



DeKalb County Government

178 Sams Street
Decatur, GA 30030

Agenda Item Substitute

File #: 2025-0739
File Status: Action

7/22/2025

Public Hearing: YES ☐ NO ☒

Department: Board of Commissioners - District 6

SUBJECT:

Commission District(s): All Commission Districts

A Resolution To Amend The Enabling Legislation Of The Watershed Customer Service And Billing Advisory Group.

Information Contact: Commissioner Edward C. "Ted" Terry

Phone Number: 404-371-4909

PURPOSE:

A resolution to amend the enabling legislation of the Watershed Customer Service and Billing Advisory Group.

NEED/IMPACT:

The DeKalb County Governing Authority established the Watershed Customer Service and Billing Advisory Group ("Advisory Group") by resolution on December 13, 2016, to provide informed input concerning customer service and billing for the Watershed Department. Recent discussions with the DeKalb County Board of Commissioners and the Advisory Group have identified opportunities to enhance the Advisory Group's role and effectiveness to further improve customer service and oversight of County activities related to water and sewer billing. These amendments include: Section 2 (d) "advocating on behalf of residents by interfacing with the DeKalb County Water and Sewer Customer Advocate (WSCA) and County Staff to identify issues and recommend improvements" and Section 4 (h) "receive and review monthly reports from the Water and Sewer Customer Advocate (WSCA) to identify issues and recommend improvements."

FISCAL IMPACT:

Unknown at this time.

RECOMMENDATION:

To approve the resolution and authorize the Chief Executive Officer or her designee to execute all necessary documents in a form acceptable to the County Attorney.

**A RESOLUTION BY THE GOVERNING AUTHORITY OF DEKALB COUNTY,
GEORGIA, TO AMEND THE ENABLING LEGISLATION OF THE WATERSHED
CUSTOMER SERVICE AND BILLING ADVISORY GROUP**

WHEREAS, the DeKalb County Governing Authority established the Watershed Customer Service and Billing Advisory Group ("Advisory Group") by resolution on December 13, 2016, to provide informed input concerning customer service and billing for the Watershed Department; and

WHEREAS, recent discussions with the DeKalb County Board of Commissioners and the Advisory Group have identified opportunities to enhance the Advisory Group's role and effectiveness; and

WHEREAS, expanding the Advisory Group's purpose and responsibilities to include enhanced engagement and advocacy will further improve customer service and oversight of County activities related to water and sewer billing;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Governing Authority of DeKalb County as follows:

1. Name. The official name of this advisory group is the DeKalb County Watershed Customer Service and Billing Advisory Group ("Advisory Group").

2. Mission (Amended). The mission of the Advisory Group is expanded to:

- (a) Provide informed professional and citizen input concerning County customer service and billing practices;
- (b) Review County practices to ensure timely response and appropriate review of billing errors;
- (c) Review County practices to ensure compliance with existing policies dealing with water billing, customer service, field work related to meters/meter replacement and repair, and installation of new meters;
- (d) Interface with the DeKalb County Water and Sewer Customer Advocate ("WSCA") and County contractors and/or staff to identify systemic issues and recommend procedural improvements.

3. Purpose. To assist the professional staff of DeKalb County in making the most prudent and informed decisions regarding customer service, billing improvements and meter replacement.

4. Specific Roles /Duties (Amended). The Advisory Group shall perform the following roles and duties:

- (a) remain educated and informed about the County's billing policy and customer service needs;
- (b) provide critical input, advice, and information on how best to address customer service issues and needs;
- (c) review and discuss project implementation of new meters and or meter replacements throughout the county;
- (d) provide insight and advice on water and sewer billing and meter issues of interest or concern to the various communities and neighborhoods in DeKalb County;
- (e) review scopes of work for requests for proposals used to award contracts for Watershed meter replacement projects;
- (f) act as a sounding board for the chief executive officer and professional staff to vet new Watershed billing and customer service initiatives prior to finalization;
- (g) provide advice, reports, review, and feedback to the professional County staff, the Board of Commissioners, and the Chief Executive Officer as may be requested from time to time;
- (h) receive and review monthly reports from the Water and Sewer Customer Advocate (WSCA) to identify systemic issues and recommend procedural improvements.

5. Specific Roles and Duties of County Watershed Staff. The Director of Watershed Management or his/her designee shall:

- (a) provide assistance, input, and information as necessary and reasonable to the Advisory Group; and
- (b) answer questions and provide information at Advisory Group meetings.

6. Membership. The Advisory Group shall be comprised of 9 residents of DeKalb County. The Chief Executive Officer shall appoint 1 member; each Commissioner shall appoint 1 member; and the DeKalb Municipal Association shall appoint 1 member. In appointing members, the appointing official(s) / association shall endeavor to appoint individuals who represent a broad variety of County interests, including but not limited to appointments of residents, business leaders, city representatives within the County and experts in the area of customer service, billing, and other watershed management-related fields.

7. Terms (Amended). Commissioners from Districts 1, 2, 3, Super District 7 and the Chief Executive Officer each had the right to appoint one member for an initial term expiring on December 31, 2018. Commissioners from districts 4, 5, Super District 6 and the DeKalb Municipal Association each had the right to appoint one member for a term expiring on December 31, 2019. Thereafter, all terms for all commissioner appointments will run concurrent with the appointing commissioner's term and the term of the DeKalb Municipal Association's appointment will run for four (4) years, beginning January 1, 2020.

8. Appointment. Each member appointed pursuant to this Resolution shall serve at the pleasure of the elected official(s) / association making the appointment or until their successor is appointed, unless such term ends sooner in the manner set forth herein. If the member appointed by an individual elected official is still serving at the time the appointing elected official vacates his/ her office, the member shall continue to serve until a successor is appointed by the incoming elected official. Members may only be reappointed to two successive terms. Any vacancy in the membership shall be filled for the unexpired term in the same manner as the initial appointment. If a member moves outside the County, that action shall constitute a resignation from the Advisory Group, effective immediately. The office of a member shall be considered automatically vacant if the member is unable to exercise the duties of membership or if the member is absent from three or more consecutive meetings of the Advisory Group without previous notice to and consent from the Chair.

9. Annual organizational meeting. At its first regular meeting of each year, the Advisory Group shall, by majority vote of its membership, excluding vacant seats, elect 1 of its members to serve as chairperson and 1 member to serve as co-chairperson. The persons so elected shall serve in these capacities for terms of 1 year or until a replacement is elected. The chairperson and co-chairperson may take part in all deliberations and vote on all issues. The chairperson and the co-chairperson may each be elected to successive terms without limitation.

10. Rules and Committees. The Advisory Group is authorized, but not required to develop procedural rules, and is authorized to create committees to study various issues and make reports to the Advisory Group.

ADOPTED by the DeKalb County Board of Commissioners, this ____ day of _____, 2025.

MICHELLE LONG SPEARS
 Presiding Officer
 Board of Commissioners DeKalb
 County, Georgia

7.18.2025

APPROVED by the Chief Executive Officer, this _____ day of _____, 2025.

LORRAINE COCHRAN-JOHNSON
Chief Executive Officer
DeKalb County, Georgia

ATTEST:

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

BARBARA SANDERS-NORWOOD
County Clerk
Board of Commissioners and

WILLIAM J. LINKOUS
County Attorney
DeKalb County, Georgia