

Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the City Commission of the City of Auburndale held May 15, 2023, at 7:00 p.m. in the Commission Room of City Hall, after having been properly advertised, with the following members present: Mayor Dorothea Taylor Bogert, Commissioners: Keith Cowie, Richard Hamann, Jack Myers, and Bill Sterling. Also, present were: City Manager Jeffrey Tillman, City Attorney Frederick J. Murphy Jr., City Clerk Brandon Henry, and Police Chief Terry Storie.

Mayor Dorothea Taylor Bogert declared a quorum present, and the Meeting was opened with prayer by Bonnie O'Malley, Spirit Life Ministries, and a salute to the flag.

Motion by Commissioner Sterling, seconded by Commissioner Hamann, to approve Minutes of the City Commission Meeting of May 1, 2023. Upon vote, all ayes.

City Manager Jeffrey Tillman announced that the next dinner meeting for the Ridge League of Cities is June 8th, in Lakeland.

Mayor Taylor Bogert recognized Greater Auburndale Chamber of Commerce President Alex Cam, who was in attendance.

She asked if there was public comment on any item not on the agenda. There was no public comment.

1. PRESENTATION OF REGIONAL WASTEWATER TREATMENT PLANT SERVICE AREA EVALUATION – CHASTAIN-SKILLMAN

City Manager Tillman said he is joined tonight by Vaughan Leer with Chastain-Skillman.

Mr. Tillman said the study is because of growth. Polk County is the fastest growing County in Florida, and the fifth fastest growing in the country. So there is a tremendous amount of pressure on all City services. You can see it in the year-over-year amount of single-family home permits and business tax receipts issued. In 2020, we did a sewer capacity analysis specifically at the Regional Wastewater Treatment Plant which showed 2030 as the year for needed improvement. In 2021, we saw that a lot of the pumps that are designed to run 12 hours a day were running 22 hours a day, demonstrating the increased flows in our sewer system because of the increased growth. As we have this unprecedented growth, we found the need to study the lines and lift stations of our sewer system.

He said in May of 2022, City Staff requested Chastain-Skillman, the City's consulting engineers, to evaluate a 10-inch wastewater force main that pumps flow from SR-559 west along C. Fred Jones Boulevard and south along Berkley Road and the Auburndale/TECO Trail to the Regional Master Lift Station. As a result of growth, the concern was that the existing wastewater infrastructure may not be able to handle the increased flows. The northern portion of the Auburndale Utility Service Area is served by the Regional Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP).

City Manager Tillman presented a map depicting the study areas.

He said as a result of the findings of the Northside 10-inch Force Main Evaluation, in October 2022 City Staff requested Chastain-Skillman to evaluate the entire Regional Wastewater Treatment Plant Service Area. The Evaluation collected and analyzed data to develop a computer simulation model for the Service Area, perform computer simulation of various growth/timing scenarios, check Wastewater Treatment Plant capacity/disposal impacts under various scenarios, develop Capital Improvement Projects in 5-year increments for a 20-year horizon, and summarize/document findings in a Technical Memorandum. He continued explaining the map depicting the study areas. He yielded to Vaughan Leer with Chastain-Skillman to explain some of the findings of the study.

Vaughan Leer said new infrastructure is needed to accommodate growth and to maintain the City's statement of Level of Service for wastewater. The City has a committed capacity of 4.8-million gallons per day. The current capacity of the Regional Wastewater Treatment Facility is 4-million gallons per day. There is a current limitational capacity at the Regional Wastewater Treatment Plant because the State of Florida requires public access reuse or sprayfields with limited public access reuse. The problem is that right now the City's Regional Sprayfield only has 2.7-million gallons per day of capacity available. For the permit renewal from 2021, we were able to work with the Department of Environmental Protection to allow annual increases over the course of the next five years to get that field up to 3.2-million gallons per day. There is still a disparity. Part of the City Commission's purchase of the land for the secondary sprayfield will get us to 4-million gallons per day. We will need more.

Current infrastructure needs updating to add additional capacity or free up capacity within existing infrastructure. As Mr. Tillman indicated, the Regional Master Lift Station is currently a severe bottleneck for the City's utility system. Additionally, with all the development, we suggested to City staff with their agreement, that we need Development Agreements to allow the development to continue concurrently with the City's updates of the infrastructure. The Developer's Agreements are intended to prescribe to the developers what can and cannot happen, and what triggers are required from the City's infrastructure to allow development to move forward.

Mr. Leer presented a map of the Master 559 Lift Station and 10-inch force main, serving areas north and northeastern of the Utility Service Area. It is at capacity. It discharges to the Regional Master Lift Station and capacity is limited. Proposed improvements include the Pace Road Master Lift Station, and a force main directly to the regional plant. The timing would be immediate because we have developers waiting. The City has partnered with one of the developers on the Pace Road Master Lift Station and the 16-inch discharge force main. That developer and their consultants are facilitating the design and construction of it on behalf of the City. An additional project is a 10-inch force main. He summarized the most likely location of this project. That will free approximately 1-million gallons of capacity in the Regional Lift Station.

He presented a map of the Southern Force Main. He summarized its location. Capacity is limited. We are not seeing so much development in the southern portion – there is a fair amount, but when your pipelines are running full, you can only squeeze so much additional flow in. Proposed improvements include relocating force main discharge directly to the Regional Wastewater Treatment Facility. He summarized the location of the proposed improvement. Timing would be immediate because we need to free up as much capacity in the Regional Master Lift Station to respond to the growth in that northeastern quadrant.

He presented a map of the Gapway Force Main. He summarized its location. It discharges to the Regional Master Lift Station. That master lift station has gotten its use out of it. The City has done well with it. But unfortunately, the day has come that to accommodate the development in the northeastern region, we need a second force main because the existing 16-inch is projected to be overloaded as development comes online. Unlike the others, this is what we are going to use the Regional Master Lift Station for moving forward. It will be the primary master station to serve this area.

To go with all the development, we need to do some things at the plant. The Regional Wastewater Treatment Plant was originally built as a 2-million gallon per day facility in 1995. Back then, it was referred to as the West Regional Wastewater Treatment Plant. It was expanded for the last time in 2009 to 4-million gallons per day. The current capacity is 4-million gallons per day. The current capacity that we need to accommodate development is 4.8-million gallons per day. Projected future capacity is 6-million gallons per day to handle remaining developable parcels within the City. That is where the additional sprayfield capacity or some semblance of reuse comes into play for that additional 2-million gallons of capacity daily. Proposed improvements include adding 2-million gallons to the treatment facility. Planning and design efforts need to start immediately. We are looking at three to four years for design and permitting, because it is not a straightforward process. There are a lot of

hoops in permitting. The second phase would be construction commencing within that three-to-four-year window.

City Manager Tillman presented a slide summarizing the capital improvement costs and timing for the proposed projects.

He presented a slide summarizing a timeline of actions regarding the proposed projects. Staff recommends accepting the Regional Wastewater Treatment Plant Service Area Evaluation.

Motion by Commissioner Cowie, seconded by Commissioner Hamann, to accept the Regional Wastewater Treatment Plant Service Area Evaluation.

Commissioner Hamann asked Mr. Leer if there is anything to alleviate us from having to get so much sprayfield, or is the technology not there yet?

Mr. Leer answered the technology is there, but the regulators are not.

Commissioner Myers asked does the County not have one?

City Manager Tillman said there are other means in which to utilize reuse.

Commissioner Myers recalled a previous permit with the Department of Environmental Protection.

Public Works / Public Utilities Director John Dickson said our permitted capacity is 2.67-million gallons per day. The Florida Department of Environmental Protection has written into the new permit that there are steps we can take with Tenoroc to get that permit up to 3.2-million gallons per day. They also gave us an opportunity to rerate our new sprayfield.

Commissioner Myers asked what about the other sprayfield north of Interstate 4? Have we had it rerated?

Mr. Dickson answered we would also have the possibility of combining the permits. The way he envisions it right now, we have the capability of sending reuse from both plants to the reuse tank at Lake Myrtle. The reuse tank at Lake Myrtle discharges to our reuse system at Lake Myrtle and to Interstate 4. It is his thought that we can maybe pull a permit for the Interstate 4 Sprayfield to take water from either the Regional or the Allred. Right now, the Interstate 4 Sprayfield is probably only getting 400,000 or 500,000 gallons per day. We are using most of it on the fields at Lake Myrtle. The Interstate 4 Sprayfield is rated for 1.5-million gallons per day.

Commissioner Myers asked did we look at rerouting any of that to get the capacity north of Interstate 4?

Mr. Leer answered not the entire 2 million. We have not even begun the planning and design phase yet. We are open to looking at outside-the-box methods to come up with disposal.

Commissioner Myers asked what about Tenoroc High School?

Mr. Dickson answered he does not know.

Commissioner Myers said it is outside-the-box.

Mr. Dickson said most of that effluent disposal, we are going to be good with our current 4-million gallons. Our current sprayfield will take us to that. When they show the additional sprayfield, that is when we start expanding the plant. We can reevaluate and look at all these things before we look for more property. We will exhaust all those other avenues.

Mr. Leer said with the plant expansion, the Florida Department of Environmental Protection will not permit the expansion without the proper reuse capacity. So the two will marry together automatically.

Mr. Dickson said the issue out there and why we can never know anything about reuse out there is the land and the soils. It does not take a lot.

City Manager Tillman said he will note that we have had discussions as we grow up the State Road 559 area, trying to get a reuse line across Gapway Road in addition to some of the other lines, to give us as the ability to spray common areas such as landscaping and parks, or getting reuse water to the North Auburndale Park - which is under contract. We can work with development so they can get cheap reuse water.

Commissioner Myers said we have so much development out there. We might look to provide reuse water at a discounted rate to citizens if they want to hook up. He said he thinks the County requires it in certain parts. He reflected on when the wastewater plant was originally built. He said interest rates are going up. Where are we on the note for the Regional Plant? We are coming up on 30 years. He thinks we refinanced that for the expansion. We voted for sewer impact fees this year. We should look at the sewer impact fees and the note. He hates to put a burden on existing citizens.

City Manager Tillman said we completed a study about a year and a half ago on our water and sewer utilities, knowing these capital improvements will be plugged into that plan. We have three more years left on the debt service for the plant.

Commissioner Myers said that is a good thing.

Commissioner Hamann asked how much more can we expand this plant without having to go to another plant?

Mr. Leer said he is new to Chastain-Skillman, having been with the firm for about a year and a half. Rumor has it that when the expanded plant was built in 2009, there was consideration of busting out the wall between the two digesters where you treat the sludge, and retrofitting it to another "SBR" basin, getting us to five. He thinks we can do six on the existing plant site, but it will be tight. Beyond that, we would be looking for more land. Let us hope we do not get to that point.

Commissioner Hamann said at one time, we did a complete total buildout of the Comprehensive Plan of what we would need. This plant would take us up to 8-million gallons?

Mr. Leer clarified that it is 6-million gallons.

City Manager Tillman said Community Development Director Julie Womble has been very involved in this process in doing the land use analysis. That is getting us close to the 6-million gallons. It is a plan. We feel confident with the 6-million-gallon number for future buildout, but it is just a plan.

Commissioner Myers asked to clarify this is just all sewer?

City Manager Tillman said that is correct, this is all the sewer study.

Mayor Taylor Bogert asked for public comment.

Maulissa Braverman, 1918 Lake Ariana Boulevard, asked how long do we expect the new proposed plant to last? Is there a longevity of time that we can estimate based on the new growth that Auburndale is experiencing?

Mr. Leer answered it would depend upon what you are talking about. The concrete structures and such for the tank would be a 50-year minimum design life. The mechanical equipment that goes into the tank is about a 25-year design life.

Commissioner Myers asked about equipment that was recently replaced.

Mr. Dickson clarified what was replaced.

City Manager Tillman said we are planning to get 6-million gallons a day.

Mr. Leer said as part of the planning and design effort of the treatment plant expansion, one of the first steps will be to revisit the 6 million number, versus the buildout – based on the current day zoning requirements and land use allotments to verify with some semblance of reasonable accuracy that we have the right number.

City Attorney Frederick J. Murphy Jr. said this was a very interesting report and well presented. There is an interplay between the concurrency management system that the City is required by law in our Comprehensive Plan to maintain, which Chapter 163 speaks to – and what is real – how much water and wastewater people are using, and how much we have committed in terms of capacity in our system i.e. when you pay a connection fee or pull a building permit for vertical construction. He wants to make it clear that while it may look like we overcommitted, we have not really overcommitted in reality. We made a careful analysis in our concurrency planning, which is good – we are required to do that. We have also been very diligent in our utility efforts, bringing this to the Commission now so that you can be on the front-end as we work with our partners and developers in the community to marry up with what is actually happening in the development world. People pulling permits and actual construction, it is not as theoretical. As City Manager Tillman mentioned, it is just a plan. Plans have a way of evolving and changing. This is very responsible, particularly when you look at the other items on the agenda. There is concurrency management, and then there is the utilities department that manages what people are using. It might appear that they are siloed, but they are not.

Commissioner Myers asked does it give everybody, as far as development that has been approved, the go ahead with developer agreements?

City Manager Tillman answered each developer agreement would need to be worked on with developers moving forward.

Commissioner Myers said he thinks they all want to work with us. They rely on us regarding their financial standing.

City Manager Tillman said we need to finalize the study this evening. Once the Commission accepts this, staff will work together with Chastain Skillman and the City Attorney to develop those developer agreements.

Commissioner Myers said to thank the developers for their patience.

Mayor Taylor Bogert said one of the things her and City Manager Tillman have talked about is making sure we stay ahead of the growth. This is the start to get ahead so we can service those who need services.

Commissioner Myers said he hopes in going forward with this study that it gives staff a good grasp on what we have and do not have, so that developers have a good grasp as well.

Upon vote, all ayes.

2. PRESENTATION OF PROPOSED CAPITAL OUTLAY FOR FISCAL YEAR 23-24 AND FISCAL YEAR 24-25

City Manager Tillman said in preparation of the proposed Fiscal Year 2024 and Fiscal Year 2025 Budgets, Department Directors were requested to revisit all the Capital projects previously approved by the City Commission in the second-year budget (Fiscal Year 2024) and the 5-Year Capital Improvement Program (CIP). This helps to determine if the equipment or improvements are still needed, could be delayed, and/or has a funding source.

The proposed Fiscal Year 2024 Capital Outlay section reflects expenditures of \$35,068,374. Fiscal Year 2025 includes Capital Outlay projects totaling \$24,210,115. He said the presentation will be organized a little differently this year because of the amount of capital projects on the utilities side.

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City Manager Tillman presented specific improvements for Fiscal Year 2024 for the Public Utility Department Capital Overlay.

Commissioner Myers said the picture on the presentation depicts SunTrax in the background. Thinking outside the box, maybe the big infield of SunTrax could be a sprayfield?

City Manager Tillman said staff tried to reach out to them regarding this, they were very hesitant. He continued presenting specific improvements for Fiscal Year 2024 for the Public Utility Department Capital Overlay,

City Manager Tillman said some of these projects are phased over a two-year period, so you will see them in both years. He also recommends to the Commission that we shift every American Rescue Plan Act dollar outside of the Berkley Water Treatment Plant Expansion into sewer projects to help offset the significant cost there. We do have water impact fees that will help pay for the Polk Regional Water Cooperative project but we will need additional sewer funds.

Commissioner Myers asked if those are currently in reserve?

City Manager Tillman said yes. He continued presenting specific improvements for Fiscal Year 2024 for the Public Utility Department Capital Overlay.

Commissioner Myers said as we get these moving and get more online, then we can go for grants.

City Manager Tillman said we would certainly go after grant dollars. We will have a list of projects to talk to our legislators about. We will do everything we can to find resources to get these projects done and done in an expedited manner. He continued presenting specific capital projects.

City Manager Tillman presented specific improvements for Fiscal Year 2025 for the Public Utility Department Capital Overlay.

Regarding the Replacement Vactor Truck, Commissioner Myers asked if we are keeping the old vactor truck or trading it in?

Public Works / Public Utilities Director John Dickson answered it depends if we get a good trade-in value for it or not.

City Manager Tillman continued presenting specific improvements for Fiscal Year 2025 for the Public Utility Department Capital Overlay.

City Manager Tillman presented a table of the Public Utilities' Capital Improvement Program.

City Manager Tillman presented specific improvements for Fiscal Year 2024 and Fiscal Year 2025 for the General Fund and Community Redevelopment Agency Capital Outlay, by department, for the Fire Department.

Mayor Taylor Bogert asked if we accommodated for price increases regarding new Fire Department vehicles.

City Manager Tillman said the manufacturer locked our price in.

He presented a table of the Fire Department's Capital Improvement Program.

City Manager Tillman presented specific improvements for Fiscal Year 2024 and Fiscal Year 2025 for the General Fund and Community Redevelopment Agency Capital Outlay, by department, for the Police Department. He presented a table of the Police Department's Capital Improvement Program.

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He presented specific improvements for Fiscal Year 2024 and Fiscal Year 2025 for the General Fund and Community Redevelopment Agency Capital Outlay, by department, for the Parks and Recreation Department. He presented a table of the Parks and Recreation Department's Capital Improvement Program.

City Manager Tillman presented specific improvements for Fiscal Year 2024 and Fiscal Year 2025 for the General Fund and Community Redevelopment Agency Capital Outlay, by department, for the Public Works Department. He presented a table of the Public Works Department's Capital Improvement Program.

He presented specific improvements for Fiscal Year 2024 and Fiscal Year 2025 for the General Fund and Community Redevelopment Agency Capital Outlay, for the Community Redevelopment Agency. He presented a table of the Community Redevelopment Agency's Capital Improvement Program.

He said during the audit presentation, Commissioner Sterling asked about software. The City is exploring a new Enterprise Resource Planning software, spread out amongst different department's Capital Improvement Programs.

Staff recommends tentative approval of the Capital Outlay sections of the Proposed Fiscal Year 2024 and Fiscal Year 2025 Budgets. Formal adoption of the Fiscal Year 2024 Budget and conceptual approval of the Fiscal Year 2025 Budget will come after the scheduled Public Hearings in September.

Mayor Taylor Bogert asked for public comment. There was no public comment.

Motion by Commissioner Cowie, seconded by Commissioner Hamann, to tentatively approve the Capital Outlay sections of the Proposed Fiscal Year 2024 and Fiscal Year 2025 Budgets. Upon vote, all ayes.

City Manager Tillman thanked all the Department Directors and staff for their help.

3. CONSIDER PROPOSAL FOR UTILITY RATE AND CONNECTION FEE STUDY UPDATE

City Manager Tillman said in December 2020, the City Commission authorized Raftelis to perform a Utility Rate and Connection Fee Study. As result of the Study, the City Commission approved adjustments in water and wastewater connection fees, as well as a 4% adjustment in water utility rates and a 0.5% adjustment in wastewater utility rates for five (5) years, beginning in 2022, to meet the balance of proposed expenses and required revenue.

Following the Regional Wastewater System Evaluation recently completed by Chastain-Skillman, City Staff is proposing that Raftelis review and recommend any needed updates to utility rates and connection fees based upon the revised 5-year Capital Improvements Plan. Raftelis' proposal has been designed to provide the City with two options, one being an update to only the sewer rates and connection fees in light of recent findings from the Regional Wastewater System Evaluation for \$30,000. The second being an update to both the water and wastewater rates and connection fees to also address cost changes in the Polk Regional Water Cooperative (PRWC) Projects as well as many additional considerations required for the City to operate the utilities for a total cost of \$40,000.

The proposed Raftelis Scope of Work is consistent with the previous services provided by the firm in 2003, 2006, 2012, 2016, and 2021. A Combined Water and Wastewater Study provides a thorough review of projected water and wastewater revenues compared to the City's Two-Year Budget, Five-Year Capital Improvement Plan, operational expenses, budget transfers, estimated inflation and debt service.

Raftelis is familiar with the City's infrastructure and customer billing processes. They are also engaged with the Polk Regional Water Cooperative and aware of the future impacts of Auburndale's participation in Polk Regional Water Cooperative projects.

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The proposed Scope of Services and cost totals have been reviewed by the City's Finance Director, Public Utilities Director, City Manager and City Attorney. Estimated completion of the Study is projected in the third quarter of 2023.

Staff recommends authorizing the Raftelis Scope of Services for both a Water and Wastewater Utility Rate and Connection Fee Study in the amount of \$40,000.

Mayor Taylor Bogert asked for public comment. There was no public comment.

Motion by Commissioner Sterling, seconded by Commissioner Cowie, to authorize the Raftelis Scope of Services for both a Water and Wastewater Utility Rate and Connection Fee Study in the amount of \$40,000.

Commissioner Myers said this is the fastest we have done another rate study, specifically for water. The water study we did the last time had escalators of price increases over time. Have we even gotten to the end of that time?

City Manager Tillman answered we have not. The rate started in 2022 and was on a five-year timeframe, so they were projecting we would not get all the increases until 2027.

Commissioner Myers asked if the Polk Regional Water Cooperative is doing their own rate study?

City Manager Tillman said the Polk Regional Water Cooperative recommended each individual city look at their own individual utility rate.

Commissioner Myers said we just did the water study and we have not gotten to the installation period of rate increases that were recommended to us.

City Manager Tillman said we would almost be starting anew and looking at it again based on new numbers.

Upon vote, all ayes.

The Meeting was adjourned at 8:27:58 p.m.

I HEREBY CERTIFY that the foregoing Minutes are true and correct.



Brandon Henry, City Clerk