



**MINUTES
WORKSESSION
JOINT MEETING OF
FAIRFIELD COUNTY COUNCIL
AND WINNSBORO TOWN COUNCIL
APRIL 16, 2014**

Present:

County Council:

David L. Ferguson, Mary Lynn Kinley, Kamau Marcharia, R. David Brown, Carolyn B. Robinson, J. Milton Pope, Davis Anderson, Shryll Brown

Town Council:

Roger Gaddy, Stan Klaus, Clyde Sanders, Jackie Wilkes, Don Wood, John Fantry

Corps of Engineers:

Dudley Patrick, Pat Rushing, George Ebai

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 Herald-Independent, The State, and Winnsboro Cablevision, and ninety-six other individuals.

1. CALL TO ORDER

At 6:23 P.M., Chairman Ferguson called the County Council meeting to order. Mayor Roger Gaddy called the Town of Winnsboro Council to order.

2. INVOCATION

County Council Member Mary Lynn Kinley led in the Invocation.

3. ITEMS OF DISCUSSION:

A. U. S. Army Corps Of Engineers Pre-Final Submittal Report Of Concept Study Of A Water Supply System For Fairfield County And Analysis Of Water Supply Alternatives For The Town Of Winnsboro

Mr. Patrick opened discussion of Pre-Final Report of water supply needs in Fairfield County by outlining the recommendations as set forth in the Executive Summary:

- Fairfield County, South Carolina partnered with the US Army Corps of Engineers, Charleston District, to conduct a study of the water supply needs in Fairfield County under USACE's Planning Assistance to States (PAS) Program. As part of the effort, USACE also conducted an analysis of the existing water supply system in the Town of Winnsboro.
- The Study included a concept-level analysis of the engineering, environmental, and economic feasibility of establishing a County-wide water supply system which included an array of potential alternatives; a screening of recommended alternatives; a discussion of environmental and permitting issues; a discussion of benefits; and concept-level cost estimates. Concurrently, the Study included an analysis of the engineering, environmental, and economic feasibility of various options for augmenting the water supply system for the Town of Winnsboro; an array of potential alternatives; a screening of recommended alternatives; a discussion of environmental and permitting issues; a discussion of benefits; and concept-level cost estimates.
- The recommended alternative for Fairfield County is to purchase treated water from the Town of Winnsboro that will utilize Winnsboro's connection to the City of Columbia in Blythewood.
- The County would fund construction of a booster pump station near the County line that would pump treated water to serve County demand. This would provide the most cost-effective solution to the County's water supply deficiencies under current and projected demands.
- The estimated cost for this recommended alternative is \$715,000.00.

- The recommended alternative for the Town of Winnsboro is to purchase treated water from the City of Columbia through its existing tie-in at Blythewood through the same potential booster pump station mentioned above. This would provide the most cost-effective solution to the Town's water supply deficiencies under current and projected demands.
- Since the scope of the project would be identical to the scope mentioned previously, the estimated cost remains \$715,000.00.

Questions and Comments:

- Assuming Winnsboro desires a long term wholesale water connection with City of Columbia Went to Columbia.
- Assuming the average daily use of water by a residential account uses 200 gallons per day.
- Two years ago, when in extreme drought in the reservoir. Were down to a 45-day supply. Took 18 months to get a contract. In the initial contract, Columbia said they could cut Winnsboro off at any time, and would not guarantee potable water. Winnsboro rates to Columbia are close to being retail, with no service or lines. Columbia is temporary. Winnsboro needs a permanent supply. Currently, Winnsboro has a customer-base for its water system, with no control because of what Columbia charges for water. Rates were negotiated with Columbia to get it down to something Winnsboro could live with, then Winnsboro had to get more water to handle the Industrial Park.
- One of the things that one worries about competitively is a high user (i.e., if there is an industry that wants to look at Richland or Fairfield) and they are a big water user, and the County is trying to attract them to Fairfield, there is not much leverage to negotiate a water price—Columbia does. Concerned about some of the nuances and what can occur when in a competitive environment for industry. Would be at a major disadvantage and under Columbia's thumb. This was not looked at in this study, and makes Winnsboro dependent on Columbia and less independent and less attractive to industry.
- The Interbasin Transfer that we asked about. Have not seen that yet. If we take water out of the Broad, or vice versa, if we take water out of Wateree, and sewer goes into one or the other, is that going to be considered Interbasin Transfer? If the County decides to put a water plant on Lake Wateree or Broad River, and water is taken out of Wateree and it ends up in treatment and put in the sewer plant that ends up going into the Broad, is that going to be an Interbasin Transfer? If it is, then that eliminates the County from putting a plant on Lake Wateree.
- When discussing major water users, have to think about where the County is as far as wastewater is concerned because anything that is put in has to be taken out. Bringing water in is only half the solution.
- If the County did want to do another water plant, it would need to be on the eastern side of the river.
- Assuming that Winnsboro desires to meet growth in the Town of Ridgeway's water needs through purchasing additional water from the City of Columbia.
- The Corps of Engineers cannot make an assumption as to whether or not the Town of Winnsboro desires to maintain an existing or expand the existing water supply, the Town of Winnsboro's preference is to continue water supply to meet the demand for the Town of Ridgeway.
- Assuming that access to water via the Kennecott Gold Mine Quarry outside of Ridgeway was not a potential source of water.
- The quarry was not considered to be a viable source of water for long term. There was a comment at an earlier meeting about possible source of contaminants in the water supply in the Gold Mine Quarry.
- Trying to get the most recent report on their closure and what they are expecting.

- Assuming that the study should not address using a joint-regional water authority to undertake acquiring water from Lake Monticello or the Broad River.
- What generally has been your experience with water authorities and water purveyors?
- How much growth and how many created customers has this helped the Lake Marion area?
- What was the key factor in determining that Columbia water was the best water deal for the County?
- The Columbia alternative is the most cost-effective alternative to meet the water demands through the projected growth period.
- Years ago, DHEC tried to encourage smaller systems to become part of larger systems for their viability. Did that in any way play a part in your analysis?
- Based on your conclusion, what are the chances of Fairfield applying for and receiving federal money if we decide to do something different from your recommendation?
- Did Marion County Water Authority try to follow that with sewer? Has that spurred any growth or is it too early to tell?
- Has the philosophy changed? Why is it different down there than here? What is the projected population growth?
- This study is still a draft. From this, a follow up needs to occur and additional information needs to be communication between the Town and County Council.
- Where will benchmark be if water tank is expanded?

Citizen Questions:

- What is the projected population growth (i.e., percentage of numbers)? There was a Comprehensive Plan that was out to 2021 done and 2010. Does anybody know the cost of putting the study and plan together?
- What sort of growth rate would it take to necessitate or be more viable than getting water from Columbia? Did we determine a population growth tipping point for Winnsboro and Fairfield to get our own sources? Could we do census analysis to determine tipping point? At what point would we need to seek our own source?

Conclusion:

- A meeting with Congressman Mulvaney's office will be held next week to determine if any grants, etc. would be available.

3. ADJOURN

The meeting was adjourned at 8:08 P.M., upon unanimous approval of the Winnsboro Town Council and Fairfield County Council.

SHRYLL M. BROWN
CLERK TO COUNCIL

DAVID L. FERGUSON, SR.
CHAIRMAN