

**CHARLOTTE-MECKLENBURG UTILITIES  
ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
MINUTES OF MEETING  
October 20, 2011**

The Charlotte-Mecklenburg Utilities Advisory Committee met Thursday, October 20, 2011, 3:30 pm at 4222 Westmont Drive, Charlotte, North Carolina.

Members Present: George Beckwith, Jim Duke, Ron Charbonneau, Frank McMahan, Jim Merrifield, Marco Varela

Members Absent: David Jarrett

Guest(s): Andy Grzynski, CDOT

Staff Present:	Barry Gullet	Director
	Kim Eagle	Deputy Director
	Mickey Hicks	Business Manager
	Steve Miller	Customer Service Manager
	Regina Cousar	Continuous Improvement Officer
	Karen Whichard	Public Information Officer

**Safety Minute**

Please drive carefully through neighborhoods on Halloween night. Many children will be out trick or treating and may not be watching for cars as they normally would.

**Minutes**

A motion was made by Frank McMahan, and seconded by Jim Duke, to approve the September 2011 minutes.

**Updates from Previous Meeting**

- The Charlotte-Mecklenburg area is currently in stage one of drought; it appears the area will stay out of stage two for the rest of the year.
- Steve Miller presented information on the three companies that returned the RFP for the private line warranty program to City Council on October 10<sup>th</sup> and received many questions. Steve will not be going to Council on November 14<sup>th</sup> for contract approval due to some unanswered questions.
- Utilities will begin meeting with all surrounding area mayors during the first of the year.
- Utilities personnel has determined that some sections of the 24 inch water main on Park Road in the Huntingtowne Farm area need to be replaced and interconnects made where dead ends currently exist.
- As of this week, Utilities has 73 vacancies with eight more new hires beginning November 1<sup>st</sup>. Field Operations division should have an additional eight crews in the field by November 15<sup>th</sup>.
- The Highway 16 Administration building renovation is moving forward. Staff has been moved upstairs where there are new lights, carpet and paint.
- Barry Gullet introduced Andy Grzynski with CDOT's Planning section. Barry is Andy's mentor through the City's Shared Leadership program.

### **Budget Update**

The annual budgeted amounts for water and sewer are \$90M and \$140M respectively. The first quarter of FY12 is in line with the three year average. Capacity fees collected during the first quarter of FY12 have increased since FY09, with current collections of \$2.7M.

### **Meter Equipment Pilot**

Jim Duke was among three customers in the Peninsula where old faulty transmitters were found. Moisture intrusion or other issues can cause the older transmitters to over-read or under read usage. In the first pilot in the River Run and Hidden Valley subdivisions, the read percentage is 99.5 to 99.8% for meter hourly data collection during drive by; while the read percentage is 100% in the second pilot located in the Faires Farm and Peninsula subdivisions. Both piloted transmitters passed the 10 day bucket test (underwater for 10 days and then attempt to read). Utilities is looking at a migration path from AMR (drive-by technology) to AMI (fixed network). The pilot transmitters that are currently being studied are migratory so they can adapt to the AMI style. The pilot study allows the utility to gain additional operational information that will help form a better long term strategy. Utilities will begin crafting an RFP for a long-term meter strategy that will likely issue in 2012.

### **Performance Management**

The Utilities Customer Service Division (CSD) receives 25,000 service orders per month, with the data being maintained by two workgroups. To help enhance the service to customers, all data is being moved to one area which will be reviewed by the Performance Team. Another group that was formed is the Customer Account Advocacy workgroup, which will help with escalated customers. CSD developed a training program for all employees, with certification given at the completion of the training. Currently, CSD has 609 high bill inspections backlogged. The delinquency fee was increased from \$32 to \$58 on July 1, 2011 to help recover costs of sending field techs out to turn off/on water service. 311 receives approximately 40,000 Utilities-related phone calls per month.

### **Miscellaneous**

Jim Duke inquired about CMUD having the ability to control Duke Energy's raising and lowering of lakes. CMUD, along with Duke Energy and almost all Catawba River users, are members of the Drought Management Advisory Group (DMAG) which helps determine the best course of action for the region depending on current conditions and future forecasts. Most of the same members of DMAG are also members of the Catawba-Wateree Water Management Group (CWWMG) which is an incorporated entity that works with Duke Energy to make the Catawba River last longer. Duke Energy has a FERC license which controls the lake levels.

Adjourned at 4:32 pm  
Karen L. Baldwin