

**CARROLL COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS
MINUTES OF UTILITIES ADVISORY COUNCIL**

May 27, 2010

**South Carroll Senior Center
5928 Mineral Hill Road
Sykesville, MD 21784
7 p.m.**

Attendees: *Council:* Michael Wilmore, Dena Bauer, Matt Candland, Kathy Everly, Leah Ann McCormick

County Staff: Mike Evans, Sheree Lima, Rob Burk, Penny Gist, Tom Devilbiss

Absent: Frank Schaeffer, Joe Barrington, Robin Hooper, Jenny Hobbs

Reports

Master Plan updates/revisions: There are no updates/revisions at this time or upcoming in the very near future.

Enterprise Fund Rates/Department of Management & Budget's Comments: See below "Utilities Advisory Council scope and purpose".

CIP-Utilities Progress Report: The Bureau of Engineering CIP-Utilities Progress Report dated 4/27/10 was distributed and discussed. This report shows funded projects at various phases and percentages of completion. Staff meetings are held every other month to discuss progress. County monitors and maintains the status and funding of the projects on the report. Mr. Wilmore asked that future reports be emailed to the Council.

Old Business

Proposed Lineboro Community Sewerage System: It was determined via citizen surveys and action by the Board of County Commissioners that this is no longer a project.

Comments from last meeting

Web Page Information: Mr. Wilmore reiterated from April's meeting that the County web has water conservation program and devices available, but it's not user-friendly. And he asked again if the web page address could be put on the usage bills. He suggested that grant information be publicized on the site.

New Business

Utilities Advisory Council scope and purpose:

- **Recommendation on budgets and rates:** The proposed FY 11 Water and Sewer rates and supporting information was distributed and discussed at April's meeting. The Board of County Commissioners adopted the rates on 5/24/10. The budget process will be starting again soon for FY12.
- **Discuss operations and master plans with County officials:** The master plan includes water and sewer systems County-wide and in the municipalities. A triennial review of everything in the master plan occurs and major revisions are made.

- **Citizen concerns:** Mr. Wilmore asked about the pilferage of water by companies from hydrants in order to fill swimming pools and what penalties there are for stealing and damage to hydrants and valves. Mr. Evans noted that the Martz Road tank keys log onto an account for water. Mr. Barrington works with the Sheriff's Office, State Police, municipalities and County Attorney's Office regarding issuance and collection of fines/costs.

Water turn-offs due to delinquent bills – Mr. Burk stated that about 30 turn-offs occurred from 12/1/09 and 4/1/10. He communicates with customers before turning off their supply, giving them some leeway regarding certain circumstances, but sometimes it still results in turn-offs.

Sewer bill delinquencies – Mr. Burk noted that when a sewer bill is not paid a lien is placed on the property tax bill. As of 4/1/10 there has been about 2 liens placed. Customer is given 30 days to pay; 6 months delinquency results in foreclosure.

Water and sewer allocations – The Department of Planning determines what the area designations are. Connections and payment of fees are mandatory as properties are developed.

Summary of County budget calendar: Ms. Lima went over the calendar with the Council and answered questions. The capital construction budget instruction is distributed around July 1 with the draft due in August. It's submitted in September with a preliminary going before the Planning Commission in January. A recommended budget is ready by March. Operating budget requests are submitted in December. Preliminary recommendations are submitted in March. There are not a lot of new operating budget projects slated for FY12. A public hearing on the budgets is held in May.

Meetings:

- **Frequency of meetings:** Mr. Burk stated that the Council adds value to the rate setting/budgeting process and needs to have that input opportunity. After discussion with County staff, the Council decided that they will not meet in June, July, September, October and December of this year. The next meeting will be on 8/26/10, 7 p.m. at the County Office Building, Economic Development Conference Rm. 105, 225 N. Center Street, Westminster (enter at back of building). After that the next meeting is 11/18/10, 7 p.m. The schedule for 2011 is: 2/24/11, 3/24/11, 4/28/11.

- **Follow through on action items or requests:** Mr. Wilmore asked that County staff present an example of lined pipe at the next council meeting.

Need representative from business community: Mr. Candland suggested that perhaps someone that owns a health club or a car wash might be a good candidate to have on the Council. Council members must be a user of the system.

Public involvement on web page:

- **Are meetings posted here?:** The council meetings are posted in the form of a news release on the main County web page. Mr. Wilmore asked if meeting notices could be posted at libraries or noted in radio spots.
- **Can the minutes and Statement of Findings be posted here?:** Mr. Wilmore asked that these items be posted on the County web page.

- **Can we set up a way for citizens to post concerns?:** This will need to be investigated further, but it is thought that it may be able to be set up via an email address.

Ethics Commission: Mr. Burk a public hearing will be held 6/17/10 at the Carroll County Office Building at 10 a.m. for comments on proposed amendments to Chapter 18, Ethics. Part of the amendment deals with adding the Council to the list of Boards and Commissions. The Council will fill out financial disclosure statements as they did last year.

The meeting was adjourned. The next meeting will be held on August 26 at 7 p.m. at the County Office Building, Economic Development Conference Room 105, 225 N. Center Street, Westminster, Maryland.

Remaining schedule for 2010: August 26, November 18

Scheduled for 2011: February 24, March 24, April 28

cc: Council Members

J. Michael Evans, Director, Department of Public Works

Franklin G. Schaeffer, Deputy Director, Department of Public Works

Joe Barrington, Chief, Bureau of Utilities

Sheree Lima, Financial Manager, Department of Public Works

Robert Burk, Comptroller

Robin Hooper, Budget Analyst, Department of Management & Budget

Jenny Hobbs, Financial Analyst, Department of the Comptroller

Steve Powell, Chief of Staff, Board of County Commissioners

Utilities Advisory Council File

Handouts: Bureau of Engineering Utility CIP Progress Report 4/27/10

County Budget Calendar

\\ccnas\homeuser\pgist\FORMS\UTILITIES\Utilities Advisory Council Minutes\05-27-10.doc