

Pickens County Public Service Commission  
Board Meeting February 28, 2022 at 4:00 PM  
151 Clearwater Drive  
Liberty, South Carolina 29657

## MINUTES

**PSC Board Members Present:** Cameron Farrish, Eric Rodgers, Richard Tate, Mark Osborn

**PSC Board Members Absent:** Connie Bowers

**PSC Staff & Others Present:** Clint Dickey, Wendy Spann, Mathew Wallace, Tommy Webster

*(The minutes have been condensed and paraphrased during times of discussion and presentations)*

The meeting commenced at 4:02pm. February 28, 2022

Vice-Chairman Rodgers called for approval of Minutes from October 25, 2021 meeting

Farrish motioned to approve minutes, Osborn seconded, Board voted unanimously to approve.

Vice-Chairman Rodgers called for the Director's Report

## DIRECTOR'S REPORT

The Director's report was given by Clint Dickey

The Director explained that today's meeting would mainly be information with no votes being taken. The Director stated that on February 9<sup>th</sup>, 2022, The Town of Central's City Administrator contacted Mr. Dickey to ask about sewer capacity for 4 developments in and around Central. There is a 100 single family house development on Wentink Road which is being annexed into the City of Central. There will be a 90 apartment complex put in behind the Central/Clemson Rec Center. There will be 100 single family homes planned for an area near Central Elementary school which has already been annexed into the city. Then 150 homes are planned for the old American House Spinning site. The capacity requirement for these developments is 167,400 Gallons Per Day (GPD). The Director explained how the 2.9 million GPD of capacity is divided up between Central, Liberty, and Pickens County. The Director explained how a DHEC flow inventory sheet works. The Director explained the process by which capacity could be bought according to the IGA. He explained that there was plenty of capacity to sell and that it would have a negotiated price instead of the availability fee of \$2340 per 400 GPD. The cities do not charge an availability fee. The Director explained what an availability fee is. The Director said we would ask Central what they were willing to pay for this capacity. Tate said, *you said a private home if I wanted to build it would be \$2340 is that the fee we are*

*talking about?* The director explained that this was to replace the sewer capacity at the plant and that the IGA establishes that the County runs the WWTPs and the cities run the collection systems. So they can collect for treatment and collection fees. Tate said *I'm just trying to get my head around the structure of how this works. The individual citizen that owns the house and pays the bill they are not going to pay the county anything, they are going to pay the city then the city will pay us for treatment. Then we are trying to decide what a fair price is after we split off the part of the fee that we are not providing is that right?* The Director asked to finish the report then a discussion could be had to clarify that point.

The director said that he had been contacted by the owners of the old Liberty Denim Plant about finding an operator to monitor the old lagoon. The director summarized the attempt by the owners to use city sewer system to transport the water to the Upper WWTP for treatment.

The Director gave a summary of the paint job at the Upper WWTP. The engineer said that the plant could be filled by next Wednesday.

The Director summarized personnel issues such as Jerry Holden retiring and Josh Holden taking his place as maintenance tech. So we will need to hire an entry level operator.

The Director summarized the inspection report from DHEC for the Central/North WWTP. Tate said *Every place I've ever worked when you get a new manager something changes.*

The Director explained that ROW maintenance would have to be delayed because of tractor maintenance issues.

The Director ended the Director's report and began explaining the 2022-2023 budget.

The Director began going through the Budget by line to explain the accounts that had changed amounts either up or down from last year's budget.

Tate said *\$43,400 per year for data from Clemson.*

The director explained that only \$400 to \$500 dollars per year of that was for Clemson, we have around 6000 customers over all.

Osborn said *So you do that by the gallon?*

The director explained that the billing is done by water usage.

Tate said *My sewer bill with Easley Combined is about 3 times as much as my water bill I think. So to buy the clean water is about 3 times cheaper than buying the sewage treatment.*

Osborn asked *if there were fire suppression sprinklers in here?*

The director said no just a fire alarm.

Osborn asked *Who comes for a fire, the Liberty Fire Department?*

The director said yes.

Osborn asked if the rate was \$5.39 now and the director said yes.

The director said we will now go back and discuss the capacity issue with the Town of Central.

Osborn asked what O&M meant. And the director said Operation and Maintenance.

Osborn asked *Would that be Roper* and the director said no Roper serves the City of Liberty and Tate said no the administrator. The director said yes.

The director explained the availability fee. Tate said *What we can bill Central for is what it cost us to treat the sewage if I'm following this. Do you know what the figure is for treatment per gallon? So that's the availability fee that we can't charge them.*

The director explained what the availability fee is and talked about the Grange in Clemson.

Tate said *I'm just trying to get my mind around what's fair. Where I was going with that was what's the net cost or overall cost to treat sewage coming from them then add 10 or 15% to that. We are in business to make money so 10 or 15% would be profit. That would be a fair price to me.*

The director said that is a good beginning point.

Osborn said *so is that more like a onetime fee?* The director said yes.

Tate said *oh I was thinking more about the monthly bill.*

Farrish said *think of it as an impact fee.*

Osborn said *because water does the same thing.* The director said that the state says we cannot call it an impact fee only an availability fee.

Tate said *impact fee I get.*

Farrish said *its off the top what you have to pay to be a part of the group. Like a membership fee.*

Tate said *so it is held to the side to be used to upgrade or build a new plant. So we are going to give them a discount membership fee a whole sale rate. So instead of \$2340, maybe \$1500?*

Osborn said *so we don't want to just give it away.*

Farrish said *it incentivizes the cities to take responsibility for collection. The county does not do collection.*

Tate said *I'll throw this in for whatever its worth where I live what ever gets growth out of Easley tickles me to death. We are over run.*

Farrish said *Has the Town of Central's administrator said how much they want to buy. I'm sure they don't want to just buy the minimum.* The director said they want to get a price first then they determine how much they want to buy.

Osborn said *So is this like negotiating for a car, they give an offer and we can counter offer?* The director said that's the way I'm going to handle it.

Osborn said *so I would shoot high.*

Tate said *My other job since I retired from truck driving is that I sale real-estate so I get involved in this every day. Offers and counter offers.* The director said the difference is we are partners with the towns.

Tate said *so to pick your brain what would you say was a fair price for member ship fee.*

The director said \$1500 would be a good starting point. They may say they don't want to pay anything so we say \$1500.

Tate said *sounds like a plan to me.*

Osborn said *so if they start at \$1700 that is already a win for us.* The director said we are waiting for the lawyer to tell us what the buy in charge is so we can begin negotiating there.

Farrish said *In the IGA whatever Central and the county comes up with then we will have to offer that to Liberty as well.* The director said yes. The director explained that if capacity is purchased and not used within 5 years, it goes back to the county and is non-refundable. This does not apply to Central because of the IGA. The director said he would get with Phillip Mishoe and ask what he is willing to pay and then he would get the buy in charge number from the lawyer and we would discuss these in the next meeting.

Rodgers said *Is there any other business or comments?*

Farrish asked *if county council was in the mindset that they want to barley break even and not stick it to the municipalities. Is that correct.* The director said yes.

Osborn said *so they just want to breakeven also.* There was discussion of not over charging for this.

Tate said *politically speaking every time the tax payer gets an increase they start calling for a refund.*

Rodgers asked for a motion to adjourn. Farrish motioned to adjourn Tate seconded all vote to adjourn.

Submitted:

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Clinton L. Dickey

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Date

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PSC Chair

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Date