



DeKalb County Government

1300 Commerce Drive
Decatur, Georgia 30030

Minutes - Final

PWI-Public Works & Infrastructure Committee

Tuesday, March 15, 2022

3:30 PM

This meeting will be conducted via teleconference (Zoom). Simultaneous public access to the meeting will be available

(1) via live stream on DCTV's webpage,

(2) on DCTVChannel23.TV

Meeting Started At: 3:31 PM

Attendees: Commissioners Cochran-Johnson, Terry, Patrick, Johnson, Rader

Present 2 - Commissioner Robert Patrick, and Commissioner Ted Terry

I. MINUTES

2022-1333 Commission District(s): ALL
Minutes for the March 1, 2022 Public Works and Infrastructure
Committee Meeting

This agenda item was approved

Yes: 3 - Cochran-Johnson, Commissioner Patrick, and Commissioner Terry

2022-1335 Commission District(s): ALL
Minutes for the March 3, 2022 Special Called Public Works and
Infrastructure Committee Meeting
MOTION was made by Robert Patrick, seconded by Lorraine Cochran-Johnson, that this agenda item be approved. The motion carried by the following vote:

Yes: 2 - Cochran-Johnson, and Commissioner Patrick

Abstain: 1 - Commissioner Terry

II. AGENDA ITEM

Previously Heard Items:

[2022-1308](#)

Commission District(s): All Commission Districts

The Department of Watershed Management Funding Plan for Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) for the years 2021 through 2030 (CIP 2021)

MOTION was made by Ted Terry, seconded by Robert Patrick, that this agenda item be recommended for approval. to the Board of Commissioners, due back on 3/22/2022. The motion carried by the following vote:

Yes: 3 - Cochran-Johnson, Commissioner Patrick, and Commissioner Terry

-presentation provided by COO Williams on customer assistance programs

-information provided by Director Hayes on water retention policy

-information provided by Arcadis Director Robert Ryall on monthly bill comparison analysis

-JR: in our system we have relatively low water rates and relatively high sewer rates. Are we charging too much for sewer?

More importantly, all of these concessions and cost transfers are based upon the premise that sewer isn't used. It seems to me that in our investment of smart meters, to identify how much of a peak bill is likely to be used for a non-sewered use. We should recognize that our meter infrastructure can give us the information to make decisions strategically, and integrate that into the enQuesta system. I would like to see us use the full power of our system to use the full power of our water for non-sewer purposes.

Z Williams: we're at a point that we need to revisit; when the original resolution was adopted we weren't as far along as we are now

-Question TT: I had a few questions and observations from the last time this was discussed, since I wasn't there at the time.

We need a clear indication of where the water is going. Regarding the enQuesta system, for customers getting real-time billing access, that will be next year.

J Matelski: the system is scheduled to go live in January; due to some resource needs it may be a few months later to potentially be moved back to May 2023

-Question TT: I want to flag there that there are certain ways for customers to be alerted if there is a spike in usage. I request that we have an extra layer of notifications for customers to have

Z Williams: we do have systems in place whereby we flag those bill and notify customers; we can present that in a separate presentation

-TT: I want to thank the team for thinking about the tiered program, and the \$5M program DeKalb Cares, as well as other programs that we have for seniors. There was discussion about the lien collection rate for inactive customers - that lien could be on the property where the meter is located. Getting landlords to begin include a utilities package was something I wanted to flag as well.

-Question LCJ: as it relates to Sanitation, we do have a process by which we attach a lien to landlords when they leave stuff out. Why don't we do something like this in this instance?

Z Williams: going back around 5 years ago when the CEO initiated the New Day Project, we undertook a process where we met each week months at a time. As we move forward, we have systems in place that analyzes the bill before and after they go out. The expectation is that they pay these bills. But when they cannot due to financial constraints, we have systems in place where we work with the owner to address this. We're at a new place in our water and sewer system.

-Question TT: for those commercial users the approach will be different? Can we get assurances that we will get plans in place to address outliers such as Brannon Hills and Whitehall Forest?

Z Williams: that's something we can discuss offline

-TT: maximizing sustainability options, like solar panels, is also important. When we're thinking of Cherry Street Energy or our county practices, we could look at revenue potential for solar

Z Williams: the opportunities to use solar on those lands for those that are underprivileged is certainly importantly to think about as well

-LCJ: there is one thing Commissioner Rader pointed out that I want to talk about. In terms of our sewer pricing

-TT: requests Watershed to work with PWI committee on additional measures for water conservation. If watershed could bring those ideas to us.

-TT: we are very conservative on revenue projections; I see revenue growth projections for us that are conservative, but the new customers and growth will help add to the system

-LCJ: we may need more special called meetings to talk through these issues

-RP: I appreciate staff putting together these projections and comparative analysis. Secondly, I understand that rate increases will be geared toward capital project improvements. I hear that we should have more responsiveness as it applies to permitting for development activities, or when new restaurants are built

-JR: reviewing the text of the cover sheet, I don't see a resolution attached to. There is a reference to a rate charge on August 1, 2022. Will there be an item that sets the rates, or does this fund the project?

Z Williams: we may not have it in Legistar but we did provide that at the last meeting

-Question JR: is the non-returning use of water part of the rate structure?

Z Williams: there is an item on the agenda today that deals with the repair assistance; that's a separate item. The project we discussed that we are working on for the discounted rate that is something we will bring back to the board

-JR: it would be helpful to include some reference to it. Are you all looking at the relative costs of water vs. sewer to

recalibrate?

Z Williams: we are but that would be a separate item. The resolution you currently have doesn't just look at the water rates for

-TT: motion to approve the discussed 6% rate increase, and requests staff develop programs addressing the casual irrigation and sewer credits, and subsistence support for low income patrons

New Agenda Items:

[2021-3460](#)

Commission District(s): All
LB- Invitation No. 21-101459 Herbicide Growth Regulator Services (Annual Contract with 2 Options to Renew): for Public Works-Sanitation to be used by Beautification. Consists of providing herbicide application services on County roads, right of ways and other locations. Recommend award to the lowest responsive and responsible bidder: American Eagle, LLC. Amount Not To Exceed: \$138,777.20.
MOTION was made by Robert Patrick, seconded by Ted Terry, that this agenda item be recommended for approval. to the Board of Commissioners, due back on 3/22/2022. The motion carried by the following vote:

Yes: 3 - Cochran-Johnson, Commissioner Patrick, and Commissioner Terry

-Question TT: regarding the locations, how is the list determined?

R Lemke: these have been some of the more important areas we've had issues on. Some of it is by complaints over time, and some are historical and areas that we know need attention. That's how this list is generated

-Question TT: it looks like the chemical types were different chemicals

-RP: requests a column of the districts in which these services are to be rendered in this contract

[2022-1225](#)

Commission District(s): All
REN - Asphalt Cement Cutback and Emulsified (Annual Contract - 2nd Renewal of 2 Options to Renew): Contract No. 1210222 for use by Public Works - Roads and Drainage (R& D). The contract consists of supplying liquid adhesive to be utilized for roadway repairs or construction to bond old asphalts with new asphalts. Awarded to Infinite Estates, LLC. Amount Not To Exceed: \$142,160.00

[2022-1265](#) Commission District(s): All
REN - Water Meter Upgrade and Replacement Program (Annual Contract - 3rd Renewal of 3 Options to Renew): Contract Nos.1133840 and 1133841 for use by the Department of Watershed Management (DWM). These contracts consist of the provision and management of upgrade and replacement of existing water meters and new water meter installations. Awarded to RTS Water Solutions, LLC and Grid One Solutions, LLC. Total Amount Not To Exceed: \$8,800,000.00

[2022-1268](#) Commission District(s): All
CO - Change Order No. 3 to Contract No. 1093417 for Inspection of Sanitary Sewer Stream Crossings (Multiyear Contract): for use by the Department of Watershed Management (DWM). This contract consists of inspections and assessments of sewer stream crossings. Awarded to River to Tap (R2T), Inc. Amount Not To Exceed: \$125,000.00.
This agenda item was recommended for approval. to the Board of Commissioners due back on 3/22/2022 .

Yes: 3 - Cochran-Johnson, Commissioner Patrick, and Commissioner Terry

-information provided by Commissioner Cochran-Johnson

[2022-1272](#) Commission District(s): All
REN - Granite Rubble Stone (Annual Contract - 2nd Renewal of 2 Options to Renew): Contract No. 1214031 for use by the Department of Watershed Management (DWM), Recreation, Parks & Cultural Affairs (RPCA) and Public Works - Roads and Drainage (R&D). Consists of the purchase of granite rubble stone used to address erosion control issues. Awarded to Bedrock Granite Co., Inc. Amount Not To Exceed: \$1,028,492.00.
MOTION was made by Robert Patrick, seconded by Ted Terry, that this agenda item be recommended for approval. to the Board of Commissioners, due back on 3/22/2022. The motion carried by the following vote:

Yes: 3 - Cochran-Johnson, Commissioner Patrick, and Commissioner Terry

-information provided by Director Lemke

[2022-1157](#)

Commission District(s): All Districts.

A Resolution of the Governing Authority of DeKalb County, Georgia,
to Adopt a Comprehensive Trails Master Plan by 2023 and to
Appropriate \$400,000 for the Development of the Trails Master Plan

-information provided by Commissioner Cochran-Johnson

-LCJ: I would like to see a dedicated funding source, as a mode for transportation and for economic development. I asked Director Ellis to be present today to talk through this as well and work down the priority list so that we can build out the path and trail network. Please share where we are with the trail plan and requested information

-information provided by Director Ellis

-Question LCJ: do you have a cost that would be associated with the comprehensive trail plan?

C Ellis: the estimate would be around \$350,000

-Question TT: regarding the cost, is that in the context of updating what has already been done or starting from scratch?

C Ellis: a combination of both but it may be a new plan since it hasn't been updated in 20 years

-Question RP: this is a great idea; we should be looking at things that cross districts, to help unite DeKalb. Is there contemplation to engage with our cities to see if they would want to partner with us?

LCJ: in terms of drafting the legislation, I could only encumber the County. It's important for us to make decisions, and I've had conversations with 2 municipalities, and they feel it's a great idea. This connectivity is about DeKalb and an important step we all need to take. I welcome the conversation and would love to invite them if others feel this would be helpful to the discussion

-Question LJ: I like the idea for the comprehensive trail; regarding the dedicated funding stream, is it listed where the funding would come from? Would this be SPLOST, general fund, or both?

LCJ: when I drafted the resolution I made no mention of the specific function. But I did mention hotel/motel fund since it would be ideal for this. We should focus on setting aside a portion of the hotel/motel fund

LJ: that's a great first step; we have so many options, and I'm glad we'll have more discussion. I want to ensure that when we set a precedent we have the right people at the table. I look forward to sharing this in PECS as well as in PWI.

-Question JR: regarding funding, to date we've funded trails through federal appropriation, SPLOST, HOST, commission district allocations, and appropriation from tax funds in the budgetary process. Moreover the PATH foundation has matched county dollars on some circumstances. We shouldn't confine ourselves to any category because we're eligible for many.

What's important is that we're ready with the plan so that we're ready for these projects. I'm interested in our thoughts on 1) our continued relationship with the PATH foundation. If we put this out to bid we would take advantage of our master agreement with PATH to oversee the study to work on certain elements to ensure we're in alignment. Secondly, our PATH system in DeKalb is both a transportation system and a recreational amenity. For those areas in the Parks, RPCA is responsible. But for the areas that extend beyond parks for connectivity, it is less clear about responsibility within the county as this relates to improvement and upkeep. We may need to think about how we can develop a dedicated staff for PATH management, and the development of new systems regarding ongoing capital maintenance. That could pay dividends on the expanding trail system ideas, tourism, and other purposes.

-LCJ: you did bring all options to the table as it relates to the funding options. I want to acknowledge several people who have been champions for the buildout of our trails - Vicki Hood, Sally Sears, Greta deMayo, Chris Hester, all part of several organizations in this effort. This resolution is to have that conversation and work to take action. I believe Mr. Sigler strictly looked at Hotel/Motel as it relates to mechanism. The key here is a dedicated funding source.

-TT: I agree with everyone's comments. There are opportunities for health, wellbeing. These trails are mobility corridors - we are preserving a public right-of-way forever. The PATH foundation is also recommending a 12 foot standard rather than 10 feet. Regarding hotel/motel, the Stone Mountain controversy exists - and part of this discussion should be to try to work through some of these issues. When I think of master plans, I believe that we need an infrastructure funding master plan. We're going to vote on transit, SPLOST, Watershed, parks & trails are all infrastructure. We have a 5 year window where the most funding in American history has been available for local governments. If we don't have the funding plan then we may lose time

-LCJ: In the interest of time today thank you for that input. We can have a separate conversation on a comprehensive infrastructure plan

-information provided by Ms. Vicki Hood - Peachtree Creek Greenway

-information provided by Ms. Sally Sears - CBS46

-information provided by OMB Director TJ Sigler on 5 year projection chart

-Question LCJ: what is the cost to build a mile of trail?

C Ellis: approximately \$1M/mile on average

Z Williams: we will come up with the logical expectation of what we can get done, how much it would cost, and how we could get it done. That way we can work backwards to find the funding. Does that work?

LCJ: that works. We'll work through this and set a later date to bring back to committee

-TT: requests an analysis on what would be the effect of continued annexation on the Hotel/Motel tax. If we lose access to revenue streams, what happens in the long-run?

-information provided by Pete Pellegrini - PATH Foundation

-LCJ: We need to have quick response on the comprehensive master trail plan. It may be a RFP. I would like to have a follow up on that in the next 2 weeks. We only have a 5 month window to take proper action. I'm not sure how long a comprehensive master trail plan takes place. Mr. Williams can you come back to us with that the next time we meet in PWI to discuss the Master Trail Plan

Z Williams: In 2 weeks we will have strong ideas on dedicated funding and ways to move this forward as expeditiously as possible

-Question TT: did we budget for a trail master plan this year?

JR: we did

Z Williams: I want to say we did for about \$250,000

-LCJ: we need to take quick action to retain a company to move forward with a plan. I look forward to continuing this work quickly and discussions going forward

-Item held in committee

[2022-1370](#)

Commission District(s): All Commission Districts
Plumbing Repair and Water Conservation Program “DeKalb Cares”
MOTION was made by Ted Terry, seconded by Robert Patrick, that this agenda item be No recommendation to the Board of Commissioners, due back on 3/22/2022. The motion carried by the following vote:

Yes: 3 - Cochran-Johnson, Commissioner Patrick, and Commissioner Terry

-information provided by Commissioner Cochran-Johnson

-LCJ: I would ask that we review this and give it proper time

-TT: I feel comfortable moving forward with it. As we move forward with the rate increase, we want to ensure we're not delaying any repairs

-Z Williams: we can provide additional information in the coming days

LCJ: I would feel comfortable with additional information

-RP: in reading the agenda item I am comfortable with it, and I would welcome additional information from staff in the meantime

-TT: motion to advance this item to the full BOC with No Official Recommendation, pending additional information from Staff

[2022-1108](#)

Commission District(s): All
Approval and authorization to execute the updated Cooperative Technical Assistance Intergovernmental Cost Sharing Agreement with the Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC)
MOTION was made by Ted Terry, seconded by Robert Patrick, that this agenda item be recommended for approval. to the Board of Commissioners, due back on 3/22/2022. The motion carried by the following vote:

Yes: 3 - Cochran-Johnson, Commissioner Patrick, and Commissioner Terry

-information provided by Attorney Ernstes

Meeting Ended At: 5:45 PM

**MOTION was made by Robert Patrick, seconded by Ted Terry,
that this agenda item be adjourned meeting. The motion carried
by the following vote:**

Yes: 3 - Cochran-Johnson, Commissioner Patrick, and Commissioner Terry

Barbara H. Sanders-Norwood CCC, CMC