



DeKalb County Government

1300 Commerce Drive
Decatur, Georgia 30030

Minutes - Draft

PWI-Public Works & Infrastructure Committee

Thursday, January 30, 2025

9:00 AM

Special Called Meeting

Meeting Started At: 9:02AM

Attendees: Commissioners C. Johnson, Massiah, Bolton, Terry, Davis Johnson

Present 2 - Commissioner Chakira Johnson, and Commissioner Nicole Massiah
Absent 1 - Chairperson Robert Patrick

I. MINUTES

2025-0072 Commission District(s): ALL
Minutes for the January 7, 2025 Public Works and Infrastructure Committee Meeting
MOTION was made by Nicole Massiah, seconded by Chakira Johnson, that this agenda item be approved. The motion carried by the following vote:

Yes: 2 - Commissioner Johnson, and Commissioner Massiah
Absent: 1 - Chairperson Patrick

II. DISCUSSION

Water & Sewer Rates Discussion

-comments provided by COO Williams
-comments provided by CEO Cochran-Johnson
-presentation provided by Consent Decree Director Maria Houser
-presentation provided by Robert Ryall - Arcadis regarding a summary of the proposed recommendations
-comments provided by COO Williams regarding the proposed DeKalb CARES Customer Assistance Programs
-Question NM: could you provide clarity on the 6% vs the 7% rate options?
-response provided by Robert Ryall
-Question MDJ: what percentage of this project would the 10 x 10 cover? Have we taken into consideration cost increases during that time, and what affect could they have on the scenario that is being presented to us?
-responses provided by Director Houser
-Question MDJ: outside the 10 x 10 plan, would we have capacity to address issues including the sewer and water distribution? Could we address either or both of those issues should need the arise during this 10 x 10 period?
-response provided by Director Houser
-Questions MDJ: are there funds added to the \$5M annually for emergencies?
-response provided by Director Houser
-Question MDJ: would repairs in one area put more strain on other areas?
-response provided by Director Houser
-comments and additional discussion by CEO Cochran-Johnson
-comments provided by Commissioner Massiah regarding a request for additional data in order to make a more informed decision
-Question MDJ: you spoke of businesses paying their fair share; would that be based upon usage for businesses?
-MDJ: regarding apartments and condos, there are some that owe millions in water and sewer because the owners and management have not paid; going forward that could continue to be an issue when complexes are collecting money for water and sewer from residents but the complexes have not paid. Additional comments provided by Commissioner Davis Johnson
-responses provided by CEO Cochran-Johnson
-comments provided by Director Houser regarding the business impact
-Question NM: how do these different subsections of the DeKalb CARES program affect other aspects of billing and other issues?
-responses provided by COO Williams
-comments provided by Commissioner Terry
-Question TT: is there vernacular in the engineering world regarding getting a secondary opinion?
-TT: I haven't seen where the Board of Commissioners has been given leeway to have an expert witness to inform the Commissioners and PWI Committee. I wonder how you all would respond if we were to propose that consultation as another viewpoint
-comments provided by COO Williams
-comments provided by Commissioner Johnson
-sustained conversation from Commissioner Terry regarding several aspects of consideration regarding water and sewer rates, transparency, public input through the Watershed Advisory Group, and a system for private laterals to be inspected and repaired
-comments provided by Director Houser
-Question TT: when did the Board approve the CIP we're currently operating on?
-responses provided by Director Houser
-Commissioner Terry requests the most recent engineering report from Arcadis
-Question TT: could you discuss what you've seen in other jurisdictions regarding the process for a capital funding plan?
-response provided by Mr. Ryall
-Commissioner Terry discussed the option of separating the water & sewer rate proposal and bond resolution into 2 separate agenda items, rather than one as it is currently proposed
-comments provided by Commissioner Terry regarding proposed next steps the Board could take
-Question LB: regarding serving South DeKalb in fire flows, the recommendation is between 40-60 PSI, but we're operating at 150 PSI. What is the maximum capacity for those pipes based on industry standards?
-responses provided by Director Houser
-Question LB: did you say we're adding an additional 60 inch or the total is 60 inch?
-responses provided by Director Houser

-Question LB: will this 65% new bond funding be used only for consent decree or funding across the board?
-response provided by Mr. Ryall

-Question LB: were the cities and counties in the comparative analysis chosen because they were similar in population?
-response provided by Mr. Ryall

-Question LB: regarding the DeKalb CARES programs, will there be a separate team to facilitate the program to ensure its implemented effectively for the residents?
-response provided by COO Williams

-Question CJ: is the 10x10 proposed rate increase and corresponding \$450M revenue bond based on the sufficiency study it seems to have ballooned by \$1B from December to January. Can this be explained?
-response provided by Mr. Ryall

-Question CJ: regarding the itemized list of projects, each of those has the engineering study and corresponding costs associated?
-response provided by Maria Houser

-Question CJ: are you proposing program enhancements to switch people from septic to sewer?
-response provided by Maria Houser

-Question CJ: when will town halls be scheduled, what is the timeline for approval of this item?
-response provided by Maria Houser

-comments provided by Commissioner Massiah

-comments provided by CEO Cochran-Johnson regarding the planning of town halls

-comments provided by COO Williams

-comments provided by Commissioner Davis Johnson

-Commissioner Davis Johnson requests the Board of Commissioners develop a process to receive a second opinion regarding the water and sewer rates proposal and CIP

-Commissioner Terry provided comments regarding clarification in seeking a second opinion to explore alternatives and policy techniques regarding the water & sewer proposal

-CEO Cochran-Johnson provided the dates for the upcoming town halls to discuss Water & Sewer rates: February 3rd at Dunwoody City Hall, February 4th at the Tucker Reed Coffey Library, and February 5th at the Porter Sanford Library

III. AGENDA ITEM

Previously Heard Agenda Items:

Finance

[2024-1326](#) Commission District(s): All Districts
Adoption Of (1) The Attached Resolution Approving 10% Rate Increase No Earlier Than May 1 for the Year 2025, and Nine Additional Increases in the Amount of 10% Each , Which Shall Become Effective on Each January 1, Beginning January 1, 2026 Through and Including January 1, 2034, and (2) the Attached Series 2025 Bond Resolution Authorizing the Issuance by the County of not to Exceed \$450 Million in Total Par Amount of Its Water and Sewerage Revenue Bonds, for the Purpose of Rehabilitating of the Scott Candler Water Treatment Facility and Other Crucial Water and Sewerage Projects, for the Department of Watershed Management (DWM) CIP.

This agenda item was recommended holding in committee to the Board of Commissioners due back on 2/11/2025 .

New Agenda Items:

Public Works - Roads & Drainage

[2025-0048](#)

Commission District(s): All Commission Districts
Authorizing Georgia Power Easement Request on DeKalb County's
Property - 727 Camp Road, Decatur, GA 30032

**This agenda item was recommended holding in committee to
the Board of Commissioners due back on 2/11/2025 .**

Previously Heard Agenda Items:

Public Works - Roads & Drainage (R&D)

[2024-1284](#)

Commission District(s): ALL
Stormwater Master Plan

**This agenda item was recommended holding in committee to
the Board of Commissioners due back on 2/11/2025 .**

Public Works - Transportation

[2024-1261](#)

Commission District(s): ALL
CO - Change Order No. 3 to Contract Nos.: 1231540, 1231542, 1231546, 1231550 and 1231552 Engineering and Design Services for Public Works Transportation & Infrastructure (Multiyear Contract): for use by Public Works-Transportation (PW-Trans). These contracts consist of providing engineering services to initiate design of selected public works infrastructure improvement projects for the County. This request seeks approval to increase the contract term through December 31, 2025 for all contracts and also seeks to increase contract funds to Contract Nos.: 1231542, 1231546, and 1231552. Awarded to: AtkinsRealis USA, Inc., Vanasse Hangen Brustlin (VHB), Inc.; Arcadis U.S. Inc.; Atlas Technical Consultants; and AECOM Technical Services, Inc. Total Amount Not To Exceed: \$1,000,000.00.

This agenda item was recommended holding in committee to the Board of Commissioners due back on 2/11/2025 .

Watershed Management

[2024-1301](#)

Commission District(s): All
CO - Change Order No. 6 to Contract No. 1124403 Teledyne ISCO Training and Support, Equipment, Software and Licenses, Part and Related System Components for Sanitary Sewer Flow Monitoring (sole Source): for use by the Department of Watershed Management (DWM). This contract consists of the provision of vendor support and training in the installation and maintenance of equipment, flow monitoring equipment, parts and related system components used in the completion of existing hydraulic modeling and sewer monitoring programs related to Consent Decree requirements. This request is to increase funding and continue with the use of the existing sole source vendor through December 31, 2025. Awarded to Teledyne Instruments, Inc. as a business unit Teledyne ISCO. Amount Not to Exceed: 3,000,000.00.

This agenda item was recommended holding in committee to the Board of Commissioners due back on 2/11/2025 .

Board of Commissioners - District 2

[2024-1357](#) Commission District(s): All Districts
Resolution of the Board of Commissioners of DeKalb County
Supporting Policy Changes to Protect Seniors, Disabled Individuals,
and Low-Income Residents Against Upcoming Water Rate
Increases
**This agenda item was recommended holding in committee to
the Board of Commissioners due back on 2/11/2025 .**

Board of Commissioners - Super District 6

[2024-1405](#) Commission District(s): All Commission Districts
A Resolution of the Board of Commissioners of DeKalb County
Requesting an Operational Audit of the DeKalb County Watershed
Department.
**This agenda item was recommended holding in committee to
the Board of Commissioners due back on 2/11/2025 .**

Meeting Ended At: 11:30AM

**MOTION was made by Nicole Massiah, seconded by Chakira
Johnson, that this agenda item be adjourned meeting. The motion
carried by the following vote:**

Yes: 2 - Commissioner Johnson, and Commissioner Massiah

Absent: 1 - Chairperson Patrick

Barbara H. Sanders-Norwood CCC, CMC