



**MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING
COMMISSIONERS OF PUBLIC WORKS
Community Room, 517 W. Washington St.
Greenville, South Carolina
October 4, 2022
8:15 a.m.**

GreenvilleWater

Commissioners of Public Works in attendance:

Chairman Phillip A. Kilgore, Vice-Chairman James W. Bannister, Debra M. Sofield, and Wil Brasington. Absent: Mayor Knox H. White. A quorum was present.

Greenville Water Senior Staff in attendance:

Chief Executive Officer David H. Bereskin, Chief Financial Officer Phil Robey, Chief Operations Officer Jeff Boss, Chief Administrative Officer Dr. Bob Schmidt, Director of Human Resources Richard Posey, Director of Strategic Initiatives Dr. Jane Arrington, Director of Water Resources Jeff Phillips, Director of Engineering Mark Hattendorf, Controller Brian Bearfield, Director of Business Services Steve Miller, Director of Field Operations Gary Baysinger, Manager of Field Operations Wayne Benson, Manager of Facilities and Maintenance Allen White, Public Relations Manager Melissa Delacroix, Internal Auditor Jacob Polson, and attorney Adam Bach.

The Regular Meeting of the Commissioners of Public Works was called to order at 8:15 a.m. by Chairman Kilgore.

1. WELCOME

2. PUBLIC COMMENT

No comments were presented.

3. CONSENT AGENDA

Chairman Kilgore asked for questions pertaining to the consent agenda items. There being none, he called for approval of the items of the Consent Agenda which were the meeting minutes of the Regular Commission Meeting September 6, 2022, the Water Resources Report, the Finance Update, New Development, and New Annexations. Commissioner Sofield moved, seconded by Vice-Chairman Bannister, to approve the items of the consent agenda. The motion passed unanimously.

4. LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

Chairman Kilgore asked Legislative Liaison Bob Knight for an update. Mr. Knight acknowledged there was not much happening in Columbia at this time. The Legislature met only for the abortion issue. Greenville Water is still waiting to hear from the ARPA funds applications.

5. TECHNOLOGY IMPROVEMENTS

Chairman Kilgore invited Director of Information Technology (I.T.) Brad Treas to present a report on improving customer service through technology. Mr. Treas thanked the

Commission for the opportunity to share some of what the I.T. department has been doing over the year.

Mr. Treas explained that opportunities were identified to address two of Greenville Water's primary contact points which were the web and phones. Opportunities identified regarding the phone system were standard call center related metrics, the route for Spanish calls, break and leak reporting, and integration of Engineering's Development Service group into the main call flow. Opportunities identified regarding the web were updating of the aging payment platform to allow for additional payment methods and to improve the resilience of the payment platform by hosting it on a major payment provider.

Mr. Treas reviewed the process of addressing these opportunities, the measures of success and future improvements.

6. MERCER INSURANCE UPDATE

Chairman Kilgore welcomed Director of Human Resources Richard Posey to provide an insurance update. Mr. Posey informed the Commission that Greenville Water's insurance broker Mercer revealed there would be zero rate increase with Blue Cross Blue Shield of SC for 2023. The trend was moving toward a large rate increase, so a zero rate increase was great news. Cigna dental insurance had a small rate increase of 6% with rates locked for the next two years. The Standard, which provides Life and Long-Term Disability insurance, announced a zero rate increase as well.

7. PARENTAL LEAVE POLICY

Mr. Posey moved into presenting, for Commission approval, a proposed new Paid Parental Leave Policy. The State of South Carolina recently enacted legislation to require paid parental leave for the State. Greenville Water is not under the State regulation, but Chief Executive Officer David Bereskin recommended offering the following:

- 4 weeks of paid Medical Recovery Leave
 - For the mother, following the birth of a child
- 2 weeks of paid Bonding Leave
 - For either parent
 - In the event of a birth, placement by adoption, or foster care

*NOTE: This totals 6 weeks for a mother, following the birth of a child

Mr. Bereskin explained this would be a positive added benefit for Greenville Water employees and help Greenville Water to remain in the category of providing some of the best benefits and pay in the Upstate of South Carolina. Employees would truly appreciate the benefit. Mr. Bereskin stated he believed the employees deserve this type of recognition and time off for these type of life events.

Commissioner Sofield moved, seconded by Vice-Chairman Bannister, to approve the new Paid Parental Leave policy as presented. The motion passed unanimously.

8. APARTMENT BILLING

Chairman Kilgore called on Director of Engineering Mark Hattendorf to present a proposed base fee update. Mr. Hattendorf began by reviewing the June 2019 adoption of the revised capacity fees for multi-family metering to standardize the fee per each dwelling. Greenville Water's goal is to bill customers and developers based on the Equivalent Residential Connection (ERC) served by master meters.

The Phase II update of the residential base fee classification was proposed to have Greenville Water adopt a residential base fee classification into the current fee schedule as follows:

- All residential accounts will be charged a 5/8" meter base fee as noted below:
 - To include all master metered multi-family dwellings, including condominiums and apartments, a fee of:
 - **\$4.52** per unit within the City
 - **\$6.78** per unit outside of City

The update is being proposed to address the inequality in fees charged per customer class. Greenville Water is not the only utility in the southeast to address this issue. Mount Pleasant Waterworks and Gwinnett County Department of Water Resources are two examples of others with a similar policy already in place. Mr. Hattendorf reviewed policy statistics, the proposed plan implementation, and communications of the fee change.

Staff recommended Greenville Water Rules and Regulations **4.90.1 Base Charges** be updated to include the following:

Multi-family developments (apartments, duplexes, etc.) that are served by master meters will be charged a base fee calculated on the number of units/dwellings served by that master metered account. Specifically, each dwelling within the multi-family building will be charged a 5/8" meter base fee.

Mr. Hattendorf proposed another Rules and Regulations language update to address as well. In looking to equate the customer base fees across the customer class, Greenville Water would like to address another longstanding policy. Regulations currently state that Greenville Water will not take over any private mains in apartment complexes. This leaves the maintenance of the mains to the apartment owners. This has not been an issue in the past, except at times when there would have been opportunities to extend water mains if Greenville Water owned the mains through the apartment complexes. Taking ownership of some of the private mains would help serve other developments or allow for looping mains in adjacent neighborhoods to make the water system more robust. If the ownership language in the Regulation **1.40 Private Property** was removed, then staff could look at individual complexes to determine if it would be reasonable to take over the mains for that complex. The maintenance of the main would become the responsibility of Greenville Water which would benefit the owner, but it would also allow Greenville Water to make system improvements utilizing those mains.

Mr. Hattendorf presented a visual of the rules with the proposed changes for review. Commissioner Wil Brasington moved, seconded by Vice-Chairman Bannister, to approve both parts of the proposed regulation changes. The motion passed unanimously.

9. 2023 COMMISSION MEETING AND HOLIDAY CALENDAR

The proposed 2023 Commission Meeting and Holiday calendar was presented to the Commission for review. After discussion, Commissioner Sofield moved, seconded by Vice-Chairman Bannister to approve the 2023 calendar as presented. The motion passed unanimously.

10. CHIEF EXECUTIVE REPORT

Mr. Bereskin announced SCDHEC 319 grant funding was approved for the second phase of the North Saluda River improvements.

Mr. Bereskin will meet with the City of Greenville Police Chief to discuss the homeless situation in the area, policing of the Greenville Water site, and Butler Avenue traffic restrictions.

Vice-Chairman Bannister moved, seconded by Commissioner Sofield, to enter Executive Session for the purpose of receiving legal advice regarding possible litigation. The motion passed unanimously.

(Executive Session)

Vice-Chairman Bannister moved, seconded by Commissioner Sofield, to go out of Executive Session. The motion carried unanimously. No action was taken.

11. COMMISSION COMMENTS

No comments presented at this time.

12. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned 9:20 a.m.



Phillip A. Kilgore, Chairman



Kimberly Hauffer, Executive Assistant