

**MINUTES  
TECHNICAL COMMITTEE MEETING  
FAIRFIELD JOINT WATER SEWER SYSTEM  
JUNE 20, 2023**

**Present:** Kyle Crager, Chairman; Jason Taylor, Laura Johnson, Robert Arndt.

**Others Present:** C.D. Rhodes, Tommy Morgan, Scott Elliott, Donald Prioleau, Heath Cookendorfer, John McMeekin, Peggy Swearingen, Clarence Gilbert, Patti Davis.

The Fairfield Joint Water Sewer Service Technical Committee met on June 20, 2023, at 6:00 p.m. at the Midlands Technical College Fairfield Campus. In accordance with the South Carolina Code of Laws, 1976, Section 30-4-80 (e), as amended, the following persons and/or organizations have been notified of the time, date and location of this meeting: The Independent Voice of Blythewood and Fairfield, The Country Chronicle and other individuals associated with distribution lists for the Town of Winnsboro, Fairfield County and the Town of Ridgeway.

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

Chairman Crager called the Technical Committee Meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. Chairman Crager proposed that the meeting be conducted in the format of a hearing, to allow for open dialogue and questions/discussions between the Committee Members, Mr. Bingham and members of the governing bodies who have members on the Commission, including Ridgeway, the Town and the County. The draft Technical Analysis has been posted today to the County's website as well as the Town's website and is available for public review. The agenda is short; however, this could parlay into a lengthy conversation.

**2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Motion made by Commissioner Taylor, seconded by Commissioner Johnson, to approve the agenda. ***The motion carried 4-0.***

**3. DISCUSSION OF ALTERNATIVES ANALYSIS**

Chairman Crager stated he will facilitate the conversation tonight. He has his own questions and comments based on his review of the information that was given to the members roughly a week ago. The members have had about a week to review this lengthy document (170 pages). Chairman Crager stated engineers can be direct and blunt at times and forego the pleasantries of neighbors and politics. He pre-emptively apologized to Mr. Bingham as he does not intend for this to happen, but it may. The intent of this Committee is to ask questions, scrutinize the information and try to find the best outcome with the absolute best data available to make the best decision for all members of the Commission and all the governing bodies in the County. Chairman Crager then deferred to the other Committee members for their questions.

- Commissioner Johnson questioned 2 MGD for Cedar Creek with MBR being at \$41.9M and for the Broad with a BNR at \$42.3M. It is her understanding that \$46M was estimated approximately two years ago as an estimate to Dominion, and Mr. Bingham stated this is correct. Commissioner Johnson questioned how the numbers are still so close to the \$46M after two years with price increases. Mr. Bingham stated the scope is different now than it was for the settlement. The length of line and direction and where it is going from and to is different, and there is a section of the line that is part of the Winnsboro and Ridgeway connector project that does not matter on which site the plant is built. The cost for the Dominion settlement included lines and pump stations necessary to go to the Broad River. Since that time, the Winnsboro Connector and the part that goes from Commerce Park to the regional pump station has been separated and is not included in the cost of either plant because it has to be built either way. The length of line in the Dominion settlement was maybe 140,000 feet and now from the regional pump station to the Broad is about 74,000 feet. There are different numbers because there is a different scope. Commissioner Johnson stated she read that regardless of which one we go with, the estimated time of completion would still be November 2027, and Mr. Bingham stated this is correct for both. At this point, there is not a 208 approval nor an NPDS permit. Those are major pieces that must be done, and there are certain decisions that must be made before those can be submitted. Also, the delivery times for equipment and materials is much longer than it has been in the past. The permitting time will be the same for either type of plant. Commissioner Johnson inquired if the Broad would take a little longer because of the distance. Mr. Bingham stated it would not take longer because there would be simultaneous construction. The contractor building the line will not be the same contractor building the plant, and 74,000 feet of pipe should be able to be constructed in 15-16 months with about two years of construction for the treatment plant. For the Broad River option, Commissioner Johnson inquired if it would follow the right-of-way or would eventually cut through private property. Mr. Bingham stated it would primarily follow the right-of-way. He cannot say that there will be no easements, but it will be a limited number. On the Ridgeway Winnsboro connector project, there were a few easements but was primarily kept within the right-of-way. Most of the roads to the Broad are fairly low traveled roads. He does not anticipate a problem being able to keep it in the right-of-way for most of the project. This, however, will not be known until the survey is done.
- Commissioner Taylor inquired concerning Mr. Bingham's statement that the scope of the project had changed as far as the line. He knows the SCIIP grant was sought in order to run the line down Peach, however,

will this cost have to be added back in to be able to actually provide service from the plant to the industrial park, which is a main objective with the industrial parks not having sufficient capacity and being able to open up the 77 corridor. Mr. Bingham stated from the regional pump station at Devil's Racetrack and Peach to Commerce is part of the Winnsboro connector project. Mr. Taylor stated two SCIIP grants were applied for and one was not funded; therefore, this funding will need to be added back in for the future either to the connector project or the sewer plant project. In order to provide service to the industrial parks, Commissioner Taylor surmised that the \$10M would have to be added back into one project or the other. Mr. Bingham agreed but stated it would not be the whole \$10M. The Ridgeway connector piece was about \$11M, and the piece going to Commerce was around \$5M. The line along Peach Road near Commerce Park to go from there back to Cedar Creek is in the Cedar Creek plant, and the line to go from the regional pump station to the Broad River is in the Broad River plant. Commissioner Taylor stated to go the Broad River, it is a necessity to put that line in. For the Cedar Creek option, the territory could be opened up without that being a necessity to be put in immediately. Chairman Crager also agreed with this statement, and this is one of his highlighted points. His opinion is that if the Broad River discharge location was not an option and we were forced to go to a different location, we would not have the analysis tailored the way it is. There is some cost in the connector project that favors the Broad River option, and it does not appear to be reflected in the current draft. If the Cedar Creek discharge was the only potential location and service had to be provided to the Devil's Racetrack parcel, a single small pump station would be needed, probably a 6-inch force main coming back toward Cedar Creek. The report with the Winnsboro connector has 18 and 24 inch pipe and stations, and it appears that if the Cedar Creek option only was assessed, it would be done in a different manner. He also does not believe, to capture the existing capacity at the Winnsboro plant, a new route would be opened up back to town, the 321 route. Instead, you would build on the existing infrastructure along 34. Basically, to capture the 500,000 gallon allocation of remaining capacity in town, it would be favorable to run a forced main up Devil's Racetrack and then improve existing infrastructure from 34 back to the plant. This would provide a more cost advantageous solution than the connector project. The difference should be part of the Broad River assessment. Mr. Bingham stated the project is intended to serve most of southern Fairfield County which could have potential connection for Jenkinsville or Lake Monticello. Chairman Crager stated the conversation of Jenkinsville or Lake Monticello, while important to the County-wide master planning, was a revelation in this report. This is the first time he has seen anyone

address providing mass sewer service for development in that part of the County. He found it a little odd, but he understands County-wide master planning. Of course, it would not make sense to collect sewer in Monticello and send it to Cedar Creek when the river is right there and there is an existing NPDS permit for reactors 2 and 3 that Dominion currently possesses. Further, he does not understand why this is being considered or even in the report as a factor. Mr. Bingham inquired how that treatment would ever be provided if not an option. Chairman Crager stated he did not know it was the objective of the County as a priority to focus on that area. He thought the primary area of focus was the 77 corridor and areas toward Blythewood building on where development is actually occurring. Commissioner Johnson inquired if Mr. Bingham was told to include Jenkinsville and Monticello, and Mr. Bingham stated he was. The Committee has changed over the last several years, and the person who was giving him instruction was the County person. He dealt with this person more, and he was the Economic Development Director of the County. Mr. Bingham stated this person was giving him direction. He presented copies of the master plan and instructed him to adhere to that. If that is not the desire of the Fairfield Joint Water and Sewer System, the Joint System needs to confer with the County and decide what is the priority. Commissioner Taylor stated, as shown in the report, Mr. Bingham states the plant needs to be viable as soon as possible, and 250,000 gallons per day is what is needed to make it viable. Mr. Bingham stated this is as low as he would feel comfortable with in order to operate, given the plant will be sized for 2 MG per day. Commissioner Taylor stated the plant then needs to serve an area where it would get a return as quickly as possible. He would argue the point again that 77 and the industrial parts are where the more immediate return would be, and getting the plant to where it would be self-sustaining is critical.

- Chairman Crager stated Mr. Bingham has plans for 2, 4 and 6 expansions, phases 1, 2 and 3. To his knowledge, there is not a waste load allocation for 6 at either location. Mr. Bingham stated this is correct. Chairman Crager further stated the comprehensive nature of the plan to eventually expand to 6 MG is a very long bridge to get there. Comparatively speaking, our neighbors to the north, Chester County, operate three plants all with creek discharges, 600,000 gallons a day, 780,000 gallons a day and 1.3 MG per day. They have been very successful in growing and garnering economic investment with this incremental approach. They are now approaching capacity and planning some larger efforts for a regional plant because they finally have the growth to get there; however, it has taken a number of years. Comparing community-wise, Fort Mill has a 3 MG a day community, Camden has recently expanded and is in the neighborhood of 4, all of

Richland County utilities at their plant on the Broad River is 6, the City of Manning is 5MG, with the point being while he understands being extremely comprehensive and plan the entire outlay for the next 40 years, he is not sure it addresses the urgency and may be too big of a pill to swallow. He is of the opinion that a more incremental step approach is better and would put us in a much better situation in the next 10-15 years versus a comprehensive 6-8 MG plant.

- The discharge limits for the two waste load allocation letters for the 2 MG are very similar. Chairman Crager then discussed this in more detail. To the point in the report in Section 6-2, it is stated that the BNR plant in Cayce far supersedes the waste load parameters of Cedar Creek with the exception of phosphorous and metals not defined in the letter. The question is could we go as far at this stage, and if so how, and if not why not, to perform the toxicity effluent dispersion model and get DHEC to better define what that would look like at the Cedar Creek option so we would know if a BNR plant could potentially work there or if we are forced to use the membrane filter plant. Is that a possible effort for DHEC to further define? Mr. Bingham stated they would potentially further define it, but with no dilution, he does not think we would do a lot better than what is listed. Commissioner Crager stated if they were to define the other metal parameters and the phosphorous parameter, would we know absolutely at that point that we have to do membranes. Mr. Bingham stated the membranes will not address the metals. Further, Chairman Crager stated in Mr. Bingham's effort and the 2018/19 effort, the automatic assumption is that membranes are required at Cedar Creek discharge location. He would like a little edification as to where is that concrete evidence. Mr. Bingham stated if there is the correct influent, it would be able to meet the parameters. The problem is there will not be a whole lot of cushion. Commissioner Taylor inquired if this is something that is primarily associated with industrial development or any effluent. Chairman Crager stated this would be industrial related, and Section 2-3 discusses the pre-treatment program and how we would have more flexibility to potentially relax the requirements at the Broad River location. He takes some exception with this and believes firmly in stewardship. Regardless of where the discharge is, we should hold our industrial discharges to the same high-quality standard regardless of where they are located. He does not feel we want to have bad actors as industrial users and to make that a consideration of our ability to relax the pre-treatment program. Mr. Bingham stated the nature of industrial pre-treatment and discharges is that things happen that are not considered.
- Chairman Crager stated at the end of section 2-5, there was an indication that public opinion and other dischargers may alter the course of being able to get this plant permitted. While this is in all likelihood a

reality, he is of the opinion that it should not factor the engineering outcome of the assessment and should not alter the engineering perspective. Whichever solution wins the day, this is why from the engineering perspective.

- There is a section on septicity of the Broad River option and conveyance line with corrosion and odor being the only concerns. Chairman Crager inquired if this is really the only concern. Mr. Bingham stated this is correct. Chairman Crager discussed this in further detail, and Mr. Bingham stated there have been no problems in Lexington. Commissioner Taylor inquired concerning lime buildups and if this is a problem. Chairman Crager stated he has not used lime in his experience and instead has been ozone or nitrogen-based additives. The nitrogen-based additives are on the way out because nitrogen is being monitored at discharge locations a lot tighter than in the past. A lot of the impetus of moving away from lime to ozone or nitrogen-based additives was because of the cost prohibitive nature of lime. Chairman Crager further discussed the estimated cost to treat per thousand for lime in the report, and it warrants mentioning that cost to treat has some annual operating O&M. This did not jump out of him when reading the report, and this would be around \$75,000 per year. We need to really take a look at what this cost is, how it is projected, how we got to that estimate and then make sure it is accounted for in the assessment of that option. Mr. Bingham stated the numbers are included, but he cannot tell where it is at this point. Chairman Crager stated he did not scrutinize costs included in the annual outlay document because of the small print. He did want to make sure that septicity treatment cost has been considered. Also, he could not find the O&M costs of the conveyance system from some point, whether it be regional pump station as currently outlined or Walter Brown I or Jackson Creek Plant or Megasite, wherever that may be. He does not see accounted for what he presumes is a very large O&M cost over the life of the Broad River option. He inquired what Mr. Bingham typically uses for annual O&M of pipelines, per foot or per mile. Mr. Bingham stated he does not have a specific number that applies to everything. Chairman Crager stated he has seen some clients use as little as .75 a foot per year, EPA gives guidance of \$2 to \$6 per foot, so when we talk about one option versus the other and one option has 15-20 more miles of linear infrastructure with that option versus this option, then you have 80-100,000 feet of pipe that has an O&M cost with it annually. If that is \$1 per foot, or even worse \$2 per foot, that is a six-digit sum (\$150,000 to \$200,000) annually that would need to be factored in over the course of the project. This would be \$10M to \$20M worth of O&M costs for having all the extra linear infrastructure. He is not saying this will skew the results one way or the

other, but he does not see this cost in the report, and this is a large financial liability.

- Since comparisons were made to Cayce, Chairman Crager requested Mr. Bingham to give the impetus for the regional plan in Cayce and how it was consolidated to get to the need for the plant. Mr. Bingham stated the impetus was basically that there was a tremendous number of satellite systems discharging into tributaries and directly into the Saluda River. The goal ultimately was to get rid of all those discharges to the creeks and get rid of everything going out of the Saluda transferring all to Cayce. When he started in the mid 90s, it took 15-20 years to finally get it all connected. Chairman Crager inquired if it would be fair to say that there were a number of smaller plants, possibly in disrepair, failing or capacity strapped. Mr. Bingham stated there was some of all of this. Chairman Crager stated there are only two known flows in our instance, one being Ridgeway, who has a total of 120,000 flow and current capacity of 60,000. The Cayce plant was based on a number of known flows, locations and plants with baseline flow to design around and not much concern that Cayce would invest a great deal of infrastructure to a plant far away from all these areas and not having flow to feed it. Therefore, Chairman Crager does not feel it is apples to apples from there to here. We have two plants that are not at capacity but approaching that, but then we have a great volume of speculative flow, and we do not know how this will develop. He feels it is extremely risky to use the Cayce model without more known and identifiable flows.
- On the order of costs, Chairman Crager stated he flipped through the 15-20 pages of costs. He feels the costs are generally low in this environment, but that may change next year. If they are low, then all the member agencies need to understand that there is liability for cost overrun. It does not appear to him that both alternatives were assessed in a vacuum independent of each other. Commissioner Taylor inquired concerning the pipe costs and feels that 17 and 15 seemed a little low. Mr. Bingham stated BNR at \$15 per gallon sounds right.

At this point, Chairman Crager invited comment from member agencies.

- Mayor McMeekin commented concerning the discussion of the time limit for the NPDS permits which are out there. To be sure there is no confusion, we do not have a request for those permits at this time. Those are other projects. Nothing can be done until permits are received.
- Council Member Gilbert questioned concerning the terrain and nature of Fairfield County with some areas having the granite and would this not affect the completion of going to the Broad River. Mr. Bingham stated this could have some affect. The line has been bored for the

Ridgeway/Winnsboro connector line, and thus far, no rock has been found but for right at the connection to the Jackson Creek Plant. Generally, you can get in without having to get into too much rock. Chairman Crager stated he generally agrees with the forced main being typically trench depth less than 6 feet. The ability is there to move horizontally and can typically be avoided. With there being a lot of forced main, the risk is still there but it is less.

- Council Member Swearingen inquired if these estimates are from two years ago, and if so, have prices not increased. Also, she requested clarification concerning the comment made at a prior meeting concerning waiting until a recession. Mr. Bingham stated the prices in this report are not from two years ago, and these are prices that were estimated this year with the assumption that contractors can be found today. The reference to a recession is that many times governmental bodies are resistant to do any work during a recession. The point is that this is the best and wisest time to spend government money, and you cannot be scared of that. There is a concern that we are headed into a recession, and the natural tendency is to do nothing. However, it is really the best time because you can get more done for the dollars spent during this period of time versus other times. The concern right now is that with the SCIIP grant money, with it being so much, that the value of the work could be skewed. Mayor McMeekin stated he agrees that some of the greatest opportunities in his life have been with other people paralyzed in fear during recessions. Being able to move when an opportunity comes is the time to move. We never know if a recession is going to happen, but you cannot be afraid to move when it does. Mr. Bingham further stated speaking on how much per gallon is the convenient metric to use and is like saying how much does a house cost at \$40 a square foot or \$100 a square foot. It depends on what you have in the house, which is the same discussion regarding the wastewater treatment plant. It depends on what is put inside and how smart you are. He has seen two plants the same size and one cost twice as much as the other. The headwork structure is the most complex structure in the plant. Everything else can be kept simple and contractors can have multiple crews working alongside of each other instead of on top of each other. This would make things go easier and be reflected in the cost. Chairman Crager stated he appreciates that perspective, and his only concern in making that our approach is the great deal of speculative flow that we are planning for is all built around growth. When we get in that recessed environment, we will not see any of that growth during that period. If this approach is taken, we will be dealing with the existing flows we have and planning for 10-15 years down the line once recovery occurs. Mr.



Bingham stated everything in the report is saying this will not be done until the need for the flow has been demonstrated. The problem or challenge with industrial focus is one facility could need 1MG a day with only one facility.

- Mayor Cookendorfer inquired concerning yearly increases and the ability to see scarcity of any type of needed product. Mr. Bingham stated there is a factor included for escalating costs from year to year, but he is not sure what is being referred to as scarcity. Mayor Cookendorfer is speaking of things such as pipe or anything like this. Mr. Bingham stated most of the materials are pretty straightforward. Chairman Crager gave the example of switch gears that are taking about 450 days, and he feels the schedule is probably realistic due to the nature of plant materials, mostly electrical components. Mr. Bingham stated generators are a two-year lead time. Council Member Swearingen questioned if the cost can really be known because substantial unknown amounts could be added. Mr. Bingham stated this is his best estimate based on what he can do today. The cost will be unknown until it is actually bid. Part of the challenge is that there is a lot of work coming out. If there are many bidders, the price will be good. However, if there is only one bidder, it will not be a very good deal. It will depend on how appealing the job is. Chairman Crager stated this is largely the reason why he did not spend a lot of time scrutinizing the costs as we cannot control the future. His comments concerning how big the plant needs to be were part of the basis for his reasoning. We are talking estimates of \$42M or \$44M and we know what the County in the settlement has allocated. There is no margin for error by taking this full approach. In his mind, a smaller more incremental process may provide the needed buffer for cost escalation two years from now when this would be ready for bid. Mayor McMeekin we must bear in mind that we need to be prepared and do a thorough investigation. We must take certain risks regardless, but we want to avoid another nuclear plant fiasco. All through the process, we are trying to think this out very carefully.

Chairman Crager apologized to Mr. Bingham for the process, and from most perspectives, it probably seems that he has a foregone conclusion of his opinion. This is not the case. The 18 and 19 efforts were performed with the existing PER. He does not have his original copy that also had many questions. The preliminary engineering report for the Cedar Creek option was no where near as comprehensive of an effort as this. There were more questions than answers at times, and it did not give a suitable amount of time to alternatives. This was a bit of a biased recommendation for one option, and everyone in this room is interested in knowing what the best solution is. We were hoping to

get there with this effort. Chairman Crager stated in his opinion we are not there yet for some of the reasons discussed tonight, and he hopes this document does not get put to the side as biased for the other option. Collectively, everyone still sits in the middle looking for someone to give them an objective review of both alternatives, or all six, and make what is abundantly clear an objective recommendation. Today, he does not feel that this effort was fully objective. He still remains, as he hopes everyone else does, with no preconceived assumptions of one option versus the other. He just wants the facts to rule the day. Mayor McMeekin stated his mind is not made up either, and he is being totally objective. You are neither right or wrong because others agree with you. Instead, you are right because the facts are correct and your reasoning is sound.

#### **4. RECOMMENDATIONS CONCERNING ALTERNATIVES ANALYSIS**

Chairman Crager stated the first recommendation would be to have more time to dig into the report. He struggled at trying to digest about 25 pages per night. Commissioner Taylor inquired if there is a way to cut through the bias of the prior reports. Chairman Crager stated this thought crossed his mind. We have studied this relentlessly, and it has been a number of years to get to this point. Administrations have changed and the players have changed, and the direction Mr. Bingham has been given has probably changed a couple of times. Mr. Bingham stated two years ago he was told to go to the Broad River, and all of this was determined during this period of time. Commissioner Taylor stated engineering and facts should drive this instead of politics. We could have a nonbiased third party who is not interested in getting the work in the future to assess and evaluate the facts. Chairman Crager believes this is the best path forward. This would need to be a nonlocal, disinterested review by an outsider who specializes in this as a rural wastewater masterplan. It has been called a PER a number of times, but it is really a planning level document with the engineering component of one treatment plan versus the other. Commissioner Johnson's opinion is that this started about two years ago, and we have gone round and round. The County has already spent well over \$1.4M to \$1.8M. Now, we are talking about going another route, and we are digging into the \$46M. The County needs to be reimbursed for all these costs, and every time we switch gears, it is costing the County. If American Engineering was trusted enough two years ago to be contracted with and to do the work, then she questions if we are doubting it now with the information that has been given. Also, he has been tugged and pulled on going in different directions. That is not his fault, and he has been doing what he has been told to do. Also, at the same time, when he is told something, it costs the County more money. She has been into this for about five months, and it is to a point that we need to sit down and have deep discussions and make a decision.

When it comes to the price, she knows there will need to be a contingency built in. Whichever is decided upon, a contingency will have to be built in and other fundings will have to be sought. She feels we are at a point that we are still stalling, and after two years, we are still finding other avenues to go. She is making these comments but is still considering that everyone is working together. We just need to make a decision and stick together on it. If we can put some type of trust in the numbers, that would be good. She understands about being a little biased, but she does not feel Mr. Bingham was technically being biased so much as he was doing what he was told to do and that was to focus on the Broad. The SCIIP Grant was for the Broad. The original contract with him and then the additional contract told him to focus on the Broad. She feels he chose what he thought would be the best option including for future growth. Concerning Monticello and Jenkinsville, she does not believe anyone should be left out. If they are included, it will give those areas opportunities for growth as well. Chairman Crager stated he would not consider a third-party review of what has been performed to date between this, the 18 effort and even the 15 Hazen effort as taking away from any effort of Mr. Bingham or moving design services and planning services to this other entity. He would envision just a blind third-party professional opinion concerning the reports. This would have a cost associated with it, but he would not anticipate it being anywhere of the magnitude of what has been spent to date. Maybe the deliverable of that effort is back to American that says this assessment needs these certain gaps filled in, a gap analysis, rerun your assessment with the gaps filled in and find if that affects your life cycle cost of each alternative. At the end of the day, this is what we are really looking at, the full life cycle cost of the 40-year sewer master plan. Most everyone in the room is concerned with cost liability, and he does not think this will be a herculean effort for a blind review and should not be too time consuming. Chairman Crager stated Commissioner Johnson mentioned we are two years into this, but we are really four years into it, but more closely to six or seven years. He is not trying to make light that this has drug out for a number of years, but there is still a group of folks that feel some of the tugs and pulls that have occurred over the years have forced Mr. Bingham down a path on some of it, and it may not have given the assessment of one alternative versus the other in a true vacuum that says this is the most probable and realistic conclusion. Then, we must choose what to do with that information. Mr. Bingham inquired how this would affect the SCIIP grant projects with the Winnsboro/Ridgeway connector, because they are to the point that the construction permitted is being submitted, and there is also a meeting this week. Chairman Crager stated the connector project as currently scoped to say that it has to go that way, whether you build the plant over here or the plant over there, is not a true statement. The question exists in his mind if RIA will be absolute with their opinion of no scope changes. We need to realize the capacity in the Winnsboro plant. How we do that could be achieved a number of different ways. What the Commission and

member agencies do on Thursday, he cannot comment on. Mayor McMeekin stated the meeting is on Thursday, and timelines will be given. You should never accept someone's word and build upon it. You should check everything out first until you are satisfied. His responsibility is to Fairfield County and the citizens, and his reasoning will be sound. As a professional at this state, Chairman Crager stated he is trying to remove himself from stating what gap analysis needs to be completed. Commissioner Johnson stated she would recommend this be taken back to the Commission, and she can talk to her Council Members as well. Commissioner Taylor inquired of the time frame for the other review. Commissioner Crager stated the engineering market is experiencing the same choke hold with all the ARPA dollars nationwide, and everybody is incredibly busy. He would think a 120-to-150-hour review would be a suitable amount of time for an experienced professional to review the documents prepared to date. This should be three to four weeks of effort; however, when it could be finalized is the question. Commissioner Taylor stated he hates to spend the time or the money, but his fear is, with some of the questions that have been brought up, if it goes out to bid and comes in a lot higher, then we have to back up and take more time. This is Chairman Crager's ultimate concern as well, with this bidding out as a \$75M to \$85M project and have a \$30M delta someone will have to fund. That liability perspective is the ultimate concern. The recommendation on the table from this Committee Meeting would be that at the next Joint Commission meeting, scheduled for this coming Tuesday, the Commission consider deployment of a third party disinterested review of the reports prepared to date and that member agencies consider that effort and cost as well. Chairman Crager made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Johnson, to forward for consideration of the whole Commission deployment of a disinterested review. ***The motion carried 4-0.*** Mayor McMeekin stated he has heard rumors of member agencies ganging up against one another, and this is spurious logic and reasoning. This will not happen because we are going to work together. The only way to prevent it is to have people of integrity on the commission. He believes we have this, and we will work together and do what is best for the County. Commissioner Taylor stated whatever this third party comes up with, we need to all pledge that we will commit to that and move forward.

## 5. ADJOURN

At 7:32 p.m., it was moved by Commissioner Johnson, seconded by Commissioner Arndt, to adjourn. ***The motion carried 4-0.***

PATTI L. DAVIS  
SECRETARY

KYLE CRAGER  
CHAIRMAN