

**MINUTES**  
**CITY OF COCOA**  
**SPECIAL MEETING OF THE CITY COUNCIL**  
**UTILITIES WORKSHOP**

**November 5, 2019**

A Utility Workshop was held on Tuesday, November 5, 2019, in City Council Chambers at Cocoa City Hall, 65 Stone Street, Cocoa, Florida as publicly noticed.

**I. OPENING MATTERS:**

Mayor Williams called the workshop to order at 5:45 p.m.

Councilman Goins provided the invocation. Mayor Williams led the assembly in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Present:	Jake Williams Jr.	Mayor
	Don Boisvert	Councilmember
	Alex Goins	Councilmember
	Lorraine Koss	Councilmember
	Matt Fuhrer	Assistant City Manager
	John Titkanich	City Manager
	Monica Arsenault	Assistant City Clerk

Absent:	Brenda Warner	Deputy Mayor
	Anthony Garganese	City Attorney

Other Staff Members Present:

Rebecca Bowman, Finance Director; Lora Howell, Deputy Finance Director; Chris Collier, Assistant Utilities Director; and Jack Walsh, Utilities Director.

David Prather and Wesley Park, members of the Utilities Advisory Board, were also in attendance.

**II. WORKSHOP TOPICS:**

**1. System Overview:**

Jack Walsh, Utilities Director, provided a presentation<sup>1</sup> regarding the Utilities Department. He explained potable water as follows:

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<sup>1</sup> Exhibit A: Utility Presentation

- 250 square miles of service area
- Regional System serving multiple jurisdictions
- Port St John to Pineda Causeway
- Mainland to Cocoa Beach, Cape Canaveral, Merritt Island
- Port Authority
- 3 Federal Installations
- NASA
- CCAFS
- PAFB
- 84,000 service connections serving approximately ~250,000 customers
  - Plant permits –31 mgdground, 8.8 mgdsurface water

Mr. Walsh shared a map of the City's potable water service area. He explained sanitary sewer and shared the following:

- 15 square miles
- City of Cocoa limits
- 6,000 service connections
- Plant Permitted Capacity 4.5 MGD
- 78 Miles of Gravity Sewer // 47 Miles Force Mains
- 1600 manholes
- 53 Lift stations

Mr. Walsh briefly discussed the reclaimed water system and pointed out that it is fifteen square miles, has seventy-four miles of pipe, is within the City of Cocoa limits only and has two thousand two hundred and twenty one service connections.

## **2. Water Operations Activities:**

Mr. Walsh shared statistics in water field operations from FY18-FY19 which includes work done by City staff, various assessments and repairs that were performed. Additionally, in FY20, annual programs will be continued and there will be data base management and refinement.

## **3. Sewer Operations:**

Mr. Walsh shared the sewer field operations activities from FY18-FY19, including assessments and repairs.

Mr. Collier added that several consultants have come in to perform assessments and they have all acknowledged that the City's system is in great shape.

Mr. Walsh mentioned the sewer field operations activities for FY20 which include continuing the slip lining program, performing manhole assessments and a gravity system cleaning. Mr. Walsh pointed out the FOG program which will continue in FY20. The FOG

program mitigates fats, oils and greases. Additionally, in FY20, new businesses will be tracked through the Development Review Committee (DRC) process, certified letters for cleaning will be required, the FOG data base will be built in GIS and staff will be visiting businesses to develop relationships.

Mr. Walsh explained the current status of reclaimed water. There is a slow and steady growth of reclaim connections and the reclaim utilization rate is at about ninety-six percent. The reclaim system is in balance with plant influent.

#### **4. Septic to Sewer:**

Mr. Walsh explained septic to sewer, a large project coming up. He shared that the “Save Our Indian River Lagoon” has funding available for areas “J” and “K”. The scope and tasks will include geotechnical, surveying and engineering which will be addressed by Bussen Engineering Group. It will take approximately ten months for plans and a community meeting will be necessary and is anticipated to be held sometime in February or March of 2020.

Furthermore, funding was discussed for septic to sewer. Mr. Walsh shared the following:

- SJRWMD Cost Share
  - District Wide
    - 33% funding construction costs
    - \$1.5M max per year
      - AWS/conservation
      - Flood
      - Natural systems
      - Water Quality/ nutrient loading
        - located within 0.25 miles water body (0.5 in 2021)
        - local ordinance enforceable
        - 50% commitment or better
- SRF Loans
  - Low interest loans for infrastructure projects
    - Loan, not a grant
    - Interest rates are below market
    - 20 year loan
    - Repayments starts after completion of the project
      - credit for Davis Bacon and American Iron
    - Requires facility master plans
    - More extensive engineering, needs alternatives
    - Certified payroll during construction,
    - 2% loan fee
    - Planning, Design or Construction can qualify

Mr. Walsh mentioned the benefits of SOIRL. The capital cost of the main line construction (gravity mains, lift stations, road repairs) will be covered by the SOIRL. Potential overages

or underestimated costs can potentially be covered and impact fees to new customers can be covered by SOIRL. Service line connections, septic removals can also be covered by SOIRL through a reimbursement by the County to the homeowner. He explained, however, that there are some potential challenges of SOIRL. He noted that money is allocated but is always subject to funding availability. City of Cocoa customers could be held liable for portions of mainline construction if not enough people connect and City of Cocoa customers could be held liable for the O&M costs in future if not enough people connect. Reimbursements available to customers today may not be available in future years, so connecting as soon as the project is complete is critical.

Mr. Walsh pointed out the City's current Sewer Policy, referencing the Code of Ordinances Chapter 22, Article I, Section 22-3(C) and Section 22-9(E).

Mr. Walsh asked Council to provide direction on developing an enforcement on the current policy which states that three hundred sixty-five days are given to connect, however there is no current consequence for violations. In response, Mayor Williams noted that he'd like to see what State law says. It was decided that the language in the current policy that notes three hundred and sixty-five days are given to connect may need to be reconsidered.

Councilwoman Koss added that she'd like to see what the economic burden would be and if there are options for funding.

Mr. Walsh provided several options for consideration:

- Charge customers the readiness to serve fixed fee
- Create a penalty for non-compliance
- What if County seeks return of cash due to non-compliance?
  - No minimum percentage to connect has been established
  - Who pays for this impact?

## **5. Capital Project Summary:**

Mr. Walsh provided an update on the North Tropical Trail looping improvements. This is located on two areas of North Tropical Trail and one area of Chase Hammock road. The project is currently eighty-nine percent complete and the anticipated substantial completion date is November 29, 2019. This was a bond-funded project.

He shared that the Reactor Clarifier #1 Effluent Pipe Replacement Project is located at the Dyal Water Treatment Plant. It is currently eighty-six percent complete and is a bond-funded project.

Furthermore, the Groundwater Filters #1 and #4 Rehab project is underway and is also located at the Dyal Water Treatment Plant. It is twelve percent complete and the anticipated substantial completion date is February 28, 2020.

Mr. Walsh explained that the Cidco Tank Ladder repair is located on Cidco Road in Cocoa. The achieved substantial completion date was October 14, 2019. The Sludge Valves replacement project is located at the Sellers Water Reclamation Facility with an anticipated substantial completion date of December 18, 2019.

The Michigan Avenue FM and Reclaim project, Marlin Manor WM Improvements project, Pineda Water Main Crossing project and SR 520 Water Main Improvements project are all in design. The construction contract is anticipated to be awarded in spring, 2020 for all projects.

## **6. Future:**

Mr. Walsh shared what's coming in the future. He discussed advanced metering infrastructure and shared that a study and financial analysis was completed by Jacobs Engineering, Inc. The City is looking to enhance customer service access, minimize misreads, etc. A schedule will be determined based on funding and city wide Enterprise Platform changes.

Additionally, there is the Patrick Airforce Base and Kennedy Space Center Infrastructure Privatization:

- RFQ for water and sewer on hold by Federal Government
- Letters of Interest requested and submitted
- Significant costs to prepare and RFQ ~ \$1.5M
- May require significant staffing changes and organizational changes for the utilities system

Councilmember Koss asked what the benefit to the City would be. In response, City Manager Titkanich explained that it would be a fifty year contract and there would be a margin involved.

Lastly, Mr. Walsh pointed out the Cocoa Utilities Capital Improvement Program Dashboard on the City's website. Information is readily available for anyone who may be interested to see project updates and various other information.

Councilmember Koss mentioned the America's Water Infrastructure Act and asked if the City had a resiliency plan in place. In response, Mr. Walsh stated no but that it would be completed in time to meet the deadline in March 2020.

Councilmember Koss inquired about the amount of money the City makes from late fees on water bills. In response, Ms. Bowman explained that when staff made changes to the utility handbook it was determined that although a considerable amount of money was being collected from late fees, it was mostly being used to cover the constant costs of sending staff back and forth to the properties.

## **III. ADJOURNMENT:**

- \* **MOTION by Councilman Boisvert; SECONDED by Councilman Goins to adjourn the Utilities Workshop.**

**AYES: Williams, Boisvert, Goins, Koss**

**MOTION PASSED (4-0)**

**The Workshop adjourned at 7:42 p.m.**

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**Jake Williams Jr., Mayor**

**ATTEST:**

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**Carie Shealy, City Clerk**

**(Transcribed by M. Arsenault, Assistant City Clerk)**