

**MINUTES
REGULAR SESSION
ST. MARY'S COUNTY METROPOLITAN COMMISSION
JANUARY 14, 2016**

Following a FY 2017 Capital Improvement Budget Work Session, the regular session of the meeting commenced at 3:15 p.m. In attendance were Commissioners Willing, Russell, Barthelme, Gaskin, Mummaugh, Pessagno, Thompson and Oliver (On Behalf of Captain Heidi Fleming, Commanding Officer, NAS Patuxent River). MetCom staff in attendance included Bundy, Cullins, Elberti, Fehn, Meiser, Shick, Edwards, and Comeau-Stanley. Several staff on hand for the length of service award presentation to Becky Shick. Others present included John Bush and Jason Babcock (*The Enterprise*).

Chairman Willing welcomed everyone to the meeting; apologizing for the delay caused by the first budget work session, and performed a review of the agenda.

MOTION TO APPROVE AGENDA

Commissioner Russell moved to approve the Agenda, as presented. Commissioner Thompson seconded the motion. Motion carried 6-0.

LENGTH OF SERVICE AWARD

Following a review of her service to the Metropolitan Commission by Ms. Cullins, Chairman Willing presented a 10-Year Length of Service Award to Becky Shick, Chief Financial Officer.

PUBLIC FORUM

Mr. Bush addressed the Board members to request consideration for an adjustment in the water usage tier thresholds to accommodate large, high-density households. Mr. Bush's presentation included a review of the materials submitted in his application to appear before the Board, which cited the objectives of the MetCom's new rate structure, implemented in 2015, as fair and equitable distribution of costs to customers and resource conservation. Mr. Bush voiced his concern that the tiered structure discriminates against large family households and presents a huge burden to those who are already budget conscious. Mr. Bush provided water consumption data for his household of 10 and advised that their high-density communal living is 13% more efficient than the average resident, when using U.S. Census Bureau data and the corresponding gallons per person monthly allocation. Discussion ensued between Board members, Mr. Bush and Mr. Bundy on the points presented. In closing, Chairman Willing thanked Mr. Bush for his presentation and noted that the staff and Board would be looking at some of the points he raised, as well as other aspects of the tiered rate structure, during the upcoming budget cycle.

APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA

Commissioner Russell moved to accept the Consent Agenda as presented, and to hereby approve all matters contained upon the Consent Agenda. Commissioner Thompson seconded the motion. Motion carried 6-0.

APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES

Commissioner Pessagno inquired about the Board directing staff to begin the process of hiring an Assistant Director at the December meeting, noting that it does not appear to be reflected in the minutes. Ms. Stanley advised that the discussion and Board action appear in the middle of Page 4, just above the Chief Financial Officer's report.

Commissioner Russell moved to approve the minutes of the December 10, 2015 meeting. Commissioner Barthelme seconded the motion. Motion carried 5-0-1. Commissioner Gaskin abstained, as she was not present at the December 10, 2015 meeting.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Mr. Bundy made mention of the email correspondence from a customer regarding residential water use and noted that this customer requested to remain somewhat anonymous. Mr. Bundy referenced the letter contained in the meeting binders and solicited input from Board members, though no discussion occurred.

Mr. Bundy addressed the recent discussions and questions from the County regarding MetCom's borrowing with the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) and unspent balances on funds borrowed. Mr. Bundy noted that all projects funded through DHCD are either complete under design or construction, however three large tank projects were delayed for logistical reasons, two of which have been bid and one is on hold for land acquisition, but we are moving forward with those projects. Mr. Bundy noted that Ms. Shick has discussed this matter with our auditors to determine how the unspent funds are reflected in our audit. Mr. Bundy advised that in the future, we are not going to borrow money for construction of projects until after the design is complete and we are ready to proceed with construction. Discussion ensued amongst the Board and staff regarding this matter, the establishment of rates based upon the Capital Improvement Budget and loan debt, and the use of reserves to fund projects.

Mr. Bundy reported that this past holiday season, MetCom employees presented St. Mary's Caring with a check for over \$2,400, noting that several fundraisers were held throughout the year. Mr. Bundy gave special recognition to Ed Hogan, fundraising chairman and his staff for their efforts and thanked the MetCom employees for their generosity towards the community. Chairman Willing and Commissioner Thompson also commented on the generosity shown by employees during the Christmas party auction.

HUMAN RESOURCES DIRECTOR'S REPORT

A. Assistant Director Position Advertisement

Ms. Cullins performed a review of the recommended advertising venues for the posting of the Assistant Director position. Discussion ensued amongst the Board and Ms. Cullins surrounding the cost and duration of the ads, as well as the success of using specific advertising outlets for senior staff position vacancies.

Commissioner Barthelme moved to approve the position advertisement and the advertising venues for the position of Assistant Director, as discussed and recommended by the Human Resources Director; to include a modification of the Enterprise advertisement, as explained by the Human Resources Director, as well as the removal of the Linked In and the addition of the Indeed ad. Commissioner Russell seconded the motion. Motion carried 6-0.

CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER'S REPORT

A. Audit Required Communications

Ms. Shick advised the Board that the Audit Required Communications provides a general review of the significant findings of the audit. Chairman Willing noted that the report does not appear to show any new information since the presentation was made by the Auditor in December.

B. FY 2016 Operating Budget Amendment

Mr. Shick performed a review of the needs associated with the Operating Budget Amendment, citing the hiring of a laboratory intern, the purchase of a snowplow blade for the loader at Marlay-Taylor Facility, office furniture and a new copier/printer. Ms. Shick advised that this amendment adjusts funds between line items in the Sewer Division and the Capital Equipment and Expenditures section of the budget.

Commissioner Russell moved to amend the FY 2016 Operating Budget, as recommended by the Commission's Chief Financial Officer, as follows, which amendment will result in no change in Net Income from Service Charges:

- (1) reduce the Sewer Salaries line item by \$8,500; and**
- (2) increase the Sewer Contractual Labor line item by \$8,500.00.**

Further move to amend the Capital Equipment and Expenditures in the FY 2016 Operating Budget as follows, which amendment will result in no net change to Capital Equipment and Expenditures:

- (1) reduce Equipment to Conduct In-House E-Coli Testing & Certification as a Water Lab line item by \$12,200;**
- (2) add a new line item for a Snow Plow Blade for Loader at Marlay-Taylor in the amount of \$5,000;**
- (3) increase Furniture for Human Resources Assistant line item in the amount of \$1,000; and**
- (4) add a new line item for Xerox Copier/Printer for Administration in the amount of \$6,200.**

Commissioner Barthelme seconded the motion. Motion carried 6-0.

CHIEF ENGINEER'S REPORT

A. O&M Propane Contract Change Order No. 1

Mr. Elberti performed a review of the contract amendment and services associated with this change order, citing the installation of a propane system to the Headworks building and the Bio-Mag building for the Marlay-Taylor WRF ENR Upgrade project. Mr. Elberti advised that this includes 250' of underground gas line and its connection to the air handler and headworks building and 100' of underground gas line and its connection to the air handler and Bio-Mag building. Mr. Elberti noted that this work would be performed under the existing Operations and Maintenance Propane Services Contract with Taylor Gas Company. Brief discussion ensued amongst the Board and Mr. Elberti on the scope of work and the existing contract.

Commissioner Russell moved to accept and approve Change Order No. 1, dated December 21, 2015, to the O&M Propane Contract #12-22-F, with Taylor Gas Co., of Lexington Park, Maryland, by the sum of \$4,650.00, for underground gas line installation to the MTWRF headworks and BioMag buildings, for the MTWRF ENR Upgrade project, Contract #8-38-S, as recommended by the Chief Engineer. Commissioner Gaskin seconded the motion. Motion carried 6-0.

B. Marlay-Taylor Data & Communications Upgrade

Mr. Elberti advised that the work associated with the Marlay-Taylor Data and Communications Upgrade includes the installation of an additional data connection line in conjunction with the ENR Upgrade project. Mr. Elberti noted that the estimate provided in the pre-commission mailing was \$6,500.00; however, the actual contract price was \$4,100.00 and further noted that this is a one-time construction fee for the work performed by Metrocast. Mr. Elberti noted that this will improve reliability to the system and is to be funded under the project budget as a contingency.

Commissioner Barthelme moved to accept and approve the proposal from Metrocast for \$4,100.00, to install conduits and cables necessary for an additional data and communication connection required as part of the Marlay-Taylor WRF ENR Upgrade project, Contract #8-38-S, as recommended by the Chief Engineer. Commissioner Gaskin seconded the motion. Motion carried 6-0.

C. Retrofit Grinder Pump Core Units Purchase

Mr. Elberti explained the scope of the purchase associated with the Barnes E-One Retrofit Grinder Pump Core Units, which are to be installed in fifty (50) grinder pump vaults in the Piney Point area. Mr. Elberti further explained that the retrofits are used to replace existing units where the vaults do not need to be replaced. Brief discussion ensued on the annual budget for this Capital Improvement Budget item.

Commissioner Russell moved that the Commission accept and award the procurement of fifty (50) Barnes E-One Retrofit Grinder Pump Units from Crane Pumps & Systems Inc. of Piqua, Ohio, for the total price of \$51,900.00, as submitted in their quote dated December 7, 2015. Commissioner Barthelme seconded the motion. Motion carried 6-0.

Based upon discussion, which occurred during the Capital Improvement Budget Work Session, **Commissioner Russell moved to direct staff to further investigate the feasibility of property acquisition near the Piney Point facility and to report back to the Board with an alternatives analysis. Commissioner Thompson seconded the motion. Motion carried 6-0.**

GENERAL LEGAL COUNSEL'S REPORT

A. Essex Station Property Matter

Ms. Meiser provided information to the Board on MetCom's Essex Station Property, located between the Church of the Ascension and Kenny's Flowers on Great Mills Road. Ms. Meiser provided some background on the property and the common boundary with the Church, citing that the property is a maintenance and staging facility used by MetCom operations staff and serves as an important facility for service to areas in Lexington Park and the southern portion of the County.

Using the overhead monitors, Ms. Meiser performed a review of the subject property and the existing boundary lines as well as the proposed new boundary line options. Ms. Meiser noted that the ingress and egress to that property is not efficient or safe and with a relocation of the common boundary, a more efficient use of both properties would occur and would greatly improve ingress and egress. Ms. Meiser advised that the Church has been approached regarding the adjustment concept and is fully agreeable, provided the Church maintains the requisite parking required under the Zoning Ordinance. Ms. Meiser noted that with the Board's approval, staff would obtain a cost proposal from the engineer to complete the adjustment plat and determine if this effort could be funded in the current fiscal year or after July 1. Brief discussion ensued between Ms. Meiser and the Board members regarding the property, the Church's beautification efforts and the proposed boundary adjustment. In closing, Ms. Meiser advised that she received a letter from the Church, which she will provide to the Board members, as it was not included in the advance meeting materials.

Commissioner Barthelme moved to authorize staff to move forward with a boundary line adjustment for the common boundary between the MetCom station and the adjoining Church of the Ascension on Great Mills Road, and to take the necessary steps to finalize and record the boundary line adjustment plat and corresponding deed. Commissioner Russell seconded the motion. Motion carried 6-0.

COMMISSION MEMBERS' TIME

Commissioner Pessagno provided a follow up to the item addressed at the last meeting concerning the Dent Property in Tall Timbers, noting that he met with staff to discuss the facts and then met with the owner, Mr. Dent, who corrected some of the staff provided information. Mr. Pessagno indicated that his recommendation to Mr. Dent was that given the age of the grinder pump stations (25+ years) that serve the apartments, the store and the house, he should sit tight and wait, as they were going to be replaced sooner or later.

Commissioner Mummaugh inquired about requests received from St. Clements Shores residents wishing to hook up. Mr. Bundy advised that no requests have been received and brief mention was made of those in Breton Bay who have indicated their wish to be added to the list to connect.

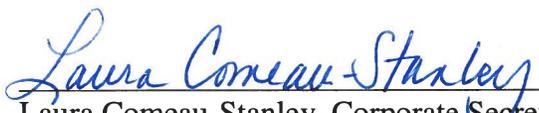
Discussion ensued amongst the group on the number of water and sewer customers currently served by St. Clements Shores and Commissioner Thompson advised that a recent newspaper article reported that there were 509 hookups. Mr. Elberti noted that he would look into that number and work with the billing office to obtain that information, as what was reported in the article was not provided by our office.

Brief mention made by Commissioner Mummaugh of the work done in Kent Island, where all residents were on septic tanks and low-pressure pumps were installed to pump just liquids, which eliminated the need for pumping stations. Commissioner Mummaugh noted that the local sewer authority owns and maintains the septic systems and have saved a tremendous amount of money in operations. Commissioner Mummaugh urged staff to read more about it on their website and brief discussion ensued amongst the group. Mr. Bundy took the opportunity to state that until we have a defined service area, we cannot know what is going to be economically feasible to do in this process. Additional discussion ensued on the number of customers served and Mr. Elberti noted that he would be prepared to make a report at the next meeting. Mr. Elberti further noted that Dewberry is wrapping up their initial draft on St. Clements Shores and he expects to report on that in late February.

Brief mention of the Marlay-Taylor Expansion analysis and Mr. Bundy recommended that because there are some issues in play now relating to the new technology, we hold off on that until we can determine what the performance is at the plant following the ENR Upgrade. Mr. Elberti indicated that we have the preliminary report from CH2M Hill and are in the process of reviewing the preliminary data and will report on that at a future meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, **Commissioner Russell moved to adjourn the meeting at 4:46 p.m. Commissioner Thompson seconded the motion. Motion carried 6-0.**



Laura Comeau-Stanley, Corporate Secretary