

**CHARLOTTE WATER
ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MINUTES OF MEETING
September 15, 2016**

Charlotte Water Advisory Committee met Thursday, September 15, 2016, 2:30 pm at 4222 Westmont Drive, Charlotte, NC.

Members Present: Barbara Bleiweis, Jim Duke, Leslie Jones, Frank McMahan, Barry Webb

Members Absent: Pride Patton, one position is vacant

Staff Present:	Barry Gullet	Director
	Steve Miller	Customer Service Manager
	James McLeod	Interim Assistant Business Manager
	Ron Hargrove	Deputy Director
	Shawn Coffman	Interim Continuous Improvement Manager
	David Czerr	Deputy Utilities Director

Safety Minute

Moving and Lifting Loads in the Workplace

Minutes

A motion was made by Leslie Jones, and seconded by Barry Webb, to approve the July 2016 minutes. Motion was approved.

Service on Private Streets

Since the demand to allow public water lines in private streets has increased, the discussion regarding public service on private streets has become an ongoing topic. A related issue is how Charlotte Water interfaces with private water systems in public or private streets. At this point, it unclear as to whether policy decisions around these two issues will be made simultaneously or if not, which one will be made first.

If policy is changed to provide public water mains in private streets, it is anticipated that requirements will need to be imposed on how that is done that could change the nature of the private neighborhood. This could become a zoning issue. Furthermore, the department would need to have proper legal structures in place beforehand, particularly regarding the street's infrastructure and what can happen if damage occurs to streets not held up to city standards.

Many city departments are involved with this issue. Transportation is interested in connectivity and wants streets that connect to each other. Planning wants a different feel for neighborhoods as they see a place for private streets but only under certain conditions. Charlotte Water would need to access the street to fix water main breaks, complete meter turn-ons and turn-offs, perform pressure tests, and other tasks. Policy around how water is provided in these situations needs to consider interests of all City departments as to how they provide service and how the best interests of the community are met.

There was discussion about disclosure requirements for private streets as it allows homeowners to have a better understanding of how to deal with water system structures and issues over the long-term. This would be a complex process to implement that would need to be managed through real estate transactions.

Private Service Lines

Charlotte Water's responsibility for maintaining water service lines ends at the road right of way, near the water meter. When Charlotte Water replaces the public portion of the service line, the customer often continues to experience problems with water pressure, flow, or quality due to their own private portion of the service line. Charlotte Water is considering an option whereby the replacement of the private section could be done by the City's contractor at the same time the public part is replaced. The homeowner would pay the cost of the private replacement over a period of time as part of their monthly water bill.

Water and Sewer rights of way

The department is considering requiring wider rights of way for water and sewer mains. With tighter streets and homes and buildings constructed closer together, it is very hard for field employees to complete sewer line repairs.

Financial Report

The financial report for the Advisory Committee was modified to include a simpler reporting of overall operating revenues and expenses. Currently, the Business Team is taking 2 years of actuals and using those to create a weighted budget vs actuals chart for FY17. At this early point in the fiscal year, it appears that both revenues and expenses are as expected.

Hot Topics

1. Social media is spreading a lot of misinformation regarding water bills and water services. The department is working to keep situations like these from getting out of control, as they hurt customer confidence. There will be an increase in efforts to communicate directly with the public.
2. A neighborhood in South End where a water main rehabilitation project was underway had a temporary top of ground service line accidental disruption that caused water color issues. This happened in a condo so there will need to be internal flushing to remove all of the discolored water from the building's pipes.
3. Drought conditions are still at stage 0, which is drought watch.
4. The department is still facing numerous issues with other utilities causing damage to water mains.
5. Sewer line capacity is another area where Charlotte Water is spending a lot of effort. The department is looking to establish a program to assist with solving capacity issues related to redevelopment or changes in land use.
6. A recent state court case seems to have established a standard by which utilities may lose their claim to a right of way if it does not exert its authority to maintain and clear it for a 20 year time period.

Meeting Adjourned at 4:07 pm

KCJ