

**UTILITY ADVISORY BOARD  
MEETING  
MAY 24, 2021**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** George Ruchti, Chairman  
David Abderhalden, Dennis Cafaro,  
Scott Howells, Derek Rooney,  
Bil Tucker

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** Mike Dougherty

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Chuck Pavlos, Utilities Director  
Steve Adams, Utilities Engineering Manager  
Kristin Simeone, Finance Director

**CALL TO ORDER/ANNOUNCEMENTS**

- Mr. Tucker called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

A. Roll Call

**NOTE: Next Scheduled Meeting heard prior to Election of Chairman and Vice Chairman.**

1. Election of Chairman and Vice Chairman

- Recording Secretary Pues opened the floor for nominations for Chairman.

- Mr. Cafaro NOMINATED Mr. Ruchti for Chairman.

- As there were no other nominations, Mr. Ruchti was appointed Chairman by acclamation.

- Recording Secretary Pues opened the floor for nominations for Vice Chairman.

- Mr. Ruchti NOMINATED Mr. Cafaro for Vice Chairman.

- As there were no other nominations, Mr. Cafaro was appointed Vice Chairman by acclamation.

B. Next Scheduled Meeting

1. June 28, 2021

- Mr. Cafaro indicated he would not be present at the June 28, 2021, meeting.

**CITIZENS COMMENTS ON AGENDA ITEMS ONLY**

- None.

**NOTE: Election of Chairman and Vice Chairman heard following Citizens Comments on Agenda Items Only, with Mr. Ruchti commencing as Chairman.**

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

A. Review and Approval of Minutes from April 26, 2021

- Mr. Rooney MOVED, Mr. Cafaro SECONDED approval of the April 26, 2021, minutes.  
MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

## REPORTS

- A. Utilities Operational Data: Review of Water and Wastewater Flows from April 2021
- Mr. Chuck Pavlos, Utilities Director, welcomed the new members to the Board. He then reviewed the April 2021 reports from the agenda material, noting the City's water would have exceeded the maximum contaminate level for total dissolved solids for the month if not for the blended water from the Reverse Osmosis Water Treatment Plant.
  - Mr. Ruchti verified same was due to lack of rainfall.
  - Mr. Pavlos then introduced Mr. Steve Adams, Utilities Engineering Manager, Mr. Steve Leonard, Senior Utilities Project Manager, and Ms. Kristin Simeone, Finance Director, to the new members of the Board.
- B. Review of Total Dissolved Solids Chart
- Discussion above.
- C. City Council Action on Utilities Agenda: Utilities Agenda Items Presented to City Council in May 2021
- Mr. Pavlos reported Council approved a developer's agreement for a wastewater force main extension along Riverside Drive, noting the City would reimburse 75% of costs as 25% of the total project flows were attributed to the developers. He concluded connections would be available for additional development along Riverside Drive as permits expired for the package plants.
  - Mr. Rooney requested clarification of the project's location.
  - Mr. Adams displayed an aerial view of the location, noting one property owner intended to develop a Recreational Vehicle Resort. He anticipated the project and development would commence soon, concluding the City would then have the ability to service the four existing mobile home park communities along Riverside Drive in the future.
  - Mr. Rooney questioned whether Charlotte County's (County) ordinance relating to mandatory service connections required existing package plants to connect.
  - Mr. Adams replied with uncertainty as to the exact language concerning existing package plants, explaining the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) regulated same and required a permit every five years. He stated the DEP could develop a schedule relative to the operating permit.
  - Mr. Tucker inquired as to the entity responsible for communicating with residents at the project location regarding their knowledge and interest in service connections to the City.
  - Mr. Adams responded the Utilities Department would be the appropriate entity.
  - Mr. Cafaro questioned how residents connected to package plants outside of City limits were expected to pay their fair share of the connection.

- Mr. Adams responded those residents paid impact fees only, which was approximately \$2,600 per unit.
- Mr. Cafaro opined full payment of impact fees could strongly deter residents from connecting to the City's utilities.
- Ms. Simeone indicated a possible solution for same was spreading payments over a period of time to help smooth costs for residents.
- Discussion ensued regarding potential funding sources for proposed projects as well as potential solutions for encouraging residents to connect to the City's force main.
- Ms. Simeone recalled the general response from the County when presented with the Septic to Sewer Project was supportive; however, they were not in support of funding same at the time.
- Mr. Cafaro requested staff follow up with the County and return to the Board with feedback.
- Mr. Adams agreed to do so.

D. Utilities Financial Report

- Ms. Simeone provided a detailed review of the April 2021 reports from the agenda material, noting "carry over beginning" would be updated by the next meeting now that the audit was finished. She stated actual year to date (YTD) revenues were approximately 104% for water billing and 104% for sewer billings, noting YTD water billings for April 2021 were \$138,000 less than the previous year. She indicated actual YTD department operating expenses were approximately 93.6% for the year with about \$950,000 of encumbrances, concluding revenues for the year surpassed expenditures.
- Mr. Ruchti inquired as to what attributed to the spike in April 2021.
- Ms. Simeone replied same could be due to reduced rainfall and seasonal residents staying longer than normal.

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

- No items.

**NEW BUSINESS**

- No items.

**STAFF COMMENTS**

A. Certificate of Appreciation – Jim Hoffman

- Mr. Pavlos announced a Certificate of Appreciation would be provided to Mr. Hoffman for his service on the Board. He then stated the utilities service area extended beyond City limits, noting he would provide new members with a map of same.
- A brief discussion ensued regarding the County's service area compared to the City's service area.

- Mr. Cafaro questioned the City's policy for annexing properties serviced by the City.
- Ms. Simeone responded pre-annexation agreements required annexed properties to be serviced by the City, adding most properties annexed into the City already had City services and were typically contiguous to each other.

**COMMITTEE/BOARD COMMENTS**

- Mr. Abderhalden expressed appreciation for staff's proactive approach in presenting the force main extension project along with the future connection fees and revenues.
- Mr. Pavlos explained Mr. Adams had convinced the developers to install the water main extension rather than adding a package plant, speaking positively regarding same.
- Mr. Rooney opined there would be an opportunity for Council to review a potential policy to incentivize annexation from a financial standpoint.
- Ms. Simeone indicated the City was attempting to be strategic with annexations, concluding members should see more going forward.

**CITIZENS' COMMENTS**

- None.

**ADJOURNMENT**

- Meeting Adjourned: 9:48 a.m.

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George Ruchti, Chairman

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Leah Pues, Recording Secretary