

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

May 12th, 2026 @ 7:00 PM
City of Palmetto- City Hall
595 Main Street, Palmetto, 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 Vice-Chair Brian Jones	The Honorable Mayor Teresa Thomas Smith
The Honorable Mayor Vince Williams	The Honorable Councilwoman Jessica Wilbanks
The Honorable Mayor Hattie Portis-Jones	The Honorable City Manager Jamila Criss

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

III. Approval of Water Authority Minutes:

The motion to approve the April 14th 2026 Water Authority meeting minutes was made by Mayor Vince Williams and Mayor Teresa Thomas Smith seconded the motion. **Vote: 7-0; Motion Carried**

IV. New Business:

V. Discussion & Approval:

- 1. Middle Chattahoochee Regional Water & Sewer Authority Tentative Regional Water Policy Roundtable Session at the Georgia Municipal Association (GMA) 2026 Annual Convention**

Mayor Teresa Thomas-Smith referenced a discussion that occurred earlier during a Service Delivery Strategy meeting regarding regional water issues. She noted that the concept of a Fulton County Water and Sewer Authority was raised and asked whether the Authority had considered engaging in discussions regarding such a possibility. Mayor Thomas-Smith emphasized the importance of exploring regional partnerships and collaborative approaches to addressing water and sewer challenges throughout the region.

Chairman Tony Phillips responded that the topic aligned with the Authority's next agenda item concerning the proposed Regional Water Policy Roundtable Session at the Georgia Municipal Association (GMA) Annual Convention. He provided an update on plans for convening a regional water discussion during the conference. Chairman Phillips reported that, through the efforts of Mayor Vince Williams, Immediate Past President of GMA, the Authority secured a dedicated session on the GMA agenda. The session is scheduled for Monday, June 29, 2026, from 4:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. at the Savannah Convention Center. Chairman Phillips noted that the meeting space was provided by GMA at no cost to the Authority and stated that the session would provide a significant opportunity to engage municipalities and stakeholders interested in regional water issues.

Mayor Thomas-Smith stated that regional water concerns were a major topic of discussion among mayors, city administrators, and city managers during the Service Delivery Strategy meeting. She expressed appreciation to Mayor Hattie Portis-Jones for helping advance the regional conversation and noted that ARC and the Authority had been included in those discussions. Mayor Thomas-Smith further stated that Mayor Rusty Paul of Sandy Springs suggested the possibility of establishing a Fulton County Water and Sewer Authority. She indicated that several participants recognized the value of expanding regional partnerships and taking a broader countywide approach to

addressing water and sewer infrastructure challenges. While acknowledging that further discussion would be necessary, she noted that the concept presented opportunities for long-term collaboration and regional benefit.

Mayor Hattie Portis-Jones agreed with Mayor Thomas-Smith's comments and stated that conversations regarding regionalization had been ongoing since the Authority received a presentation from ARC. She emphasized that no single jurisdiction could effectively address future water and sewer challenges independently and that regional cooperation would be necessary. Mayor Portis-Jones noted that both Clayton County and Douglas County currently operate water and sewer authorities, demonstrating that such a model is feasible. She further stated that local governments must pursue both short-term solutions to immediate water and sewer concerns while simultaneously developing long-term regional strategies, as current conditions are not sustainable.

Mayor Vince Williams stated that the timing was appropriate for these discussions and noted that the concept of a countywide water authority had been raised previously. He expressed optimism that stakeholders were now prepared to engage in meaningful dialogue and stated that the upcoming June roundtable session would provide an opportunity to further explore the concept.

Councilmember Brian Jones inquired whether discussions regarding a regional water authority should also involve the Association County Commissioners of Georgia (ACCG) or whether such efforts would remain a Fulton County initiative.

Mayor Williams clarified that she was referencing existing regional water authorities in Clayton and Douglas Counties and noted those examples as models for consideration.

Chairman Tony Phillips responded that ARC's previous presentation was not limited to Fulton County and included discussions regarding water challenges facing Clayton County, Douglas County, and other jurisdictions. He noted that the Chattahoochee River basin provides a potential regional framework for addressing water concerns and stated that there is a basis for discussions that extend beyond county boundaries. Chairman Phillips remarked that the conversations held during the Service Delivery Strategy meeting validated many of the regionalization concepts previously discussed by the Authority. He further noted that water challenges vary by jurisdiction but are nonetheless shared concerns throughout the region.

Chairman Phillips reviewed a draft outline for the proposed GMA Regional Water Policy Roundtable Session. He explained that the one-hour session would begin with an overview of the issue and the factors that led to the discussion. He stated that the Authority hopes to partner with ARC to provide a regional perspective on water issues and help frame the conversation. The session would also allow participating stakeholders to discuss specific water-related challenges affecting their communities, including concerns related to economic development, healthcare facilities, and infrastructure capacity. Chairman Phillips noted that the final portion of the session would focus on identifying common priorities and determining whether participants agree that water challenges constitute a regional issue requiring ongoing dialogue. He emphasized that the objective of the session is not to identify solutions but rather to establish consensus around the need for continued regional discussions.

Mayor Teresa Thomas-Smith suggested incorporating an interactive component into the session, such as allowing attendees to identify and visually display their primary water-related concerns. She stated that such an exercise could help participants identify common challenges and areas of agreement. Mayor Thomas-Smith further noted that collaboration is often most successful when stakeholders begin by addressing issues that are widely shared among jurisdictions before tackling more complex differences.

Chairman Phillips agreed with the suggestion, noting that a visual exercise could help participants recognize common themes despite differences in how water challenges manifest across jurisdictions. He reiterated that the goal of the session is to foster understanding and encourage stakeholders to participate in future regional discussions. Chairman Phillips also observed that it was significant that Mayor Rusty Paul of Sandy Springs raised

concerns regarding North Fulton water challenges, further demonstrating that water issues transcend municipal and county boundaries. He noted that nearly all Fulton County mayors and many city managers participated in the Service Delivery Strategy discussion and that there appeared to be broad consensus that regional conversations regarding water infrastructure are necessary.

Mayor Hattie Portis-Jones expressed support for the proposed interactive approach and suggested that identifying common concerns in advance could help streamline discussion during the session. She also raised questions regarding how attendance could be encouraged and what incentives might motivate stakeholders to participate.

Mayor Vince Williams responded that existing water challenges facing communities should provide sufficient motivation for participation, noting that water concerns directly affect local governments and their residents.

Mayor Teresa Thomas-Smith agreed that the manner in which the session is presented and promoted would be important, particularly given the competing demands on conference attendees' schedules.

Mayor Vince Williams stated that when securing the session, the anticipated attendance was approximately 30 to 40 participants, which he believed was a manageable size for productive discussion.

Mayor Thomas-Smith noted that casting a broad outreach net would increase the likelihood of achieving meaningful participation.

Chairman Phillips stated that while he was uncertain whether incentives would be necessary, he believed the significance of the issue itself would generate interest. He referenced previous discussions held during the Service Delivery Strategy meeting and at regional municipal gatherings, noting that water concerns have consistently generated substantial engagement among local leaders. Chairman Phillips reiterated that the issue must be approached from a regional perspective.

Mayor Williams added that ongoing drought conditions have heightened concerns regarding water availability and infrastructure throughout many communities.

Mayor Hattie Portis-Jones inquired about plans for invitations and outreach.

Chairman Phillips stated that outreach would occur in advance of the session and acknowledged the need to manage attendance due to space limitations. He suggested initially targeting jurisdictions identified during ARC's regional analysis, including communities within Fulton, Coweta, Fayette, Clayton, and surrounding areas. Chairman Phillips indicated that although invitations would be extended broadly, he anticipated attendance of approximately 10 to 20 participants, which he believed would be sufficient to begin meaningful regional dialogue. He further expressed hope that discussions generated during the GMA session would build momentum toward a larger regional summit in the future.

Chairman Phillips informed the Board that the draft session outline would be distributed via email and requested feedback and recommendations from members. Following discussion, the Board agreed to submit all comments and suggested revisions by May 26, 2026.

2. Discussion and Approval of Scope of Work for Financial Services

Chairman Tony Phillips requested confirmation from legal counsel regarding the sufficiency of the proposed Scope of Work for Financial Services. Attorney Dennis Davenport confirmed that the document was sufficient to proceed.

Mayor Teresa Thomas-Smith noted that the draft should include language related to the Authority's anticipated forensic audit. City Manager Jamila Criss suggested incorporating the language under Section E of the Scope of Work. Chairman Phillips stated that the requested revision would be made prior to finalization.

Chairman Phillips outlined the next steps in the solicitation process, explaining that once finalized, the Scope of Work would be distributed to each participating city for solicitation of qualified firms. He noted that procurement timelines typically require a 30-day solicitation period and anticipated that results would be available for consideration at a future Authority meeting.

Mayor Hattie Portis-Jones inquired whether there would be a centralized location for proposal submissions and a designated point of contact for respondents.

Chairman Phillips explained that previous discussions contemplated each city independently issuing the solicitation through its procurement platform and collecting responses. City Manager Jamila Criss suggested that a centralized process might be more efficient and would prevent vendors from having to submit multiple proposals. She referenced a current joint procurement effort between the Cities of Fairburn and Union City as an example of a coordinated approach.

Mayor Teresa Thomas-Smith supported the centralized approach and recommended that all proposals be submitted through the Authority's email address. She noted that centralizing submissions would streamline communication and ensure all responses were received and distributed consistently.

Discussion followed regarding how questions from prospective respondents would be handled. City Manager Criss noted that each city would typically identify a point of contact for procurement-related questions if individual solicitations were issued. Chairman Phillips proposed that all proposal submissions and questions be directed to the Authority's email address.

Following discussion, the Board reached consensus to utilize the Authority's email address as the central repository for all proposal submissions and inquiries. Chairman Phillips stated that each participating city would advertise the solicitation through its normal procurement channels while directing respondents to submit proposals and questions through the Authority's designated email account. He further requested that cities designate local contacts to assist with any procurement-related matters.

Mayor Vince Williams suggested that technical questions regarding the Scope of Work be reviewed by the Authority's project management team to ensure consistent and accurate responses.

Attorney Dennis Davenport recommended that all questions be submitted through the Authority's website or email system so that responses could be distributed uniformly to all interested respondents. He emphasized the importance of maintaining a fair procurement process by ensuring that all potential respondents receive the same information. Attorney Davenport further explained that questions received prior to proposal submission deadlines could result in amendments or clarifications being distributed to all prospective respondents.

Project Manager Benz recommended establishing a formal procurement schedule that included deadlines for submitting questions, issuing responses, and receiving final proposals. After discussion, the Board agreed upon the following timeline:

- Solicitation Issued: May 18, 2026
- Questions Due: June 1, 2026
- Responses Issued: June 8, 2026
- Final Proposals Due: June 18, 2026

Mayor Hattie Portis-Jones recommended that all solicitation materials be standardized across participating cities to ensure consistency. She suggested that a single individual coordinate the preparation of the solicitation package, including any cover letters and supporting documents.

Chairman Phillips agreed and noted that the Scope of Work would serve as the foundation of the solicitation package. He stated that additional procurement documents could be developed to accompany the solicitation and requested assistance from Councilmember Brian Jones in preparing a standardized solicitation package.

Councilmember Jones agreed to prepare an initial draft of the solicitation package for review and distribution.

Chairman Phillips summarized the Board's direction, stating that Councilmember Jones would prepare a common solicitation package for use by all participating cities. The solicitation would be posted by May 18, 2026, with proposal submissions and questions directed to the Authority's email address. Chairman Phillips further stated that all proposals received would be distributed to Board members for review prior to the July meeting.

Councilmember Jones recommended that the Board utilize a scoring rubric to evaluate proposals. Chairman Phillips agreed and stated that a standardized evaluation rubric would be developed and distributed to all Board members. Each member would independently evaluate and score proposals and bring their completed evaluations to the July meeting for consideration.

Mayor Teresa Thomas-Smith made a motion to approve the Scope of Work for Financial Services, including the addition of forensic audit language and the solicitation process as discussed. Council member Brian Jones seconded the motion.

Vote: 7-0; Motion Carried

VI. Reports:

1. Water Attorney Report-

Attorney Dennis Davenport provided an update regarding annual fees associated with the Authority's 2014 bond issuance. He reported that, after further research, he confirmed that the annual payment made to the Bank of New York is the required paying agent fee associated with the 2014 bond transaction. Attorney Davenport explained that the fee is approximately \$850 annually and is separate from the Authority's scheduled bond principal and interest payments. He noted that these fees will cease once the bonds are fully paid.

Attorney Davenport also provided an update regarding implementation of the Authority's Consumption and Contribution Resolution. He thanked each participating city for its cooperation and assistance in gathering and reviewing the necessary information. During the review process, the Authority identified inconsistencies in how water consumption data was being reported on invoices received from the City of Atlanta. Specifically, while Atlanta invoices report water usage in hundred cubic feet (CCF), the conversion to gallons was not always applied consistently.

To address this issue, Attorney Davenport stated that the Authority has adopted a standardized methodology that will rely on CCF measurements as reported on invoices. Total consumption will then be converted to gallons using the standard conversion rate of 748 gallons per CCF. He noted that this approach will improve accuracy, consistency, and transparency in consumption reporting. Attorney Davenport further stated that Union City is already utilizing this methodology and that it has proven to be an effective process.

Attorney Davenport reported that the Authority intends to provide monthly consumption and contribution reports to Board members going forward. The reports will allow members to monitor usage trends, financial contributions, and potential fluctuations on a regular basis, thereby reducing the likelihood of unexpected adjustments. He stated

that the Authority will also provide historical data showing consumption and contribution trends over the previous six months to assist members in understanding long-term patterns.

Attorney Davenport discussed challenges encountered during implementation, including discrepancies caused by inconsistent gallon-to-CCF conversions and occasional delays in payment processing. He noted that one payment had been delayed due to a check being lost in the mail and encouraged participating cities to utilize ACH payments whenever possible to improve reliability and tracking.

Attorney Davenport distributed updated contribution schedules and explained that certain outstanding balances reflected timing issues associated with the payment schedule established by the Authority's resolution rather than actual delinquent accounts. He stated that cities have until the first day of the following month to remit payments and expressed confidence that the updated reporting process would provide greater clarity and reduce confusion moving forward.

Mayor Teresa Thomas-Smith asked whether future reports would include both consumption and contribution data. Attorney Davenport confirmed that monthly reports would include both components, along with updated calculations reflecting any adjustments. He also reported that discussions had been held with the Authority's financial consultant regarding the new reporting framework and that future reporting would provide greater transparency and allow multiple stakeholders to review the underlying data rather than relying solely on summary reports.

Mayor Teresa Thomas-Smith thanked Attorney Davenport for his efforts in developing a more streamlined and transparent reporting process. She noted that previous reporting methods had become increasingly difficult to manage and expressed appreciation for the improvements being implemented.

2. Financial Manager

Attorney Davenport presented Requisition #291 for the Board's consideration in the amount of \$8,532.80.

A motion to approve Requisition #291 was made by Mayor Vince Williams and seconded by City Manager Jamila Criss.

Vote: 7-0; Motion Carried

3. Project Managers:

Project Manager Gray reported that guest speakers had been secured for the Authority's June 9, 2026 meeting. Representatives from the Urban League of Greater Atlanta and DeKalb County agreed to attend and provide information regarding their respective programs. Project Manager Gray noted that the speakers were prepared to provide a general overview of their programs and answer questions from Board members but requested advance notice of any specific topics the Board wished them to address.

Mayor Teresa Thomas-Smith requested that, if presentations were being prepared, the Board be provided advance copies to facilitate discussion and allow members to prepare questions. The Project Managers agreed to request advance copies of any presentation materials.

Mayor Hattie Portis-Jones asked whether the speakers had been provided with the context surrounding the Authority's interest in their programs and the broader discussions that prompted the invitation. The Project Managers confirmed that the background information had been shared.

1. Rate Analysis-

Project Manager Gray provided an update regarding the Authority's ongoing rate analysis efforts. She reported that outreach had been made to the Carl Vinson Institute of Government, which developed the online rate dashboard

currently utilized by the Georgia Environmental Finance Authority (GEFA). Due to scheduling availability, a meeting was scheduled for May 20, 2026, and additional information would be provided at the June meeting.

Project Manager Gray also reported that attempts had been made to connect with representatives of the Georgia Rural Water Association regarding rate analysis assistance. While contact had not yet been established, staff would continue those efforts.

2. Drought Conditions-

Project Manager Benz provided an update regarding statewide drought conditions. She reported that portions of Georgia had remained under Level 1 drought conditions since late April and that continued dry weather patterns could result in escalation to more severe drought classifications. She noted that these conditions further emphasize the importance of regional water planning and may contribute to increased stakeholder interest in future discussions.

Project Manager Benz also referenced prior discussions with the Fulton County Development Authority regarding water availability and economic development and suggested that the organization may be a valuable stakeholder to include in future regional water conversations.

3. Higher Education Partnerships-

Project Manager Benz reported on several educational partnership opportunities previously discussed by the Authority. She noted that Kennesaw State University may have opportunities available through its Geographic Information Systems (GIS) programs and advised that any cities interested in utilizing student assistance during the summer months should begin coordinating those requests promptly.

Project Manager Benz also reported that Georgia Tech's Capstone Program remains active and is expected to begin soliciting project proposals in July. She reminded members that qualifying projects generally require a design component. She further noted that the previously discussed CASE Program is currently being restructured and is expected to remain inactive for approximately 12 to 18 months.

4. Annual Water Loss Control Reports-

The project managers reminded members that the Annual Water Loss Control Reports are due on July 28, 2026. They stated that staff would begin coordinating with participating cities and issuing reminders to ensure timely completion of all reporting requirements associated with the Authority's water withdrawal permit.

5. USGS Monitoring Station-

Project Manager Benz reported that the Authority's annual invoice from the United States Geological Survey (USGS) for operation of the Chattahoochee River monitoring gauge is expected during the summer. She stated that the anticipated cost for both 2026 and 2027 is approximately \$15,800 annually and noted that the current contract term will conclude following the next billing cycle. Discussions regarding future monitoring costs are expected once the existing contract expires.

6. Regional Water Policy Roundtable at GMA-

Project Managers presented materials prepared to support outreach efforts related to the Regional Water Policy Roundtable scheduled during the Georgia Municipal Association Annual Convention.

The first document consisted of a concise summary highlighting key talking points regarding the Authority's history, assets, regional significance, and future opportunities. Project Managers explained that the document was intended as a brief informational resource for conversations with potential stakeholders and participants.

A second document was prepared as a more comprehensive reference guide for Board members. The guide includes project history, asset information, cost estimates, maps, permitting information, and other background materials designed to assist Board members in discussing the Authority's initiatives and regional opportunities.

Mayor Teresa Thomas-Smith asked whether portions of the outreach materials could be incorporated into invitations for the roundtable session. Chairman Tony Phillips agreed that the concept merited further discussion.

Chairman Phillips discussed the significance of recent regional conversations regarding water infrastructure and noted that several local government leaders had expressed interest in the Authority's assets and long-term regional potential. He inquired whether future regional collaboration could support revisiting discussions with the Georgia Environmental Protection Division (EPD) regarding water allocation and permitting considerations.

Project Managers explained that any expansion of regional participation would require additional studies, analysis, and coordination with service delivery strategies and existing service agreements. They also reviewed historical challenges involving service territories and previous negotiations with the City of Atlanta regarding water service areas.

Chairman Phillips noted that representatives from the City of Atlanta had participated in recent discussions and expressed hope that evolving regional conditions and infrastructure challenges could create opportunities for more productive collaboration than had been possible in previous years.

Mayor Hattie Portis-Jones stated that Atlanta representatives appeared interested in learning more about the Authority and its efforts.

Mayor Vince Williams reported that he reminded Atlanta officials of previous discussions involving the Authority and encouraged greater engagement moving forward.

Project Managers further noted that aging infrastructure and significant capital needs within the City of Atlanta may influence future regional conversations regarding water service and infrastructure planning.

Mayor Hattie Portis-Jones expressed concern that newly elected members of the Palmetto City Council had not yet received a comprehensive overview of the Authority's history and mission. She requested that Project Managers provide an educational presentation to the Council that would explain the Authority's background, current status, and future objectives in a clear and accessible manner.

Project Managers agreed to provide the requested presentation.

Mayor Hattie Portis-Jones requested that the presentation be scheduled for Palmetto's fourth Monday Council Meeting in June at 6:00 p.m.

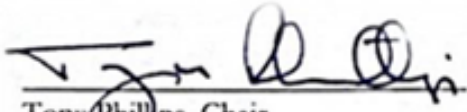
VII. Other Business

Mayor Vince Williams reported that the Regional Water Policy Roundtable session at the Georgia Municipal Association Annual Convention had received additional visibility. He stated that the session would be listed in the official conference schedule and included within the conference mobile application, resulting in increased exposure and a larger potential audience.

Chairman Tony Phillips expressed appreciation for Mayor Williams' efforts and stated that the enhanced visibility would help maximize stakeholder participation and awareness of the Authority's regional initiatives.

VIII. Adjournment

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Mayor Teresa Thomas-Smith and seconded by Mayor Vince Williams. **Vote: 7-0; Motion Carried**



Tony Phillips, Chair



Jessica Davis, Secretary