

Middle Chattahoochee Regional Water And Sewer Authority Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, October 10th, 2023
Fairburn- City Hall
56 Malone St. S.W. Fairburn, GA 30213

- I. Chairman J. Clark Boddie called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm.
- II. Roll Call was taken by Secretary Jessica Davis with the following board members present:

The Honorable Chairman Mayor J. Clark Boddie
The Honorable Mayor Vince Williams The Honorable Councilwoman Tara Miller
The Honorable Mayor Mario Avery The Honorable City Manager Tony Phillips
The Honorable Vice-Chair Sonja Fillingame

The following members were absent:
The Honorable Councilman Brian Jones

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

III. **Approval of Water Authority Minutes:**

The motion to approve the September 12th 2023 MCRW&SA Meeting Minutes was made by Mayor Williams and seconded by Mayor Avery. **Vote: 6-0; Motion Carried**

IV. **New Business:**

V. **Discussion and Approval:**

VI. **Reports:**

A. **Water Authority Attorney-**

Attorney Davenport informed the board that he's receiving several requests from individuals for the authority's 2022 Audit. He's requesting Mauldin & Jenkins to contact him regarding the requested information.

Chairman Boddie stated that they had contacted Mr. Garber and directed him to gather the information. He will contact him.

B. **Financial Report-**

Attorney Davenport presented requisition #253 in the amount of \$49,605.71.

Motion to approve Req #253 in the amount of \$49,605.71 was made by Mayor Williams and seconded by City Manager Philips. **Vote: 6-0; Motion Carried**

C. **Project Managers-**

EPA- On September 21, 2023, EPA announced an additional \$7.5 billion to be available for water infrastructure projects under WIFIA loans. If you apply with errors, EPA will assist you to make sure it's accurate. They've been working with local governments with the usage of technical assistance programs to help local governments make those applications.

City of Atlanta- The meeting with the City of Atlanta is October 26th. It's a Zoom meeting with the intent to go over everything the project managers provided to them. The project managers have about 50 questions. Project Manager Benz asked the board if they wanted to meet in person or via teams.

Chairman Boddie stated that given the two different types of meetings, one engages better in sitting at a table with the individual. Chairman Boddie prefers to have an in-person meeting.

Mayor Williams stated that he assumed the meeting was in-person but defers to however the commissioner wants to meet.

Mayor Avery informed the board that City Manager Philips would attend on his behalf.

Project Manager Benz asked the board who should attend the meeting since it's virtual.

City Manager Philips stated that Commissioner Warren typically brings a significant amount of people to the meetings. He suggests that the authority comes to the meeting with equal resources.

Mayor Williams would like Mr. Lindy Farmer, Attorney Davenport, and the Project Managers to attend.

D. General Manager-

General Manager Farmer apologized for missing the first meeting. He stated that Secretary Jessica Davis has been a tremendous help in assisting him, along with Attorney Davenport and Project Managers Benz and Gray.

GM Farmer is in favor of having an in-person meeting and stated that the authority needs some engineering representations. As far as Krebs is concerned, the City of Atlanta is based on the preliminary engineering of Krebs. GM Farmer is requesting direction from the board in contacting Krebs Engineering.

Attorney Davenport informed the board that they selected Gresham Smith, and it was more of a task order representation. Gresham Smith had a master document that incorporated 9 specific task orders that totaled \$325,000.00. The authority paid them \$150,000.00 for services rendered. The authority is not sure what they've done but asked them to stop progress until further notice. They completed some task orders but not all. Everything that the authority geared the relationship towards was for the construction of a water treatment plant. The authority's scope has changed significantly since that time and may be going in a different direction. The authority may need to reevaluate where they want to go if they're looking at specifically some type of relationship with the City of Atlanta that does not include any engineering for a new water treatment plant. If that's the case, the authority must have a conversation with Gresham Smith to end the relationship altogether. It's difficult to bring someone in like Krebs to do something when Gresham Smith is standing by waiting for the authority to get further direction.

City Manager Philips asked GM Farmer what specific direction he needed.

GM Farmer stated that he hasn't received any deliverables that he can look at. He contacted the office of Dan Post, and Ms. Antha Watkins didn't have any supporting documents. He received all invoices except for one. There is a lot of valuable information there, and the city of Atlanta has recognized it as well. He further stated that Krebs produced a very good document. After meeting with Utility Director John Martin, there needs to be some updating, cost pricing, and elimination of water tanks. In the event the City of Atlanta has a sewer spillage, the authority must have tanks for storage.

Chairman Boddie asked Attorney Davenport if the board received copies of everything that was completed for \$150,000.00.

Attorney Davenport stated that it wasn't generally a term, it was a specific task to perform, and that's why it makes a difference as to what the direction of the board is. If the direction is to move away from the original plan, which was to build the water treatment plant, most of what they're doing is tied to that, as far as their engineering is concerned. They were tasked to give the board sufficient engineering to get the authority to a certain comfort level to bid that project out. Attorney Davenport believes that the board's direction is more along the lines of partnering with the City of Atlanta to some capacity, and that's not part of the equation. If so, there needs to be a conversation with Gresham to wind the relationship down and move forward in a new direction.

Chairman Boddie agreed with Attorney Davenport.

City Manager Phillips asked Attorney Davenport to share some insight on how the authority can get some additional clarity around the task orders Gresham Smith completed to date for \$150,000.00.

GM Farmer stated that he has not seen any work completed for \$150,000.00.

City Manager Philips asked what the arrangement with Gresham Smith was about the task orders.

Attorney Davenport stated that the relationship was with Gresham Smith's project manager and the authority, but it came through him. Attorney Davenport will go back and look and see where they left off and contact their point of contact to find out where they are and their deliverables and update the board at the next meeting, and they can decide based on the information received.

GM Farmer stated that as far as Mauldin & Jenkins, he has a relationship with Mr. Miller Edwards. He was a partner in the firm and has since retired. He will reach out to Mauldin and Jenkins (Mr. Doug Moses).

GM Farmer met with Utility Director John Martin. One concern that he has from an operational perspective is the flow of water and the inconsistency of the City of Atlanta. Fire protection is a grave concern.

Chairman Boddie stated that with the industrial side, they have backup water, such as tanks because they're self-contained.

GM Farmer said that there have been many discussions with the City of Atlanta, but it should be face-to-face, not Zoom. The three cities that comprise this water authority are in the service areas of the

City of Atlanta, so certainly they must have improvements that they can share with the board and their plans. The cities have industries coming in, and they must have protection. The city's house engineers must look at what the authority could do to maintain and provide protection.

Chairman Boddie asked if the City of Atlanta showed any projection on replacing lines. The City of Palmetto has had that discussion with them because they still have 4 customers, including Microsoft who are on hold for water because of the City Atlanta. At that time, they had an estimate of 55 million dollars, and the City of Palmetto at that time, didn't know if that was enough.

Mayor Avery stated that at the last meeting, the board discussed not talking to Coweta County, but believes that because the City of Atlanta knows that the authority is not talking to another option, it makes the City of Atlanta feel like they don't have to go into town when it comes to the authority. He believes that every option needs to be looked at.

Chairman Boddie asked if they met with Coweta County.

Project Manager Benz stated that they met before the last meeting and when the board decided not to pursue any further conversation, the project managers stopped all conversations with Coweta County.


GM Farmer stated that Mayor Avery made a good point. The meeting with Coweta County went well and was a lot more pleasant. The county seems much more willing and cooperative. If the authority has a permit, they don't want to jeopardize their permit by having a long-range agreement. The authority doesn't have an agreement with the City of Atlanta. The agreement that Attorney Davenport has expired in 1995. Having these agreements with the City of Atlanta, the further away the authority is from the plant, the smaller the lines get, and the elevation and friction laws come into play. If it's not adequate there, the authority will not have adequate fire protection for the cities. The City of Atlanta has failing infrastructure, and two months ago they had a spill. The authority must have adequate tanks.

City Manager Philips stated that the permit that this board must draw water from the Chattahoochee River is a huge asset not just to this board, but to the city of Atlanta. The authorities need to keep that cognition when dealing with the City of Atlanta. In some respects, they need the authority. The authority has a permit that they would like to get to, and he further stated that in any negotiation, having more than one option is vital.

Director John Martin stated that the last meeting with the City of Atlanta concerned low water pressure. The City of Fairburn has them on a monthly schedule to provide feedback with their pressure sensors that were installed around the city. They disclosed that they had a deconditioned booster station that was near Roosevelt Highway that they had used.

City Manager Philips stated that a capital improvement plan should be something that the board requests.

- VII.** The motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:45 pm was made by Vice-Chair Fillingame and seconded by City Manager Philips. **Vote: 6-0; Motion Carried**



Mayor J. Clark Boddie, Chair



Jessica Davis, Secretary

