



Richland County Council
SEWER AD HOC COMMITTEE MINUTES
December 7 2021 – 3:00PM
Council Chambers
2020 Hampton Street, Columbia SC, 29204

MEMBERS PRESENT: Bill Malinowski, Chair, and Cheryl English

OTHERS PRESENT: Paul Livingston, Gretchen Barron, Jesica Mackey, Annette Kirylo, Michelle Onley, Tamar Black, Leonardo Brown, Patrick Wright, John Thompson, Lori Thomas, Bill Davis, Angela Weathersby and Justin Landy

1. **CALL TO ORDER** – Mr. Malinowski called the meeting to order at approximately 3:00 PM

2. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Audio problems

a. **December 15, 2020** – Ms. English moved, seconded by Mr. Malinowski, to approve the minutes as published, except the portion of the minutes regarding “Sewer Service for Albene Park”.

In Favor: Malinowski and English

The vote in favor was unanimous.

3. **ADOPTION OF AGENDA** – Ms. English moved, seconded by Mr. Malinowski, to adopt the agenda as distributed.

In Favor: Malinowski and English

The vote in favor was unanimous.

4. **ELECTION OF CHAIR** – Ms. English moved, second by Mr. Malinowski, to elect Mr. Malinowski as Chair.

In Favor: Malinowski and English

The vote in favor was unanimous.

5. **PROJECT UPDATE** – Mr. Davis stated this is a project update on the Southeast Sewer System. Water and sewer are to be incorporated as a part of the project. He noted 46 customers completed paperwork by the deadline established by Council.

Mr. Malinowski inquired if any additional applications were received after the deadline.

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Mr. Davis responded they have not received additional applications, even though multiple notifications were sent out.

Mr. Malinowski inquired about the cost for sewer and water service.

Mr. Davis responded the sewer ranges vary, based on each contract, but it will be between \$10,000 - \$25,000, and the additional costs for crossing the roads, etc.

Mr. Malinowski stated, for clarification, how much is the County paying to have the sewer installed.

Mr. Davis responded it is several hundred thousand dollars. He noted water is a lot less, but he does not know the cost off the top of his head.

Mr. Malinowski inquired about a timeframe for a return on the investment.

Mr. Davis responded it will take forever.

Ms. English stated she has been working with Mr. Davis, and his team, since she came on Council. She noted they have applied for additional funds to work with Albene Park to see if we can get them on the system.

6. **ITEMS FOR ACTION**

- a. **TCO Change Order 12** – Mr. Davis stated, with the individual sewer pump stations, they typically fail between 2-5 years. He noted, if the homeowner is not doing the maintenance, and it failed over a weekend, the County wants to ensure we have enough storage. The County's specifications and ordinance require storage of about 500 gallons. Based on the contractor's approved design, the pump stations will only allow 95-100 gallons, which is not sufficient. To prevent spillage, we are recommending installation of a concrete structure by the pump station to protect the environment.

Mr. Malinowski inquired why this was not addressed before the contract was let.

Mr. Davis responded this was before his time, and was found as a direct result of his staff looking into the information.

Mr. Malinowski stated, for clarification, the County's ordinance requires 500 gallon, per home.

Mr. Davis responded in the affirmative.

Mr. Malinowski stated, for clarification, we are currently looking at 95-100 gallons, per home, which could lead problems, and cause the County to incur penalties and fines from DHEC.

Mr. Davis responded in the affirmative.

Mr. Malinowski moved, seconded by Ms. English, to forward to Council with a recommendation to authorize the Utilities Department to move forward with the change order.

In Favor: Malinowski and English

The vote in favor was unanimous.

b. **Resuming Disconnections for Non-payment** – Mr. Malinowski inquired why this item is in this committee, and not the Coronavirus Ad Hoc Committee.

Mr. Brown stated, because there is some crossover, they wanted to inform the Sewer Ad Hoc Committee about what the Coronavirus Ad Hoc Committee is doing.

Mr. Malinowski inquired if this is something the Sewer Ad Hoc Committee should take action on.

Mr. Brown responded it would be helpful for the Sewer Ad Hoc Committee to provide a recommendation.

Mr. Malinowski noted, on May 14, 2020, the Governor allowed disconnections to begin with steps to normalize disconnections, but the committee is just being made aware of this.

Mr. Brown responded, during that time, Council discussed how to lessen the burden to citizens, and there was discussion regarding the delay in the sewer rate increase. As we were not willing to increase the rates, he assumed disconnections would also be paused, since reconnections would be expensive for the citizens.

Mr. Malinowski noted the County is in arrears for over a million dollars.

Mr. Brown stated the Coronavirus Ad Hoc Committee and Council approved the use of ARP funding to address those arrears.

Mr. Malinowski inquired where the funds are being used.

Mr. Brown responded the funds will reflect the utility system's bad debt, and put us in a neutral position. This begins telling people the County is going back to disconnection if they are not paying their fee or not honoring their payment plan.

Mr. Malinowski stated, staff's recommendation, is to resume the policy of disconnection of water and sewer for noncompliant individuals.

Ms. English moved, seconded by Mr. Malinowski, to forward to Council with a recommendation to resume the County's policy of disconnection for water and sewer for non-payment.

In Favor: Malinowski and English

The vote in favor was unanimous.

7. **ADJOURNMENT** – The meeting adjourned at approximately 3:23 PM.