



DeKalb County Government

1300 Commerce Drive
Decatur, Georgia 30030

Minutes - Draft

PWI-Public Works & Infrastructure Committee

Commissioner Robert Patrick (Chairperson)

Commissioner Chakira Johnson

Commissioner Nicole Massiah

Thursday, February 13, 2025

3:00 PM

Special Called Meeting

Meeting Started At: 3:03PM

Attendees: Commissioners Patrick, C Johnson, Massiah, Bolton, Long Spears

Present 3 - Chairperson Robert Patrick, Commissioner Chakira Johnson, and
Commissioner Nicole Massiah

I. DISCUSSION

Water & Sewer Rates Discussion

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- the Committee was distributed an uncoupled rate resolution, which separates the 10x10 rate increase proposal from the bond resolution
 - presentation provided by Director Maria Houser regarding the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP)
 - Question NM: with this information being digital, is it updated to reflect the completed projects?
 - response provided by Director Houser regarding quarterly updates that reflect the most up to date information
 - Question NM: do we know how often this will be updated?
 - response provided by Director Houser
 - Question NM: how often will commissioners be updated on this information?
 - Z Williams: a formal discussion quarterly in PWI would make sense, and perhaps semi-annually in Committee of the Whole could be a good cadence
 - CJ: regarding access to the beta if you could try it out with PWI and go from there
 - Question RP: CIP 2021 is brought in to 2024?
 - response provided by Director Houser
 - Question NM: is it possible to get a study that utilizes 2024 data?
 - responses provided by Director Houser and CFO McNabb
 - Question MLS: could you tell me the funding needed to satisfy the Consent Decree?
 - response provided by Director Houser
 - Question MLS: why can't we focus on satisfying the \$1.5B first, and strive toward our current deadline of 2027, and then do the remaining projects through 2035?
 - response provided by Director Houser
 - Question MLS: could we look at another option instead of 10 years, 5 years to complete Consent Decree?
 - response provided by Deputy County Attorney Welch
 - Question MLS: how are fines calculated?
 - response provided by Attorney Welch
 - Question MLS: who defines what the fines would be?
 - response provided by Attorney Welch regarding stipulated penalties within the Modified Consent Decree
 - Question MLS: when would we have to pay the fine that was stipulated in 2021?
 - response provided by Attorney Welch
 - Question MLS: so we're looking at a fine on the front end, and a larger fine on the back end?
 - response provided by Attorney Welch
 - RP: if we have sufficiency of funding in place, we would be able to stay within the schedule that is being laid out before us
 - Question MLS: so you're saying the modified decree could take 2-3 years to negotiate?
 - response provided by Attorney Welch
 - Question MLS: last year did we miss any deadlines that we know of?
 - response provided by Attorney Welch
 - Question RP: you're saying there are multiple categories of fines? Some for spills and others for missed deadlines?
 - response provided by Attorney Welch
 - Question MLS: how much have we paid to date in fines?
 - M Houser: it's over \$4M to my knowledge
 - Question MLS: how much did we pay last year?
 - M Houser: Around \$651,000 last year fines for spills
 - Question LB: if we assume we collect at a rate of 93% we will be able to meet the needs. Is that consistent with what we've seen in the past regarding collection rates?
 - response provided by CFO McNabb
 - Question LB: does the 93% take into account the new proposals for the shutoff protection programs for low income households?
 - response provided by CFO McNabb
 - Question LB: are we able to go back and make an educated guess for a more real projection of whether we'll be able to pay when taking into account the rate protection programs and potential fines?
 - response provided by CFO McNabb
 - Question RP: what is the industry standard for capturing water and sewer fees, and getting bills paid?
 - D McNabb: 98% - 99%; additional comments provided by CFO McNabb
 - Question NM: these projections are based on the studies done by Arcadis?

-response provided by CFO McNabb

-Question NM: on page 14 of the rate study, they are making no warranties with respect to what they are providing us, leaving us with no recourse as this is for informational purposes only.

-Question NM: do we know if better models may be a better alternative such as a 12x5 or a 10x5?

-response provided by CFO McNabb

-Question NM: have we looked into a company that's willing to warranty this information?

-response provided by CFO McNabb

-information provided by Attorney Welch regarding several options for the Board to consider regarding water/sewer rates

-comments provided by Commissioner Long Spears regarding resolution option #1

-Commissioner Long Spears expressed her preference for alternative #1

-Commissioner Long Spears requests that the dates are correct on the rate resolution

-comments provided by Commissioner Long Spears regarding resolution option #2

-Attorney Welch presented option #3

-comments provided by Commissioner Massiah regarding draft language

-comments provided by Commissioner Johnson regarding protocols and future references to these protocols

-Question LB: when was the water/sewer master plan completed?

-response provided by Attorney Welch

-Question MLS: could we amend this to state the "Office of Water and Sewer Customer Advocacy"

-Z Williams: would you consider income eligibility or financial hardship as part of this?

-MLS: I will take it under consideration

Budget Discussion

-information provided by COO Williams regarding notable budgetary proposed changes within purview of the PWI Committee, as well as overall budgetary changes

-Question RP: last year there was a midyear budget allocation for sidewalk repairs. Is that carried over into a CIP account?

-response provided by Director Sigler

-Question RP: there are stop signs that are overgrown with debris; Director Lemke was working on a replacement plan; where are we with that?

-response provided by COO Williams

-RP: we could have Director Lemke come back and give us an update on this information

-COO Williams discussed additionally discussing striping, retention ponds using ARP funding, and SPLOST II within the next quarter to the PWI Committee

-Question CJ: regarding the pay and class study and the operational assessment, what is the timing on those?

-Z Williams: as quickly as possible; additional comments provided by COO Williams

-RP: are enhanced benefits part of the pay and class study analysis?

-response provided by COO Williams

-comments provided by Commissioner Massiah regarding constituent concerns related to the water sewer revenue sufficiency study

II. AGENDA ITEM

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 2/25/2025.

-this item was discussed within context of the Water/Sewer rates discussion

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 2/25/2025 .

-this item was discussed within context of the Water/Sewer rates discussion, as it will be rolled into a draft of the overall rate resolution options for the Board

Meeting Ended At: 4:49pm

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

Yes: 3 - Chairperson Patrick, Commissioner Johnson, and Commissioner Massiah

Barbara H. Sanders-Norwood CCC, CMC