urban League at the direction of the Board.

VII. Other Business

- **City of Palmetto Forensic Audit**

Mayor Teresa Thomas-Smith advised the Board that, upon taking office, one of the City of Palmetto's initial actions was to conduct an operational risk assessment, followed by a forensic audit.

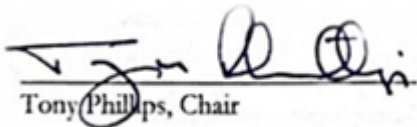
Mayor Thomas-Smith reported that the City has now received the results of the forensic audit and stated that she would like to share the report with the Authority. She clarified that she was not requesting discussion of the report during the current meeting, as Board members should be provided with adequate time to review the information.

Mayor Thomas-Smith requested that the City of Palmetto Forensic Audit Report be placed on the agenda for the Authority's next meeting for further discussion.

VIII. Adjournment

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Mayor Teresa Thomas Smith and seconded by Mayor Vince Williams.

Vote: 6-0; Motion Carried



Tony Phillips, Chair



J. Davis
Jessica Davis, Secretary