

**FLUVANNA COUNTY CITIZEN WATER COMMITTEE  
MEETING MINUTES**

**March 25<sup>th</sup>, 2010**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Joe Chesser, Board of Supervisors Representative  
Shelly Wright, Interim County Administrator  
John Robins, Public Works Director  
Vicki Karabinus, Economic Development Director  
Darren Coffey, Planning and Community Development Director  
Roger Smith, Utilities Specialist  
Elizabeth Fortune, Planning Commission Representative  
Alan Batson, Chairman FUSD Advisory Board  
Cole Hunter (for Leighton Cumming), President LMOA  
Robert Flood, President Chamber of Commerce  
Elizabeth Franklin, Chair of Fluvanna Taxpayers Association  
Dennis Holder, Fluvanna Friends of Rural Preservation  
Scott Marshall, Chairman Economic Development Authority  
Stephen Scott, Chairman Economic Development Commission

**ALSO PRESENT:**

Mozell Booker, Fork Union Supervisor  
Pat Groot, County Grants Coordinator  
Bill Hughes  
Neil Phillips  
Adrian Miller  
Keith Smith  
Chris Fairchild  
Erick Gomez

**CALL TO ORDER**

Ms. Shelly Wright, Interim County Administrator, called the meeting of March 25<sup>th</sup>, 2010 to order at 7:00p.m. in the Historic Courthouse of Fluvanna County in Palmyra, Virginia.

**WELCOME & INTRODUCTIONS**

Ms. Wright welcomed the attendees and public, and initiated the introduction of the committee members.

**PURPOSE, TIMEFRAMES AND COMMUNICATIONS:**

Ms. Wright suggested a list of meeting dates at approximately two week intervals beginning on April 1<sup>st</sup> at 7pm in the Historic Courthouse (see attached for final list) and opened discussion on this matter.

After general discussion, the group agreed to the schedule as proposed and that the meetings should proceed regardless of individual member attendance.

Mr. Chesser encouraged the committee members to communicate to their communities/constituencies regarding meeting discussions to propagate the dialogue to a broader audience.

Mr. Scott inquired if the meetings could be recorded. Ms. Wright agreed to look into that possibility.

Ms. Wright gave an overview of the purpose of the committee - better community communication, review of the previous decision process, and initial recommendations for discussion.

The County website will be used to build an email list of interested parties to send routine communications. Conventional media will also be used such as news releases, advertisements, etc. At the end of the process, the community should have a good understanding of the reasoning and rationale behind the decision process and the recommendations that result.

Mr. Holder emphasized the importance of a two way communication process to receive broader public input. Mr. Chesser agreed, but emphasized that the opportunity for participation is as important as the amount of participation.

Mr. Robins suggested that perhaps presentations could be followed by a public hearing style format to invite more participation.

Ms. Fortune offered that Planning Commission work sessions and meetings could be used as a public input mechanism.

Ms. Franklin emphasized the importance of the public input process and that it be a coordinated effort. The general public will need adequate time to absorb this information before being able to give good feedback.

Ms. Wright stated the importance of all of the committee members taking ownership of this process. We will succeed or fail together.

Ms. Fortune asked about the opportunity for public comment at these committee meetings. The committee agreed to have a public comment opportunity at the end of each meeting.

Mr. Batson encouraged the use of the press as well (e.g., advertisements, minutes, summaries, articles).

#### **DISCUSSION OF PROPOSED PROCESS AND TIMELINE:**

Mr. Robins gave a presentation to guide the committee through a discussion on how to proceed, a timeline, general background information, and the proposed objectives.

Step 1: Identify and define the objectives and take those to the Board of Supervisors (BOS).

Step 2: Review previously identified alternative approaches that supply water and address the identified objectives. Take final alternatives to the BOS.

Step 3: Evaluate each alternative using objectives and recommend best alternative(s), hold a town hall meeting (June 15<sup>th</sup>), and take to BOS.

The timeline that was developed is intended to get a final recommendation to the BOS in July.

Mr. Robins gave an overview of the history of Fluvanna's water supply planning (see presentation for details).

Committee members emphasized the importance of identifying any water supply project benefits to the public and for each alternative.

Mr. Robins invited committee members to visit with him one-on-one for a more detailed overview of any aspect of the presented project history or any other project information.

#### **OBJECTIVES :**

Mr. Robins discussed the proposed objectives – communicate well, provide water to the Community Planning Areas, provide water to the schools, provide water to the Fork Union Sanitary District, develop a system that can pay back the county for any general fund support (within a defined period), and keep the general fund obligation as small as possible.

Ms. Fortune raised the issue of the final disposal of water once a supply system is in place. Mr. Robins stated that issue is really a separate conversation, but offered that some preliminary options that could be cost effective include the state prison's sewer system, an existing permitted system in the Better Living Industrial Park, or the Louisa County system in Zion Crossroads.

Mr. Holder and Ms. Fortune emphasized the importance of being cognizant of the cost of the sewerage infrastructure that would be needed, in addition to the water infrastructure. Mr. Robins stated that the water and sewer funds are set up to generate a revenue stream to cover expenses. Those costs will be analyzed as part of the evaluation of the final alternatives.

Ms. Fortune suggested that an objective be to reduce stress on the groundwater table by connecting groundwater systems to the central system (e.g., the schools' use of wells).

Mr. Holder stated that the committee needed to back up and answer four questions – What do we mean by economic development? What are the facts that support we should have economic development? What evidence is there that water is critical to economic development? Why is a pipeline the solution to satisfy that need? Mr. Holder stated that these are questions that exist among members of the public and they should be included in any communications to citizens. Mr. Scott and Mr. Marshall noted that those questions have been discussed throughout the community as a result of the Economic Development Commission's business plan and accompanying public meetings. Ms. Wright reminded the committee of its charter as set forth by the Board and cautioned going beyond the scope of those priorities.

Mr. Chesser emphasized the importance of communicating the information that exists regarding the importance and benefits of economic development to the community. Sharing the Economic Development Commission's "road show" information is important, has been posted on the County's website for some time, and can be linked from the water committee resources area.

The committee discussed the value of identifying other reasons and benefits to the provision of a central water supply.

Mr. Hunter emphasized the importance of communicating the benefits of providing a central water supply to the growth areas of the county, including the Rivanna Community Planning Area (CPA).

Ms. Franklin suggested that an objective be included that requires the County to be responsive to tax payers in three ways – good financial investment to tax payers, financial consequences to tax payers (debt load), and to fully address previously posed questions regarding the joint water authority if that is an alternative that is considered.

Mr. Marshall asked if the objective to "Provide water to the Community Planning Areas" meant to provide water specifically through this pipeline, or simply that water was available. If the former, he questioned the rationale for serving the Rivanna CPA with another water line since it is already served by AquaVirginia. Mr. Batson emphasized the importance of long term planning regarding the provision of a more reliable water supply to any area of the county. Mr. Coffey affirmed that the state mandated Water Supply Plan, that is currently underway, will help to provide a broader context for such planning. This plan should conclude this summer. A draft will be available in April.

The committee agreed that the objectives to be discussed further at the next meet should tentatively be:

1. Ensure availability of water to the CPA's for the long term.  
- namely Fork Union, Zion Crossroads, Palmyra, Rivanna – possibly Scottsville and Columbia
2. Ensure availability of water to primary County facilities.
3. Conduct a comprehensive cost/benefit analysis.
4. Identify feasible alternatives.
5. Protect the rural preservation area.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

Mr. Neil Phillips suggested that a dedicated document room for citizens to be able to review any previous water supply related project information would be beneficial to interested parties.

**SET AGENDA FOR UPCOMING MEETING:**

- A. Create a communications plan (for the committee)
- B. Review the objectives (further define)
- C. Begin review of the previously considered alternatives

**ADJOURN**

There being no further business, Ms. Wright adjourned the Citizen Water Committee meeting of March 25<sup>th</sup>, 2010 at 9:20 p.m.

Minutes recorded by Darren Coffey.

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Approved by Committee Consent on April 1<sup>st</sup>