

RICHLAND COUNTY COUNCIL

SOUTH CAROLINA



SEWER AD HOC COMMITTEE

March 17, 2015
2:30 PM
4th Floor Conference Room

In accordance with the Freedom of Information Act, a copy of the agenda was sent to radio and TV stations, newspapers, persons requesting notification, and was posted on the bulletin board located in the lobby of the County Administration Building

CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Washington called the meeting to order at approximately 2:40 PM

FUTURE DIRECTION OF UTILITIES

Richland County should explore the option of having a private company promote water service to a portion of Richland County whereby Richland County will benefit financially [RUSH and MALINOWSKI]

Mr. Hammett stated this item goes back about 2 ½ years when a request to purchase the County facilities was received.

- RFQ was issued in June 2013 in response to the request.
- Revised RFQ was issued to include a privatization option in July 2013.
- Responses were received September 30, 2013; no action was taken by Council.
- Consultant was retained to look at four options: (a) sell system, (b) privatization of the system, (c) continue operations as a County Department, and (d) establishment of a water and sewer authority.
- Recommendation was to establish a water and sewer authority; committee did not take action.
- The matter was revisited at the Council Retreat in January 2015.
- Oasis Consulting reiterated their recommendation to establish a water and sewer authority; keeping the department as is was a close 2nd.
- As directed by Council, the Utilities Director position has been advertised.

Mr. Washington stated the 2002 water master plan needs to be reviewed.

Committee Members Present

Kelvin E. Washington, Sr., Chair
Paul Livingston
Bill Malinowski

Others Present:

Torrey Rush
Julie-Ann Dixon
Greg Pearce
Tony McDonald
Sparty Hammett
Daniel Driggers
Monique McDaniels
Larry Smith
Ray Peterson
Michelle Onley

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Mr. Malinowski inquired what action Council took in relation to the 2002 Water Master Plan.

Mr. Livingston stated that Council had concerns at that time about the water rates.

Mr. McDonald stated that one of the other deterrents was the costs of getting the initial infrastructure in place.

Mr. Malinowski requested a letter be sent to the City of Columbia and other municipalities that Richland County does not give approval to any future servicing of customers in the unincorporated areas and will dealt with on a case by case basis.

This item was held until after Executive Session.

LOWER RICHLAND SEWER

Mr. Hammett stated Joel Wood & Associates reinitiated the engineering/design of the project. One of the outstanding matters is how the tap and connections are going to be handled for the project.

- Rural Development's understanding is that prior to construction all tap and connection fees will be waived for the project.
- Funding is available for 92 connections and there are 181 tap fee waivers.
- Surveys are ready to be sent to all 574 households within the 200 foot buffer of the proposed lines.
- Council could potentially use \$250,000 from School District One to cover the additional city customers that have been identified and approximately 32 additional connections.
- \$350,000 has been identified FY16 CDBG funds to cover 100 connections
- If more than 224 households are interested in sewer service, additional CDBG funds would be available, as well as, loan funds from both Rural Development and State Revolving Fund.

Staff recommended waiving tap and connections fees for all potential customers prior to construction.

Mr. Malinowski inquired if there were any parameters for received the waiver.

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Mr. Hammett stated the service area has been designated as low to moderate income; therefore, the service area households are eligible for CDBG funds.

Mr. Malinowski inquired as to the survey content being sent to the residents.

Mr. Hammett stated the survey will have the background, list of questions raised by residents, and essentially if they are interested in tying into the project.

Mr. Pearce inquired if the 1,370 residents currently being served by the City of Columbia paid tap fees to the City and, if so, what happens to those tap fees.

Mr. Hammett stated the residents did pay tap fees to the City of Columbia and the County will be paying \$800 per customer to take over those customers.

The Lower Richland Sewer rate is \$37.60 based upon the financials from Rural Development.

Mr. Malinowski moved, seconded by Mr. Washington, to move forward with waiving all tap and connection fees and to send out survey to residents as soon as possible. The vote in favor was unanimous.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

The committee went into Executive Session at approximately 3:07 p.m.
and came out at approximately 3:55 p.m.

Contractual Matter: 208 Plan – Mr. Malinowski moved, seconded by Mr. Livingston, to direct the Administrator to proceed as discussed in Executive Session. The vote in favor was unanimous.

Contractual Matter: Palmetto Utilities – Mr. Malinowski moved, seconded by Mr. Livingston, to direct the Administrator to proceed as discussed in Executive Session. The vote in favor was unanimous.

Contractual Matter: Palmetto Utilities – 208 Plan Amendment – Mr. Malinowski moved, seconded by Mr. Livingston, to direct the Administrator to proceed as discussed in Executive Session. The vote in favor was unanimous.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at approximately 4:00 PM.

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The Minutes were transcribed by Michelle M. Onley, Deputy Clerk of Council

