MINUTES
City Council Public Works & Utilities Committee

Wednesday, April 3, 2024 – 3:30 PM
City Council Chambers

Members Present:	Mac Morrow, Chair, Council Member Lauren Wise, Vice-Chair, Council Member Owen Carson, Citizen Member Mayor Maureen Copelof, Ex-Officio
Staff Present:	Wilson Hooper, City Manager Dean Luebbe, Finance Director Wesley Shook, Acting Public Works Director Dennis Richardson, Water Treatment Plan Supervisor Emory Owen, Wastewater Treatment Plant Supervisor Aaron Winans, WWTP Staff Alex Shepherd, Assistant to the City Manager Becky McCann, Communications Coordinator
Guests:	Bryan Wright, AECOM; Harvey Sankey; Glendon Fetterolf, John Brinkley, and Ross Stroud of CDM Smith; Kevin Laird of GMC Engineering; David DePratter, Steve Barbian, Tom Vollmar, and Matt Broderick of KCI

A. Welcome and Call to Order

Committee Chair Mac Morrow called the meeting to order at 3:30 pm.

B. Certification of Quorum

Assistant to the City Manager Alex Shepherd certified that a quorum was present.

C. Approval of Agenda

Motion by Mr. Carson, seconded by Mr. Wise to approve the agenda as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

D. Approval of Minutes

1. March 6, 2024

Motion by Mr. Carson, seconded by Mr. Wise to approve the minutes of the March 6, 2024 meeting as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

2. March 13, 2024 Special Meeting

Motion by Mr. Wise, seconded by Mr. Carson to approve the minutes of the March 13, 2024 special meeting as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

E. WWTP Engineering Firm Selection

Mr. Hooper provided a recap of the process that the committee has followed so far. He stated that we have heard presentations from four engineering firms, and a few weeks ago, we met to discuss the qualifications of each firm. Each committee member had a rubric where they ranked each firm in different categories, but we did not compile those because I believe the committee needed to come to a consensus. Mr. Hooper said his goal for today is to ask clarifying questions to two of the firms we originally interviewed, KCI and CDM Smith, and then have another discussion about who we would like to go with. We also have a representative from a third firm in the room in case the committee has any clarifying questions for them as well.

Mr. Fetterolf from CDM Smith answered the questions that the committee gave him in advance. He said they use a hypothetical inflow growth of 2% to forecast future flows. He stated that there has been a significant difference in BOD and TSS data six years after the 2013 report was conducted. Mr. Fetterolf said we gave you three layouts: one on the existing site, one across the street from the WWTP, and one at the Davidson River Village. We discussed federal funding opportunities and BRIC funding.

Mr. Wise asked about the pitfalls of projecting 50 years.

Mr. Fetterolf said we would go back and look 20 years ago at flow data and look at future economic development, and we would probably recommend performing the analysis in 20-year blocks and then re-evaluating the projections every 5 to 10 years.

Mr. Hooper asked, would you also be able to project large economic development projects if the Davidson River Village ever becomes developed.

Mr. Fetterolf said, we can always go back and change our economic outlook projections. Our model is customizable, and we have low, medium, and high economic growth rates.

Mr. Carson asked, how intensive is the process to collect ammonia and phosphorus data.

Mr. Fetterolf said, to remain on the schedule we have proposed, we would need around 60 to 90 days worth of collection, and we would want to discuss this with plant staff to ensure it's not a burden on them.

Mr. DePratter from KCI addressed the questions that the committee had provided in advance. He explained that the design alternatives were determined based on the availability of serviceable equipment and recent investments in the plant, which would be valuable to retain. Regarding funding options, he mentioned considerations such as building on the existing site or creating a regional system, but emphasized the need for a cost opinion and a clear direction before seeking funding. Mr. DePratter noted that with more advanced waste treatment systems, the existing site could likely accommodate 8 to 10 MGD.

Mr. Wise inquired about the challenges of projecting 50 years into the future.

Mr. DePratter acknowledged the difficulty of such long-term predictions but highlighted the importance of considering potential economic and residential developments. He assured that the model would be designed with flexibility to accommodate future changes.

Mr. Hooper raised a question about the reliability of newer technologies for achieving high MGD treatment levels.

Mr. DePratter explained that many of these technologies have undergone testing and are considered reliable and adaptable, with the possibility of retrofitting the treatment plant for additional MGD if needed.

Mr. Morrow asked about the differences in sludge management with these technologies.

Mr. Vollmar stated that there is not a significant variation among the treatment technologies in terms of sludge management.

Mr. Winans inquired about performing wet weather permitting in North Carolina.

Mr. Vollmar admitted that they have limited experience with wet weather permitting in the state due to the scarcity of such systems. However, he expressed their intention to pursue this avenue, although it cannot be guaranteed.

Mr. Morrow emphasized that a decision did not need to be made immediately and expressed interest in analyzing the assessments further.

Mr. Laird from GMC Engineering said that his firm has extensive experience with greenfield plants and mentioned their involvement in implementing the first Nereda process in the United States.

F. Public Comment

Mr. Hooper asked if the committee would be able to meet through out the Summer because there is a lot of work to be done.

The committee said they would look at their calendars to ensure they could meet at their regular time throughout the Summer.

G. Set Date for Next Meeting

The next regular meeting of the Public Works & Utilities Committee was scheduled for Wednesday, May 1, 2024 at 3:30 p.m.

H. Adjourn

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 5:03 p.m.

Minutes Approved: May 1, 2024

X

Mac Morrow
Chair, Council Member

X

Alex Shepherd
Assistant to the City Manager