

**CITY OF PUNTA GORDA, FLORIDA
UTILITY ADVISORY BOARD MEETING MINUTES
FEBRUARY 28, 2022, 9:00 A.M.**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Ruchti, Chair
Abderhalden, Cafaro, Rooney, Tucker

MEMBERS ABSENT: Dougherty, Howells

OTHERS PRESENT: Neil Peters, Interim Utilities Director; Steven Leonard, Senior Utilities Project Manager; Steve Adams, Utilities Engineering Manager; Kristin Simeone, Finance Director; Sara Welch, Deputy City Clerk; Michael Putnam, GIS Coordinator

CALL TO ORDER

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

[Next Scheduled Meeting - March 28, 2022.](#)

Exhibit:
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Mr. Ruchti announced the next scheduled meeting was on March 28, 2022.

[Election of Chairman and Vice Chairman](#)

Exhibit:
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Recording Secretary Pues opened the floor for nominations for Chair.

Mr. Rooney **NOMINATED** Mr. Ruchti.

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

Recording Secretary Pues opened the floor for nomination for Vice Chair.

Mr. Ruchti **NOMINATED** Mr. Cafaro.

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

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None.

1) APPROVAL OF MINUTES

1.a [Review of regular meeting minutes from January 24, 2022.](#)

Exhibits:
[Cover Page](#)
[UAB 02-28-2022 Minutes](#)

Mr. Rooney **MOVED** to approve the January 24, 2022, minutes, **SECONDED** by Mr. Tucker.

MOTION UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED.

2) REPORTS

2.a Utilities Operational Data

Exhibits:

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[UAB 02-28-2022 Operational Data](#)

Mr. Neil Peters, Interim Utilities Director, briefly reviewed the Operational Data report for February 2022, noting Water to Town Average for the Water Treatment Plant (WTP) was 4.6 million gallons per day (MGD), with a Peak Day of 6.97 MGD, and Average Day Flow for the Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) was 2.6 MGD, with a Peak Day of 2.9 MGD.

Mr. Cafaro inquired as to why the peak day reached 6.97 MGD.

Mr. Steven Leonard, Senior Utilities Project Manager, replied irrigation demands as well as water transferred to the Peace River Manasota Regional Water Supply Authority (PRMRWSA) contributed to same, verifying the usage amount was typical this time of year.

2.b TDS Chart

Exhibits:

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[UAB - 02-28-2022 TDS Chart January 2022](#)

Mr. Peters spoke positively on the performance of the Reverse Osmosis Plant.

2.c Utilities agenda items for City Council

Exhibits:

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[UAB 02-28-2022 City Council Action](#)

Mr. Peters stated no utilities items were presented to City Council in February 2022.

2.d CIP Status Update

Exhibits:

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[UAB 02-28-2022 CIP Status Update](#)

Mr. Steve Adams, Utilities Engineering Manager, presented the Capital Improvement Project (CIP) status update, beginning with a summary of the statuses of the Henry Street Force Main Improvements project, Herald Court Gravity Sewer Replacement project, Master Pump Facility (MPF) Tank Coating project, MPF Upgrade project and Taylor Road Water Main project (slides 1-6).

Mr. Ruchti recalled a potential issue with the location at Taylor Road.

Mr. Adams indicated an alignment study was completed and confirmed the multi-use recreational trail would be on the right side of the subject location and the water main line would be installed on the left side. He next reviewed the statuses of the Tee and Green Water Main Improvements project, WTP Belt Press Replacement project, WTP Filter Media Replacement project, WTP Well 1 Electrical Repair project and WWTP Improvements project (slides 7-12).

Mr. Cafaro opined it would be beneficial to develop and provide a detailed estimated cost for the WWTP Improvement project to prevent sticker shock. Mr. Adams indicated staff was working on same, concluding the information would be presented to members once available.

2.e Utilities Financial Report

Exhibits:

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[UAB 02-28-2022 UT Financials](#)

Ms. Kristin Simeone, Finance Director, provided a detailed review of the January 2022 reports, noting year-to-date (YTD) water billings were 110% and sewer billings were 102.5%. She indicated water billings for January 2022 increased by approximately \$590,000, concluding the YTD budget was \$4 million and YTD actual was almost \$7 million.

Discussion ensued regarding the City's payment process for contracted projects as well as some funding alternatives for same, such as the infrastructure bill.

3) GENERAL BUSINESS

3.a Utility Advisory Board Bylaws

Exhibits:

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[Utility Advisory Board Bylaws - Proposed](#)

[Utility Advisory Board Bylaws - Existing](#)

[Bylaws Presentation](#)

Ms. Sara Welch, Deputy City Clerk, announced changes were made to the Board's bylaws and additional feedback was needed. She provided an overview of the proposed changes, which included reorganization, removal and some additional language. She concluded the amendments would move forward to City Council if members recommended adoption of same.

Mr. Rooney **MOVED** to recommend the proposed bylaw changes to City Council, **SECONDED** by Mr. Abderhalden.

MOTION UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED.

3.b GIS Presentation

Exhibits:

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Mr. Michael Putnam, Geographical Information System (GIS) Coordinator, provided a detailed review of the GIS Presentation, beginning with an explanation of the GIS, the goals for delivering data and the advantages of asset inventory (slides 3-5). He next summarized the data denoted in the charts for water/sewer mains in miles, sewer assets and water assets (slides 6-8), providing an in depth overview of the device and software used for collecting the data (slides 9-11). He then described the system and process for creating, sharing and analyzing surveys, pointing out the results from a hydrant survey (slides 12-13). He lastly outlined the details of the Drone Program, the benefits of the Ground Penetrating Radar device and the specifications of locator balls (slides 14-17).

A question and answer session took place between Mr. Putnam and members, which included additional details on the City's process for marking and locating underground utilities, with members commenting positively on the information provided and work completed.

3.c RO Water Quality

Exhibits:

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[UAB 02-28-2022 RO Water Quality Discussion](#)

Mr. Peters recalled members expressed interest in informing the community about the quality of the City's drinking water, inquiring whether members had feedback regarding the proposed flyer or insert which addressed same.

Mr. Ruchti indicated Ms. Melissa Reichert, Assistant City Manager, and himself worked on developing an informational piece relating to the entire water treatment program to include in either the weekly highlights from the City Manager's Office or as an insert with the utilities bill. He commented Mr. Howell had provided feedback regarding the language relating to bottled water and changing filters in the proposed letter.

Mr. Rooney suggested the information be further simplified to grab customers' attention, noting some examples of synopses which could be distributed monthly or included on the City's website. He opined the information did not incorporate enough of what the City had accomplished with water.

Discussion ensued regarding potential resources for informing the public of the City's achievements relating to water quality, with members speaking in favor of marketing being developed for same.

Mr. Rooney opined distribution of the flyer should be postponed, noting the City Manager's Office could then consider members' comments regarding same.

Mr. Rooney **MOVED** to postpone the flyer and to recommend the City Manager's Office incorporate some of the elements from same in their communications to the public, **SECONDED** by Mr. Cafaro.

MOTION UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED.

STAFF COMMENTS

None.

MEMBER COMMENTS

Mr. Cafaro inquired whether there were any comments from the Utilities Department regarding the City's Comprehensive Plan.

Mr. Peters replied the Utilities Department did not have much involvement with same.

Mr. Cafaro opined the Utilities Department should be contiguous with growth of the City, questioning whether there were documents created by the Utilities Department regarding same.

Mr. Leonard responded the Utilities Department did not have planning experts and hired consultants for same, adding the department reviewed and agreed with the information denoted in the report from the Urban Design Division.

Mr. Abderhalden invited members to participate in an Earth Day event hosted by the Charlotte Harbor Environmental Center.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 11:00 a.m.

Recording Secretary

Chair