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Augusta County Service Authority
Regular Board Meeting, March 19, 2020, at 1:30 p.m.
Board Meeting Room

PRESENT: Andrew C. Middleton, Chairman, North River District
Garry R. Gordon, Vice-Chairman, Middle River District
Carolyn S. Bragg, South River District
Allen Dahl, Beverley Manor District – *via phone conference from his home due to illness*
John H. Graves, Wayne District
Michael L. Shull, Riverheads District
Timothy Simmons, Pastures District
Phil Martin, Executive Director
Jean Marshall, Secretary

ABSENT: Brent Canterbury, Treasurer

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CALL TO ORDER

The Chairman called the meeting to order at 1:30 P.M.

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ADOPTION OF REVISED AGENDA

Mrs. Bragg moved, seconded by Mr. Shull to adopt the revised Agenda.

Vote was as follows:

Yeas: Middleton, Gordon, Bragg, Dahl, Graves, Shull
and Simmons
Nays: None

Motion approved.

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APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Shull moved, seconded by Mrs. Bragg, to approve the minutes of the Regular Board Meeting of February 20, 2020, which had been mailed to the members with no corrections made.

Vote was as follows:

Yeas: Middleton, Gordon, Bragg, Dahl, Graves, Shull
and Simmons
Nays: None

Motion approved.

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NEW COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS

Dr. Middleton announced revisions to committee assignments as follows:

Personnel Committee – Mr. Graves, (Chairman) and Mr. Simmons

Land Committee – Mr. Shull, Chairman and Mr. Dahl

Executive and Finance committees remain unchanged

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MATTERS PRESENTED BY THE PUBLIC

Staff spoke on behalf of Mrs. Barbara Swisher who lives on Cricket Rd. The Service Authority water main serving Mrs. Swisher's property is roughly 700 feet from her house, resulting in a long water lateral. Mrs. Swisher has reported multiple leaks on the water lateral and after the Service Authority investigated, it was determined there is approximately 160 psi on her lateral. The Service Authority believes this is an excessive amount of pressure and is contributing to the leaks. Virginia Department of Health regulates the minimum amount of pressure required on water lines; however, there is no policy in place stating a maximum pressure.

Mrs. Swisher had inquired if the water main could be extended to her house, thereby reducing the length of her lateral. Extending the water main would not be a viable option because it would cost approximately \$70,000.00 to install and would not generate any new customers.

The overall water pressure in the area is high and the Service Authority is exploring possible locations where a main line pressure reducing valve could be installed to benefit all properties. Currently, Mrs. Swisher has a pressure reducing valve on the water line entering her house which reduces the inside pressure to 55 psi, but the water lateral remains at 160 psi.

Staff recommended the Service Authority purchase 700 feet of 1" municipex pipe for a cost of \$1,000. Mrs. Swisher has agreed to provide the installation of the pipe.

Mr. Dahl stated he has concerns about precedent setting, however, since Mrs. Swisher will be responsible for installing the line, the precedent setting should be mitigated.

Mr. Gordon asked about the age and material of the existing line.

Staff stated it is 30 years old and made of black plastic.

Mrs. Bragg asked if the customer paid for the original line.

Staff stated the customer did pay for the original line.

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Mrs. Bragg asked if there was any possibility the line would be split in the future to service neighboring properties.

Staff stated some neighboring properties are already Service Authority customers. The 1” line would not be adequate to extend to anyone else. Even though the Service Authority will be purchasing the line material, it will remain a private lateral line.

Mr. Dahl moved, seconded by Mrs. Bragg for the Service Authority to purchase the 700 feet of line, with Mrs. Swisher being responsible for the installation.

Vote was as follows:

Yeas:	Middleton, Gordon, Bragg, Dahl, Graves, Shull and Simmons
Nays:	None

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EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR’S HIGHLIGHTS

A. COVID-19 Update

Staff stated if there are any employee situations that may arise due to COVID-19, Staff will brief the Personnel Committee. The Committee will decide if there is a need to call a special meeting with the Board.

Mr. Simmons asked if employees are given personal protective equipment when answering service calls.

Staff stated employees are provided with hand sanitizer and gloves, and are equipped with personal protective equipment as part of daily operations.

Dr. Middleton asked if Field Operations staff go inside customer homes.

Staff stated it is very rare for them to go into customer homes. The only case would be if there was a sewer backup making it necessary to see any inside damage.

Dr. Middleton stated it may be worthwhile for staff to ask occupants if there is any sickness in the home before entering. He stated the Executive Director will have full discretion to do what he thinks is in the best interest of employee protection.

B. State Legislation

Mr. Shull explained the County is in the process of putting together information showing what recently passed legislation will cost the County and taxpayers. He would like Staff to put together a report of what new legislation will cost the Service Authority and the rate payers.

Staff agreed to prepare a report of the monetary effects to the Service Authority and rate payers due to new legislation.

Staff explained the budget amendment, which was recently passed and is directing DEQ to look at more cost effective ways to accomplish what was laid out in the original WIP III plan, is now waiting for approval by the Governor.

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PROGRESS REPORT

The Progress Report for February is on file in the Secretary’s office and was reviewed with the Board.

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FY-21 BUDGET OVERVIEW

Staff presented the preliminary overview of the FY-21 budget as presented on PowerPoint, which the Board received a copy of prior to the meeting.

The following specific items were highlighted in the presentation: consumption revenues are approximately 5% above budget and expenses are approximately 6% below budget; FY-21 water and wastewater usage is projected to be 3.8% higher than FY-20; 100 new water connections and 85 new sewer connections are being projected with 40% at full hookup fees and 60% at partial hookup fees. Operating expenses are still being evaluated for FY-21 but are currently showing a 2.22% increase from FY-20. Health insurance is anticipated to increase 5%. Staff is considering and prioritizing the capital projects to be included in the FY-21 budget.

Staff will meet with the Personnel and Finance committees and will present the FY-21 draft budget at the April meeting based on input from both committees.

Dr. Middleton asked if there are any considerations factored in for COVID-19.

Staff stated there were no considerations factored in. Determination of how COVID-19 will affect the budget is uncertain at this time.

Dr. Middleton suggested it be noted in the budget the proposed figures are subject to change depending on the effect of COVID-19.

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REVISION TO ACSA BY-LAWS

Staff explained Section 10-2 of the ACSA By-Laws currently states “Parliamentary procedure on Authority meetings shall be in accordance with Robert’s Rules of Order, Newly Revised, 11th Edition.”

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Over the last two years there have been several occasions where a question concerning the correct parliamentary procedure, in order to strictly comply with Robert's Rules, resulted in confusion and an unproductive use of Board time. Part of this was the result of the Authority never having designated an official Parliamentarian, but part is also attributed to Robert's Rules of Order having been expanded over time to cover organizations that are larger and in need of more rules than this Authority, thereby becoming more complicated.

It has been, and continues to be the desire of both the Board Chairman and the Executive Director to keep meetings productive, civil, efficient and brief. It is believed a simpler set of Rules of Order would be beneficial for conduct of business in the monthly Board Meetings as well as Committee Meetings.

The following proposed rules are intended to cover how we conduct Board meetings and to protect the individual rights of all Board Members. They have been reviewed and approved by the Service Authority's attorney, Randall Perdue.

"AUGUSTA COUNTY SERVICE AUTHORITY RULES OF ORDER"

1. A quorum is a majority of the Board, physically present in one location.
2. The Executive Director, with input from the Chairman and Vice-Chairman, shall draft a proposed agenda for each meeting. This proposed agenda shall be revised as necessary and adopted by a majority vote as prescribed in the ACSA By-Laws.
3. All Board Members should have a chance to speak on any issue before the Board. The initial round of comments should be limited to five minutes per member. After all members have had an opportunity to speak the chair may grant each member an additional five minutes to extend their remarks.
4. A "second" is required to have a matter voted upon. The lone exception is a recommendation from a Committee which shall stand as its own motion and second.
5. Procedural maneuvers will not be allowed to thwart the productivity of the Board, especially by unnecessarily extending the length of Board Meetings.
6. Except for public hearings and "Matters Presented by the Public," whether the public can speak on an issue is in the discretion of the Chairman or a majority of the Board.
7. Many matters can be passed by a majority of those present and voting, provided there is a quorum present. Theoretically, a matter can pass with only 1 vote, if the others abstain. However, a majority of the full Board membership (i.e., 4 out of 7) is required to spend more than \$500.00, impose rate or fee increases, address active or potential litigation, require action by the Executive Director or to borrow money.
8. The vote of each member must be recorded on every item voted upon.
9. A tie vote defeats the motion, resolution or issue voted upon.
10. The motion to adjourn customarily is made as follows: "I move we adjourn subject to the call of the Chairman." That makes it easy to call a special meeting in case something comes up before the next scheduled meeting.
11. The Board "speaks" through its actions. No one member, not even the Chairman, can speak for the entire Board unless the Board has taken some action to authorize it. Nor can any individual Board Member make any binding commitment to any other party.
12. Statements made and matters discussed in closed session are strictly confidential and should be repeated to no one. This is particularly true of "advice from Authority Counsel" since disclosure will result in loss of attorney-client confidentiality privilege.

- 13. No vote shall be taken in closed session. The staff may receive direction in closed session if it is an action the staff is authorized to do on its own initiative.
- 14. Any procedural issue not addressed in these Rules of Order shall be decided at the sole discretion of the Chairman. These decisions by the Chairman on procedural issues shall be subject to overrule by a majority of the full Board membership through a motion, second to the motion, and subsequent vote to overrule the Chairman’s decision for that particular procedural issue.

The undersigned acknowledges receipt of these Rules of Order and agrees to comply with the entirety hereof.

Signature: _____

Name: _____

Date: _____

It should be noted the Board of Supervisors of Augusta County does not conduct their meetings in accordance with Robert’s Rules of Order. They have adopted a simple, one-page document that each Board Member agrees to honor.

Mrs. Bragg moved, seconded by Mr. Graves to amend Article X, Section 10-2 of the Augusta County Service Authority By-laws to follow Augusta County Service Authority Rules of Order.

Vote was as follows:

Yeas:	Middleton, Gordon, Bragg, Dahl, Graves, Shull and Simmons
Nays:	None

Motion approved.

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NEW FIELD OPERATIONS FACILITY UPDATE

Staff shared with the Board information received from David Atwood of VDOT regarding the existing entrance at Middle River Treatment Plant. If Field Operations is moved to the Middle River location, the number of trips per day would increase through the entrance. Mr. Atwood explained to Staff if the trips per day through the existing entrance were 200 or less, no revisions to the entrance would be required. If the trips per day were ever greater than 200, the Service Authority would be required to install 48’ long by 12’ wide tapers on either side of the entrance along Laurel Hill Road. Mr. Atwood also verified the sight distance is adequate and turn lanes would not be needed. Staff has determined there should be less than 200 trips per day on average and less than the allowable turns into the site, therefore, improvements to the entrance would not be necessary at this time.

Mr. Shull asked how many customers come to the Customer Service counter each day.

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Staff is unsure of the hourly and daily averages, but believes it is less than the number requiring the creation of a turning lane.

Mr. Dahl stated he looked for other potential properties for the new facility. Unless having a remote lay-down yard is an option, there isn't any property available large enough for a new facility. The only possibility would be the former Kmart building in the City of Waynesboro, which consists of 90,000 square feet and sits on 27 acres. The sale price for the building is \$2.8M. There is no garage on the property and the building is basically a shell.

Dr. Middleton stated the process of searching for a new location for Field Operations has been ongoing since 2016. A decision on the location needs to be made by the end of the fiscal year. He deferred the matter to the Land and Water Committee asking them to present recommendations on how to move ahead with the process at the April meeting.

Mr. Shull asked how many acres would be needed for the building and the lay-down yard.

Staff stated approximately six to eight acres would be needed.

Dr. Middleton asked for confirmation of the square footage for the main building.

Staff stated the total of all buildings is estimated to be approximately 30,000 square feet, which includes 20,000 square feet for the main building and the remaining square footage for the warehouse and other storage.

Mr. Shull stated the Land and Water Committee would visit the Kmart building and make a recommendation on it.

Mr. Dahl stated the Design Electric property consists of four acres. He asked if the Design Electric building would accommodate Field Operations' needs right away and could the existing offices be utilized as they are or would the building need to be remodeled.

Staff stated the Design Electric building has never been toured.

Mrs. Bragg stated the Design Electric building was ruled out because it does not have a suitable layout or meet any of the other needs.

Mr. Dahl stated one advantage of the Design Electric building is the already finished office space. He offered for the Land Committee to tour this building as well.

Staff stated the building itself would be large enough, but the land is not big enough to build a garage and fleet service building on.

Dr. Middleton reiterated the goal should be to get a new facility for Field Operations and Facility Maintenance as soon as possible.

Staff stated an analysis of the number of work orders and travel distance would be put together for the Kmart location and the effect it would have on drive time for employees. Staff will also put together renovation costs for both buildings.

Dr. Middleton asked if the Service Authority would be taxed by the City of Waynesboro, should Field Operations be relocated to the Kmart building.

Staff is unsure if the Service Authority would be taxed.

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SUSPENSION OF NON-PAY CUTOFFS

Staff stated on Monday, March 16 the State Corporation Commission (SCC) issued an emergency order to suspend utility service disconnections during the State of Emergency the Commonwealth is under due to COVID-19. The SCC regulates privately owned facilities, but does not regulate governmental utilities, such as counties, cities, and authorities; therefore, the Service Authority is not subject to the order.

Since December 1, 2019, the Service Authority has nine accounts that are delinquent and currently turned off. There are 65 additional non-pay cutoffs scheduled for this week. The first step for these non-pay cutoffs is to hang a door-tag informing the customer their services are subject to disconnection. Most customers bring their account current once the door-tag is hung and avoid disconnection. The Service Authority has postponed hanging door-tags and disconnections this week pending a decision by the Board.

Staff recommends all non-pay cutoffs be suspended for 60 days, and to restore service to the nine customers who have not made arrangements to have service restored, assuming the properties are occupied. Service will continue to be billed and any delinquent accounts will be addressed once the 60 day period has expired.

Mrs. Bragg moved, seconded by Mr. Simmons to suspend non-pay cutoffs for a period of 60 days and reinstate the services of the nine customers that have been disconnected.

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BOARD COMMENTS

Mr. Graves thanked Casey McCracken for helping a Service Authority customer with a billing issue.

Mr. Graves suggested the Service Authority put a program in place to assist customers facing hardship during the pandemic.

Mr. Dahl stated the Service Authority needs to continue to provide water and sewer services during this time, regardless of a customer’s inability to pay their bill.

Mr. Simmons thanked Staff for the attention given to the pandemic and for staying informed of the situation and its effect on the Service Authority.

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Mr. Shull stated depending on the pandemic situation, the Service Authority may need to extend the suspension of non-payment cutoffs beyond 60 days.

Mr. Shull asked if the Service Authority waives connection fees for volunteer fire departments.

Staff stated currently the fees are not waived. The Board of Supervisors has helped the fire departments in the past with similar fees. The bond covenants call for all customers to be charged for a connection.

Dr. Middleton asked Staff to check the restrictions of the Service Authority bond covenants and report if there is any flexibility allowing the Service Authority to assist fire departments with connection fees. He also asked Staff to determine if an emergency fund could be set up or if there is a way donations may be made to assist customers who are unable to pay their water and sewer bill.

Mr. Gordon thanked Staff for keeping the Board informed of the pandemic situation.

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There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 3:00 p.m.

Board Secretary

Chairman