

**MINUTES
TECHNICAL COMMITTEE MEETING
FAIRFIELD JOINT WATER SEWER SYSTEM
JANUARY 23, 2024**

Present: Kyle Crager, Chairman; Jason Taylor, Robert Arndt, Commissioners.

Absent: Laura Johnson

The Fairfield Joint Water Sewer System's Technical Committee met on January 23, 2024, at 5:00 p.m. at 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 5:10 p.m.

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Chairman Crager stated as of yesterday, a request was received from American Engineering to not participate in this meeting, so this time slot from 5:00 to 5:30 will be removed from the agenda. Motion made by Commissioner Taylor, seconded by Commissioner Arndt, to approve the agenda with this change. ***The motion carried 3-0.***

3. LETTER OF INTENT QUESTION PERIOD FOR INTERESTED FIRMS

Chairman Crager stated the intent for tonight's meeting is to make the Committee available, along with members of the organizations involved, for a question-and-answer session with interested firms in the upcoming RFQ. There were individual time slots for the two firms that requested to be present, to include American Engineering at 5:00 p.m. and Goodwyn, Mills, Cawood at 5:30 p.m. **With the agenda now amended to remove American Engineering, Chairman Crager recessed the meeting at 5:12 p.m.**

A. American Engineering – See above.

Chairman Crager called the meeting to order at 5:33 p.m. after being recessed. Chairman Crager stated the intent for the meeting tonight is for the firm to ask questions of the Committee, and they will in turn answer as

best they can. Committee Members introduced themselves and turned the floor over to the firm.

- B.** Goodwyn, Mills, Cawood – Present for Goodwyn, Mills, Cawood were Tyler Morgan (Engineering Manager for South Carolina located in Greenville), Ed Saxon (retired General Manager with Beaufort Water and Sewer Authority about four years ago and now working with the firm as a consultant) and Kevin Laird (runs Engineering Group company-wide). Chairman Crager stated there are a number of interested parties in attendance, both elected and general population.

Mr. Morgan thanked the Committee for the opportunity to attend tonight. The firm has submitted a Letter of Interest. They have a lot of experience with very similar projects, and they are very excited about this project. The following are some questions the firm has concerning the project:

- Anticipated schedule and date to go online – Chairman Crager will default this question to some of the other interested parties, but there is a great deal of urgency in the area with the presence of Scout Motors and the accompanying economic development. A realistic time-frame on the current path is to have an operable facility and system in the 27-29 horizon. It is understood there is a lot of heavy lifting to do, and this is probably 4-5 years out. Mr. Morgan stated in looking at staffing projection, the firm wanted to have an understanding if the project is a first quarter this year type of selection process or a third quarter. As far as the solicitation itself, Chairman Crager stated it would probably not be first quarter and is not eminent. Mr. Morgan believes the document the firm responded to mentioned submitting an LOI and inquired if the authority would solicit just those firms or will it again be publicly advertised. Chairman Crager believes the intent is to publicly advertise to all interested parties.
- Decision making – Mr. Morgan inquired if the Committee or other stakeholders would be the decision makers. Chairman Crager stated there are many other stakeholders involved, and the Selection/Review Committee for the RFQ has not been set.
- Life of the project – Mr. Morgan knows there are some funds set aside for the facility and questioned if there has been any thought to any shortfall balance and how this would be funded, such as grants or bonding. Chairman Crager stated this is a point of common conversation with what that delta would end up being. A great deal of time has been spent in polling various resources to make this determination and what it might ultimately be. Mr. Morgan stated it is a benefit not to have an ARPA deadline, and

contractors will be very interested coming in on the back end of this. Chairman Crager stated the hope is also that the price escalation will cease. Mr. Morgan stated he believes there will be a lot of opportunities for funding with everybody working together.

- Collection – Mr. Morgan inquired if the intent is to direct the flow from the Mega Site to the new facility once it is online. Chairman Crager stated the current scope of work primarily exists from a point in infrastructure yet to be built, conveying from there to the ultimate determined discharge site through the treatment process. Mr. Morgan inquired if selection of the site would be in the consultant's scope. Commissioner Taylor stated the County and the Town are working together with the County primarily taking the lead, and they have identified some potential sites that would be appropriate for the location of the plant. Property has not been acquired yet. Mr. Morgan stated this inquiry was to work toward building the best team possible.
- Waste load allocation – Mr. Morgan inquired if this would be provided at the point an engineer is appointed. Chairman Crager stated allocation has not been approved yet, and the County retains a couple of approved waste load allocations at different discharge locations. Chairman Crager believes there are a total of three, and Commissioner Taylor stated this was given about 2-1/2 to 3 years ago. Mr. Morgan inquired if there are any PER's available publicly to review. Chairman Crager stated there have been some efforts in the past, but he cannot speak to whether these are publicly available. He does know the most recent effort was posted publicly intentionally for transparency. Mr. Morgan stated if the RFQ or RFP is posted, it would be available at that time. Chairman Crager will speak with Counsel and Procurement Managers to know whether or not this can be done. Mr. Saxon inquired how to access this. After discussion, this can be sent to the firm. Mr. Morgan stated they have been involved with a lot of new facilities recently and asked if there was an idea if a lab would be involved. Commissioner Taylor deferred this question to Mr. Wright and inquired what would be best. Mr. Wright stated the Winnsboro Plant can do the lab work at its facility if needed. However, it would be better to have it on site to do process control testing and those types of things. There is a certain amount of holding time required for these tests, so the preference would be for this to be on site. Chairman Crager stated it might be in everyone's best interest to reserve the right to co-locate those lab facilities to potentially save in scope and cost for a period of time.

- Technology – Mr. Morgan inquired of the technology with the current facility. Mr. Wright stated the Town has a standard air setup and tertiary treatment with triple buffer. The process works fine and is meeting limits. Mr. Wright has run other types of plants, and he feels this will depend on discharge limits of the discharge site and what process will be used to treat. Mr. Morgan stated there are a lot of technologies, and it is important to be sure everyone is on the same page about what will be the end result. Mr. Morgan inquired concerning the amount of flow that could immediately go to the new facility, and he feels this will influence the type of technology. Commissioner Taylor stated initially it will be very low flow going to the new plant. Mr. Morgan further inquired if the intent is to take a few pump stations that are going to the existing plant and re-route them. Chairman Crager stated this is correct, and there has been an arbitrary threshold established of targeting 300,000 as the point where the switch is flipped and moved to the new facility.
- Mr. Morgan stated he has seen a lot of success, given the volatility of the market, with alternative delivery and questioned if this would be something procurement would allow or be something of interest. Chairman Crager stated this would be of interest. All parties of the member agencies do not have a lot of experience with this as it is a newly formed organization. Mr. Morgan inquired if the commission would be interested in something like construction manager at-risk or along these lines. Commissioner Taylor stated there would be interest in this method. Mr. Morgan stated he believes this would be of great value to know the budget ahead of the day to break ground. Mr. Morgan stated he can see a lot of thought has been put into this project, which is a big undertaking. Finding the right partners is extremely important, both consultant and construction.
- Mr. Laird inquired, looking back from 2030, what would a successful project look like. Commissioner Arndt stated an optimal product, and Commissioner Taylor added that it should be easy to maintain and operate with manageable costs. This is about promoting growth in the County, and every day the plant is not built is a day of lost opportunity to attract potential industries and spin-offs from Scout and/or housing. Chairman Crager stated it will be important to keep everyone in the room happy and deliver a good product with everyone working together to achieve the objectives of why this organization was formed five or six years ago, which is consolidation of resources and utilities. Mr. Wright stated in the end the plant must work and meet the limits with keeping the costs down. Chairman Crager stated at the end,

we should also all be proud of the project. Decorative aspects will probably end up being passed on for the functionality that is sought by everyone. Mr. Laird stated the group has done a lot of greenfield wastewater and water plants in the last few years in South Carolina from Laurens County to Aiken to Walhalla to Pickens, which is a joint authority much like this. A project in the City of Commerce, Georgia, is also very similar. A massive SK Battery plant was built, similar to the Scout situation, and they had a lot of growth going on as a result. GMC is designing a greenfield wastewater plant for them right now. They will also divert some flow, and GMC did the site selection. They are just beginning to go through the technology discussion with them and the funding discussion as they only have a certain amount of money, and it must be sure to be used in the right way with low maintenance costs. This is a very applicable project to this area. GMC has been working in the State for a long time and no one has an unlimited bucket of money, so finding additional funds is also part of the job.

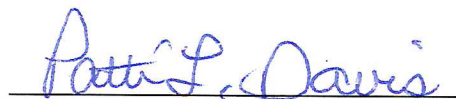
- Mr. Morgan, referring to the handout, stating this was provided to highlight some of GMC's experience, along with some of its employees. It is important to understand phasing and not shortchanging on the front end that will hinder long term. GMC has 72 employees in South Carolina and 74 in Georgia. The treatment group is located in Greenville. There is also staff in Charlotte and Columbia. Within a 60-mile radius, there will be good coverage with experienced people, including licensed operators. When it comes to funding, Mr. Morgan stated this Commission is ahead of the game in a unique position to have funds available. The GMC staff has been very involved with funding agencies across the State. Given this story, Mr. Morgan believes GMC would be a great resource to assist and be an advocate. With the flow that is going to be diverted, this is fairly straightforward and may not need a lot of hydraulic modeling. However, GMC has a modeling group in Greenville as well. The group is very familiar with CMAR, and the majority of projects lately have been CMAR with a lot of contractor relationships. A lot of people are very excited about this project, and these type projects do not come around that often. Mr. Laird added that GMC is a regional firm with a large footprint in the Southeast. They have been around for almost 80 years. The company is about a 650-person firm that is employee owned with staff living in the communities that they serve. He also stated this is a very exciting project that does not come around that often. Greenfield plants are pretty unique. An engineer would be lucky to work on

one of these projects in their career, and GMC has worked on five in the last five years. This is something to say from the technology discussion and also making the plant as expandable as possible with the least amount of up-front costs. It is a big deal to get things right on the front end.

Chairman Crager is thrilled GMC is here today and interested in the project. He then opened the floor to Commissioner Taylor and Commissioner Arndt along with any interested members from the stakeholders. No one had any further questions. Chairman Crager thanked GMC for coming to the meeting tonight.

4. ADJOURN

At 6:03 p.m., it was moved by Commissioner Taylor, seconded by Commissioner Arndt, to adjourn. ***The motion carried 3-0.***



PATTI L. DAVIS
SECRETARY



KYLE CRAGER
CHAIRMAN