

VERO BEACH UTILITIES COMMISSION MINUTES
TUESDAY, MAY 10, 2022 - 9:30 A.M.
CITY HALL, COUNCIL CHAMBERS, VERO BEACH, FLORIDA

PRESENT: Chairman, Jane Burton; Vice Chairman and Indian River Shores Representative, Bob Auwaerter; Members: Bill Eggers, John Sanders, Mark Mucher and Member at Large, JT Mooney **Also Present:** Water and Sewer Director, Rob Bolton; Assistant City Attorney, Jenny Flanigan and Deputy City Clerk, Sherri Philo

Excused Absence: Judy Orcutt

1. CALL TO ORDER

The Chairman called today's meeting to order at 9:30 a.m. and the Deputy City Clerk performed the roll Call.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A) March 8, 2022 – Regular Meeting

Mr. Eggers made a motion to approve the minutes of the March 8, 2022 regular Utilities Commission meeting. Mr. Mooney seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

B) April 18, 2022 – Special Call Meeting

Mr. Eggers made a motion to approve the minutes of the April 18, 2022 Special Call Utilities Commission meeting. Mr. Mooney seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

3. PUBLIC COMMENT

None

4. NEW BUSINESS

Mr. Auwaerter referred to the three (3) items listed under Member's Matters on today's agenda. He asked did a specific member request them.

Ms. Sherri Philo, Deputy City Clerk, reported that there was a request from Mrs. Orcutt to place some items on the agenda.

Mr. Auwaerter questioned so all three (3) items were from Mrs. Orcutt.

Mr. Rob Bolton, Water and Sewer Director, reported that item 7-C) Copper Pipe Corrosion Update was requested by Mr. Mucher.

Mr. Auwaerter suggested that in the future it should be listed on the agenda what member requested the item.

Ms. Jenny Flanigan, Assistant City Attorney, asked is that the pleasure of the Commission.

Mrs. Burton asked Mr. Auwaerter if he was making that his motion.

Mr. Auwaerter made that a motion (that the member's names are to be listed on the agenda under their item). Mr. Mucher seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

5. OLD BUSINESS

A) Discussion on the Mainland STEP System Project and Septic Policy

Mr. Bolton gave a brief update on where they were regarding the STEP System on the mainland. He reported that years ago the City installed all the lines on the mainland that were inside the City limits. They sent out letters for a portion of the mainland. Last summer they held a meeting with the homeowners for about half of the mainland. They did not do the other half of the mainland because they have had some supply chain issues with the STEP equipment.

Mr. Mooney asked how many orders did they get for new installation.

Mr. Bolton said under normal years when they are not promoting the *Step up and Save* program they would have about 75 to 90 installations per year. When they are promoting the *Step up and Save* program they get about 150 to 180 installations per year.

B) Continuing Discussion on the objections to Florida Department of Environmental Protection Indian River Lagoon Basin Management Action Plan – Mr. Matt Mitts, Director of Public Works and Mr. Rob Bolton, Water and Sewer Director

Mr. Bolton reported that he and Mr. Matt Mitts, Public Works Director, have been working on a draft Resolution to take to the Legislative Delegation to request that they look at the BMAP and the total maximum daily load (TMDL) program to possibly add in some penalties to cities and communities that don't uphold their part of the requirements. Once the Resolution is completed staff would be bringing it before the Utilities Commission for their recommendations to the City Council.

The Chairman opened public comments on the items just discussed.

Mr. Keith Drewett referred to item 5-A) Discussion on the Mainland STEP System Project and Septic Policy. He noted that there was a specific issue that Mrs. Orcutt discussed at their last meeting, which was tabled to today's meeting. He suggested that the Commission again table this item to their next meeting. He said the discussion was regarding a date certain for connection and whether the Commission felt motivated to take a position on it.

Mrs. Burton said they would table this item to the June 14, 2022, Utilities Commission meeting when Mrs. Orcutt can be present.

6. CHAIRMAN'S MATTERS

Mrs. Burton said the three (3) items under Member's Matters are from Mrs. Orcutt so if no one else on the Commission wants to discuss them then they will table these items to their next meeting.

Mr. Auwaerter made a motion to table those three (3) items. Mr. Mucher seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

7. MEMBER'S MATTERS

A) Update on Progress Meeting the Requirements of SB712 – Clean Waterways Act – Mr. Rob Bolton, Water and Sewer Director

This item was tabled to the June 14, 2022, Utilities Commission meeting.

B) Update on Stormwater Outfalls – Mr. Matt Mitts, Public Work's Director

This item was tabled to the June 14, 2022, Utilities Commission meeting.

C) Copper Pipe Corrosion Update – Rob Bolton, Water and Sewer Director

This item was tabled to the June 14, 2022, Utilities Commission meeting.

Mr. Auwaerter asked with regards to the stormwater tax, what is going to be the annual impact to the Utilities Fund.

Mr. Bolton said nothing. He explained that it would be a separate Enterprise Fund.

Mr. Auwaerter questioned so there was not going to be any stormwater assessment to any of the Utility Fund properties.

Mr. Bolton said they would have the Water Plant site and the Wastewater Plant site. He does not know the dollar amount.

Mr. Auwaerter questioned, but the City is getting ready to do their budget and they don't have any sense of what the dollar amount is.

Mr. Bolton said that he has not been given the number at this point.

Mr. Auwaerter asked when the consultants gave their presentation, did they give the number of Equivalent Residential Units (ERU's).

Mr. Bolton said they did not specifically give it to him. It is a separate Enterprise Fund.

Mr. Auwaerter said there has been low pressure on reclaimed water on the barrier island. He has seen it in the Town of Indian River Shores properties and has heard complaints from other constituents. He said that he was told by an irrigation technician who was working on his property that he has seen it up and down the island. He asked Mr. Bolton if he had any comments.

Mr. Bolton said they would see it in the area of Fred Tuerk Drive and they would normally not see it as they go further south. He said it is a hydraulic issue associated with the line that belongs to the Town of Indian River Shores that was converted to a water line. As

demand increased over the years it created the issue. The City has done modifications over the years by installing and upgrading the Indian River Shores tank to a holding tank and repump facility. However, whenever they get into a drought condition like they are currently in and everyone doubles their water demand, that is when they see problems. He reported that they express this to the community leaders in each subdivision. He said they discuss this in March of every year that they are going to have complaints in May because that is when things start turning brown and people double the amount of water to try to save their grass.

Mr. Auwaerter asked how does that communication get to the communities.

Mr. Bolton said when staff receives a call they then discuss the issue with the leaders of the Home Owner Associations. He reported that the three (3) areas that normally call to complain are, Park Shores, the Estuary and Bermuda Bay. He said that he has currently only heard from Park Shores.

Mr. Auwaerter said that he lives in Ocean Colony.

Mr. Bolton said Ocean Colony has a problem internally with their system. They have very small mains and they have very long run times on their irrigation system so it depends on how they schedule the hours they could have higher pressure.

Mr. Auwaerter asked what are the hours of higher pressure.

Mr. Bolton said from 11:00 p.m. to 7:00 a.m. He explained that when they are not in a drought condition they normally leave a reduced pressure from 7:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. so people are able to work on their irrigation system. Currently they have not been able to do that because they are having to move so much water up to John's Island to refill the tank that they suspended the normal times where they could test the irrigation systems for the month of May.

Mr. Mucher asked what department is in charge of the stormwater utility.

Mr. Bolton answered the Public Works Department.

Mr. Auwaerter said there are three (3) Councilmembers in the audience today and this is a question that he would be asking the City Council since it is going to be an assessment to the utility.

Mr. Mooney asked what was the estimated assessment value.

Mrs. Burton said during the presentation they showed how it would be calculated, but they did not give figures on the actual value dollar wise.

Mr. Auwaerter asked did the City Council say how much money they wanted to raise.

Mrs. Burton said that was not discussed.

Mr. Mucher thought the ERU went from \$5.00 to a little over \$7.00.

Mrs. Burton explained that was just an estimate.

Mr. Mucher thought that when Sebastian first got their utility the first thing they did was that they bonded out the cash flow. He asked is there anything in the City's Ordinances that prevents the stormwater utility from bonding out the cash flow.

Ms. Flanigan reported that at this stage the City still needs to adopt the amended Stormwater Assessment Ordinance, which would be going before the City Council on May 17, 2022. She noted that the City's stormwater utility is heavily regulated by Florida Law so if the City was to take that action it would only be if it was authorized explicitly by the Florida Legislature.

8. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Auwaerter made a motion to adjourn today's meeting at 10:04 a.m. Mr. Eggert seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

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