

**CHARLOTTE WATER
ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MINUTES OF MEETING
February 18, 2016**

Charlotte Water Advisory Committee met Thursday, January 21, 2:30 pm at 4222 Westmont Drive, Charlotte, North Carolina.

Members Present: Jim Duke, Leslie Jones, Frank McMahan,
Ron Charbonneau

Members Absent: Pride Patton

Staff Present:	Barry Gullet	Utilities Director
	Jennifer Frost	Assistant to Director
	Barry Shearin	Deputy Director
	Melissa Hershberger	Assistant Business Manager
	Regina Cousar	Continuous Improvement Manager
	Carl Wilson	Chief Engineer
	Karen Weatherly	City Attorney

Safety Minute
Defensive Driving

Minutes

A motion was made by Leslie Jones, and seconded by Frank McMahan, to approve the January 2016 Minutes. Motion was approved.

Water Quality

Identifying Flint, Michigan's high concentration of blood levels of lead content amongst its citizens, it has not only raised concern toward their local citizenship but on a national level as well. Charlotte Water's response to the local news media, neighboring municipalities, and City of Charlotte citizens will share the continued effort to be transparent while actions are taking place to keep and maintain the safety of our water supply. There are certain differences between Charlotte Water and Flint, Michigan's water system:

- The first way we differ is in the number of lead pipes that are located in the Charlotte service area. There are thousands of miles of pipes in the Charlotte area. It is Charlotte Water's belief that there are only four of these pipes in service. When the Utility has discovered these pipes to be of an existence, they are replaced. These lines are generally buried out in the street where the water main is connected to the service line. They are flexible, and do tend to have goosenecks that are used to connect from the water main to the service water meter. Typically finding these lines are not on a straightforward path. In some cities, lead pipes are directly lined within residential homes. Charlotte Water has not seen any through the years.

- The second difference in the way Charlotte Water differs from Flint, Michigan is that the Utility has a Water Treatment and Corrosion Control program that works really well. When Flint switched from their old water system, they apparently did not start up any corrosion control programs or at least one that was consistent with Detroit's water supply. As a result they were corrosive and dissolved lead into the water.
- Thirdly, the underlying issue surrounding the Flint, Michigan water crisis is revenue. The city is shrinking and not expanding efforts towards their infrastructure, staff, and training.

Citizens are concerned and would like continued assurances that their water is safe to drink, bathe, and cook in. Charlotte Water along with most other utilities has gotten accustomed to working under the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) rigorous standards. However, the Utility has determined that it can do more. Right now, Charlotte Water is in the process of developing a program that will include the 50 locations that are already regularly tested and analyzed. There will be additional efforts to increase the frequency of the number of times a test will occur as well as the addition of the types of houses that are sampled. There will be a lot of data and criteria that will go along with those tests. Charlotte Water will be expanding its efforts in testing houses in Tier 1 to make sure that we truly have data that back up our water quality initiative. There are mounds of historical data that have been collected that present no indication of lead and copper should be considered an environmental or health issue in our service area. Expanding our water quality sampling program will go beyond the basic lead and copper testing. In recent conversations, Arsenic, Vanadium, and Coal Ash have been equally discussed. Charlotte Water will continue its effort to examine analysis of these minerals as well. Charlotte Water does engage customers when dealing with medical concerns, however, the other part of the puzzle is that it can be become a real challenge to communicate with people who have been put through a state of panic when crises such as Flint, Michigan do occur. Charlotte City Council is having local town hall meetings where the most prominent question has been directed towards "water quality." Charlotte Water has responded by telling citizens that water samples are being collected and analyzed. These sampling occurrences are taking place across the water distribution system. However, if they taste, see a color change or smell an odor, please contact our 311 call center for a water quality investigation. Jennifer Frost (Assistant to Director) has put together a team that will gather all data in response to the flushing program i.e. hydrants, treatment process, and Lab analysis.

Financial Update

For the month of January the volumes are at average. The revenues are right on target and expenses are average as well.

Budget Development Process Update

- o Charlotte Water has identified additional staffing needs that have been presented to the City Manager. Charlotte Water will be seeking to fill a broad range of employment opportunities. These employment opportunities are identified as the following:
- o Property Manager that will be able to facilitate needs of about 109 parcels of properties that are owned and maintained by the Utility. These properties range from Water Treatment sites to our Waste Water Treatment or cell tower sites. The Utility frequently receives request from citizens or construction vendors to use or allow a site to be utilized

as a holding area for construction cables, antennas, or deal directly with homes that are in the right of way of these specific properties. (1 position)

- Plan Design Engineer- Entry level position with the intent of supplementing the rehab group. Charlotte Water will be asking for a 3rd engineer to make all of them equally productive that will serve to address the Utility's ongoing and increasing maintenance needs.
- Operations Manager – There is a superintendent that has a span of control with 15 direct reports that can be increasingly overwhelming on the Waste Water Treatment side. (1 Position)
- System Protection Group / Regulation of Industrial users – the number of industries is climbing and their compliance is deteriorating alongside the industries that are not complying. Two positions are requested; Environmental Compliance Specialist and a Fats Oil and Grease (FOG) inspector.
- Off Street Sanitary Cleaning Crew – There are about 2600 miles of sewer lines that are down in the woods and alongside creek beds. A large percentage of sewer overflows occur off to the side of these areas that are challenging to get trucks and crews to. To alleviate some of strenuous work the Utility is asking for these positions.
- Updating and keeping up with technology needs alongside of customers' expectations. The online electronic payment and bill portal system need upgrading. We are asking for one position to accommodate that need.
- Hydrant flushing will continue to be an ongoing effort. More organization and structure will need to be acquired in this area. We are asking for at least two employment opportunities to organize and implement a systematic flushing program.
- Charlotte Water has been in the midst of a massive information request. There is a need to reorganize our collection of public records data system so that the information will be more readily available to retrieve.
- Lab- influx of analysis data and testing
- Treatment Plant electrician – currently maintenance electrician work is contracted out through selected vendors. There is a need to organize and manage that system.
- Administrative officer related to implementing the City's Financial Management System. The Utility is able to retrieve information but there is a strong need to enter information into the system. Support staff has been identified as a need to handle that data entry need.
- Facilities ground security- Charlotte Water has had an unusually high number of incidents of intrusions into both our Water and Waste Water plants. Thieves have stolen items from and vandalized our building facilities. There is a recommendation that additional on-site camera, alarms, etcetera is offered as a solution. Right now, it is possible that a pilot contract for evening patrol would incur an estimated cost of \$118K. More options are being considered.
- One position related to Technology Help Desk needs- support for cell phones, printer maintenance, and computers that have malfunctioned.

The grand total for these employment opportunities are roughly \$2.05M. The impact on the cost of the water rate is about \$0.20 a month.

Hot Topics

Ground Security issues – Identifying where the Utility is most vulnerable. Where are your most expensive equipment and chemical i.e. liquid chlorine storage?

Meeting Adjourned – 3:45

TGN