



**Brunswick-Glynn County Joint Water and Sewer Commission
1703 Gloucester Street, Brunswick, GA 31520
Tuesday, April 4, 2017 2:00 PM
Commission Meeting Room**

PUBLIC INFORMATION & CUSTOMER RELATIONS COMMITTEE AGENDA

Committee Members: **Commissioner Steve Copeland, Chairman**
 Commissioner Robert Bowen
 Commissioner Cornell Harvey
 Executive Director Jimmy Junkin
 Public Information Officer Jay Sellers

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

Public Comments will be limited to 3 minutes per speaker. Comments are to be limited to relevant information regarding your position and should avoid being repetitious. Individuals should sign in stating your name, address and the subject matter on which you wish to speak. Your cooperation in this process will be greatly appreciated

DISCUSSION:

- 1. Effective Community Engagement Program – J. Sellers**
 - Website Design Update
 - Future Town Hall Meeting Schedule
 - Focus Group Volunteers
- 2. Community Lifeblood Campaign – “Value of the JWSC” – J. Sellers**
- 3. Standards of Practice – J. Sellers**
- 4. “Proudly Serving High Quality H₂O” Campaign – J. Sellers**

DIRECTOR’S UPDATE

MEETING ADJOURNED

**All citizens are invited to attend.
There is a possibility of a quorum of Commissioners being present.**



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Commission Meeting Room
Tuesday, April 4, 2017 at 2:00 PM

**PUBLIC INFORMATION & CUSTOMER RELATIONS
COMMITTEE MINUTES**

PRESENT: Steve Copeland, Chairman
Cornell Harvey, Commissioner
Donald Elliot, Chairman of Commission
Jimmy Junkin, Executive Director
Jay Sellers, Public Information Officer

ABSENT: Robert Bowen, Commissioner

ALSO PRESENT: John Donaghy, Chief Financial Officer

Chairman Copeland called the meeting to order at 2:00 PM.

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

Mrs. Monica Smith – New Service Applications. Mrs. Smith provided two recommendations to the Committee as follows: (1) Modify the JWSC New Customer Application process to eliminate Social Security numbers, and (2) Set up the system so that Lessors/Landlords are ultimately responsible for a bill in the event it isn't paid by the tenant. John Donaghy responded to Mrs. Smith. He advised that the JWSC is required under the Red Flag Rules set forth by the Federal Trade Commission in order to identify all customers in the system to help in avoiding identity theft, of which utility services are one of the areas persons would falsely identify themselves in the application process. He added that it is required to have utility bills in your name to obtain a driver's license in Georgia, which is one reason the FTC has mandated use of SSN's in identification. Mrs. Smith suggested that this use of SSN's should be researched and challenged. John Donaghy also noted that there are laws prohibiting billing landlords for monies past due from tenants for services.

APPROVAL:

1. Minutes from the February 28, 2017 Committee Meeting
Commissioner Harvey made a motion seconded by Commissioner Elliott to approve the minutes from February 28, 2017 Public Information & Customer Relations Committee Meeting. Motion carried 3-0-1 (Commissioner Bowen was absent.)

DISCUSSION:

1. Effective Community Engagement Program – J. Sellers
Jay Sellers presented that in previous meeting, the Committee discussed the organizational vision and mission statement, and narrowing that down to answer what can we do to have a more concise mission and vision statement for this Committee. He mentioned that in being more concise in keeping with the

organizational mission of promoting the BGJWSC value to the whole community. Jay added that the mission of this Committee is to develop, implement and monitor the information that is communicated to the public and to ensure that all communication is transparent, timely, accurate and thorough. He noted there were three methods considered for an effective community engagement program were as follows: (1) website design update, (2) town hall meetings, and (3) potential focus group volunteers. The current BGJWSC website (designed in 2013-2014) was displayed and the newsfeed style was discussed, along with how the information is presented, and that as items are posted they are placed at the top and push down the previous postings. Jay added that Staff is looking at some other options for design that would be good for the BGJWSC website. The website for Birmingham Water Works was then displayed and discussed as an example of a website based on icons rather than newsfeed. It was considered that the current news of importance and interest for JWSC customers could be placed on a scrolling banner at the top of the screen, such as Birmingham has several area pictures scrolling on theirs. Other websites were displayed such as the Glynn County website, and Oklahoma City's which were designed by outside site design sources. Jay noted costs of website design and use of them for posting news. For example, the BGJWSC website was designed by Jay at zero costs other than his time, and the monthly cost to the JWSC is about \$9.00 per month. Oklahoma City's website was designed at a cost of about \$125,000.00 plus annual fees associated. Jay referred to other more important priorities of the JWSC such as Lift Station Projects, and indicated there is no immediate intent at this time to invest a large amount of money in a website design. Realizing that the JWSC's website does need some tweaking, his department is interested in doing some incremental in-house redesign to make our website more attractive to the public. Jay also noted that changes in the website would be concurrent with the upcoming and more informative Paymentus customer portal of which will be accessed through the JWSC website. Another important point was made that the theme of the website needs to be responsive on a mobile device, as compared to our current site.

A brief discussion developed regarding the Public Information Town Hall Meetings currently scheduled for May. It was noted that these meetings should not be held at or around the same time as the upcoming Finance Town Hall Meetings. The cancellation of the Public Information Town Hall Meetings for May was confirmed.

Potential Focus Groups was also discussed. Methods of reaching out to the community and understanding the needs of citizens and how they communicate were noted. The challenges associated with effective development of communications and timely publishing of important notices that are transparent, accurate and thorough are a point of concern to the Committee.

2. Community Lifeblood Campaign – “Value of the JWSC” – J. Sellers

Jay presented the Community Lifeblood Campaign Introduction – Draft Version 1.0 to the Committee, which he prepared in March. He read from the drafted document which will be used to help express to the BGJWSC customers and the whole community the value of the JWSC as a source of life-giving freshwater, and its aim to provide reliable services. This document explains that in order to provide healthy quality water, investments in infrastructure capital improvements (referred to as repair, rehabilitation and capacity expansion) are required to support our home, industrial and economic activities. It also helps to clarify why rates may need to be revised over time to accommodate fiscally responsible infrastructure development and daily operational costs of the water and wastewater system.

3. Standards of Practice – J. Sellers

Standards of Practice was discussed among the group. Jay Sellers presented that the State does not dictate all the Practices of the JWSC, such as Boil Water Advisories and how they should be communicated to the public. He discussed the section from the Draft Version 1.0 of the Public Information & Customer Relations Standards of Practice for BGJWSC, regarding “Boil Water Advisory – Best Practices.” The procedures of initiating a Boil Water Advisory were noted, as well as the “all-clear” notices, affected area

maps, and the use of door knob notices. Jay further discussed the Emergency Notification Needs and the planned Opt-Out system. This future notification system will only be used for service outages or boil water advisories. Jay indicated that he would like for this future system to only contact those residents or customers in the affected areas, and preferably via phone and/or electronic means. As a board member with the Local Emergency Planning Committee, Jay is also in the process of assuming the responsibility for upgrading content on emergency radio station, FM104.9, and will be able to remotely upload recorded Boil Water Advisories to the radio station.

4. “Proudly Serving High Quality H2O” Campaign – J. Sellers


Jay Sellers explained that the purpose of the “Proudly Serving High Quality H2O” Campaign is to promote awareness of the BGJWSC as a lifesaving utility in the community. He gave a brief presentation of how this campaign would showcase partnership with restaurants and public facilities that distribute JWSC’s water to their customers. Jay will continue to work on this project and will provide additional numbers and estimates of any related costs associated.

Executive Director Update

Meeting was adjourned at 3:27 pm.


Steve Copeland, Chairman

Attest:


Janice Meridith,
Exec. Commission Administrator



Brunswick-Glynn County Joint Water & Sewer Commission
1703 Gloucester Street, Brunswick, GA 31520
Commission Meeting Room
Tuesday, February 28, 2017 at 2:00 PM

PUBLIC INFORMATION & CUSTOMER SERVICE COMMITTEE MINUTES

PRESENT: Steve Copeland, Chairman
Cornell Harvey, Commissioner
Donald Elliot, Commissioner
Jimmy Junkin, Executive Director
Jay Sellers, Public Information Officer

ABSENT: Robert Bowen, Commissioner

ALSO PRESENT: John Donaghy, Chief Financial Officer

Chairman Copeland called the meeting to order at 2:06 PM.

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

There being no citizens that wished to address the Committee, Chairman Copeland closed the Public Comment Period.

DISCUSSION:

1. Vision for Public Information and Customer Relations of the BGJWSC – J. Sellers /J. Junkin
Jay advised that the current mission statement was last written in 2005, prior to the formation of the organization of the BGJWSC in 2008. He noted that we have been operating under that mission statement, but it has not been well publicized within the organization and that we have not been specifically referring to that in our day to day operations and indicating that this is “exactly what we are doing”. Jay added that Mr. Junkin had held a small meeting to discuss the mission statement and a revision of it. Mr. Junkin began this discussion with the mission statement specific to the Public Information and Customer Relations Committee and the key message that the committee is trying to communicate to the public in the bigger picture. One message is that we are the lifeblood in the community with respect to the maintaining of the system. If it is not maintained, then the quality of life of our community goes down, and economic opportunities go down. He noted the question of how do we get our message out to the community and make sure that citizens understand the significance of the water utility, its role in the community, and its value to the community. Mr. Junkin then shared the rough draft of the mission statement for the committee. “The BGJWSC safely provides quality drinking water and environmentally responsible sanitary sewer service to the residents and businesses of Glynn County and the City of Brunswick at reasonable rates while meeting or exceeding associated regulatory requirements.” He then followed up with the vision of how we see that mission occurring and being executed. “The vision is to be deemed best in class amongst our peer utilities.” He explained the term “best in class” as meaning that we cannot be compared to the very large communities such as Atlanta or

those that have many more (in magnitude) capabilities and resources to provide greater and more services within their water & sewer utilities. BGJWSC can only be compared to water utilities in similar sized communities. The expectations for “best in class” would include the example that when similar sized utilities are resolving issues and problem they might look to BGJWSC to discover what we have done to resolve our issues, and then make contact with our staff as a resource to gain help from to figure out what is going on and solving issues. Mr. Junkin then discussed 8 core principles to help us achieve the vision and mission. (1.) Achieve the mission objectives for the utility with the implementation of the BGJWSC business plan which utilizes key attributes effectively managing utilities and incorporates programs designed to improve short and long term utility performance. (2.) Demonstrate leadership in service delivery and customer service. (3.) Develop the benchmarks and metrics to compare peer utilities and measure interim performance while continuously striving for improvement throughout the utility. (4.) Adhere to the regulatory requirements to protect citizens and the environment. (5.) Provide open and honest and timely communication and information impacting BGJWSC stakeholders. (6.) Maintain a safe working situation for all BGJWSC employees. (7.) Achieve a sustainable business financial model to perform the mission and strategic business plan. (8.) Through a comprehensive and systematic asset management program promote and extend infrastructure life cycles with the end result being a stabilization of rates, lower operating costs and efficient reliable service for our customer base.

2. Standards of Practice – J. Sellers

Jay Sellers moved the discussion to the standards of practice starting with the core values of the Public Information Office and questions the standards should answer. (1.) How does our message enforce public health transparency, sustainability and resiliency? (2.) What is the least amount of data that can be used to communicate information that can lead to supporting both our decision making and that of our ratepayers? – The goal of this question being to not inundate the public with such a great amount of information that they have to sift through it to discover the important points, and to provide just the exact amount of information to give a clear and concise understanding to the public without overwhelming them. Further discussions concerned the suggested responsibility of this committee providing the infrastructure for effective public information and customer relations with monitoring by the committee; engaging customer relations and measures on how satisfied the customers are that we are doing the right thing and communicating correctly; communicating with a diverse community and being aware of how they stay connected with our communications; and, piecing together a plan on how to get our message out and figuring out how effectively the customers are receiving it. It was suggested that obtaining an outside resource to assist in developing a program of ways of communicating with the public and being able to measure the effectiveness of our communications with the public. Commissioner Harvey commented that we should figure out which direction JWSC should go in; have outside firms make proposals; focus on how we are going to collect data and measure it as we collect it; and then evaluate it and determine how efficient we are at getting the word out. Mr. Junkin added that key performance indicators should be used internally, and then there should also be those that are strictly customer driven such as system issues and response time of which are examples of things that are a measure of a level of service to the community so that we can determine where we need to continuously improve. Chairman Copeland indicated that he sees a vision as there being one main place for dissemination of information so the community will know where they can go to obtain that information. Jay Sellers indicated that the BGJWSC website is currently used as our main source of communication, and when our website is updated, that feed automatically goes to Facebook and also Twitter. Jay commented that there is a link on our website where the public can subscribe to be automatically notified on their e-mail of updates to our website (specific categories of updates to their choosing).

3. Effective Community Engagement – J. Sellers

Jay Sellers presented and displayed the BGJWSC website and showed the manner of updates and where the public can go to subscribe for notification of updates. He also showed the Facebook updates associated. Discussion continued to public use of the website and our using the website and

communicating with the community. It was suggested that the committee needs to define what a program should look like and talk to some other utilities and or other public relations groups who have defined this for other utilities. Mr. Junkin indicated that Jay had already been in contact with Atlanta and began gathering contacts and having conversations with outside sources. It was commented that we need to become more routine with communicating with the community. Communications during Hurricane Matthew and how many public views there were on Facebook for updates on the storm and our services was discussed. Jay also added that he watches the public chat rooms on Facebook to check for the public conversation and communications to be aware when there are miscommunications about BGJWSC and the services.

Chairman Copeland asked if there was agreement that two specific work products for the next meeting would be the Standards of Practice and what an effective community engagement program looks like. Commissioner Elliott also indicated that there could be communication to the national programs.

The final three deliverables for drafting and discussion on the follow-up monthly meeting were: (1.) A statement of (SOP) Standard of Practice for items that the Commission handles (i.e. the boil water advisories, etc.), (2.) an effective community engagement program, and (3.) a presentation to demonstrate the value of the Commission to the county, the value of the water & sewer system to the state, and the value of the water & sewer system to the nation.

Executive Director Update

Mr. Junkin commented that long term, BGJWSC needs to be making an effort to gain community awareness and understanding of our value to the community.

Meeting was adjourned at 3:25 pm.

Steve Copeland, Chairman

Attest:

Janice Meridith,
Exec. Commission Administrator

Community Lifeblood Campaign Introduction

The United States Small Business Administration has said that “small business is the lifeblood of the community.” While we don’t disagree, we’d like to go one step further and say that no community can thrive or even survive without the most precious resource available on earth: life-giving freshwater. We’d like for you to spend some time thinking about how the BGJWSC is not only your source for that water if you’re one of our customers, but we’d also like to reveal to you the many ways that you benefit from our services even if you’re not directly a ratepayer of our services.

Lifeblood is defined as an indispensable factor or influence that gives something its strength or vitality. Not only is the safe drinking water that you consume one of these indispensable factors, but you also take advantage of a broader community benefit of fire protection and treatment of wastewater. Imagine living in a community that has not been as highly focused on delivering these services at or above standards required by local, state and national regulations. Can you imagine the concerns that you would have if you were a resident of a community like Flint, Michigan, where contaminants in the publically operated water system are continuing to threaten the health of those that drink the water? This threat comes through a systematic policy of neglect, lack of oversight, and lack of accountability. We are all aware of the dangers that lie in areas with less restriction, such as Mexico or Brazil, but no one likes to believe that danger could exist here in our country.

We aim to provide the most reliable services to you. Imagine living in a community in which the utility allowed systems to degrade or fail to the point of regular, widespread outages. Your trip to the mall or to a restaurant would be complicated by the need to stop by a portable toilet or hand-wash station. Industrial and economic activities would be crippled since where you work is just as important as where you live. In areas where fire protection should be available but is not because of weak water pressure, loss of property or life could occur. The BGJWSC needs to do everything we can to keep situations like this from happening since the connectedness of local government agencies along with private enterprise benefits us all with the services granted by both sales and property tax revenue along with other inputs and outputs in the financial stream.

The BGJWSC takes your health and quality of life very seriously. Out of a great abundance of caution, we follow policies which demonstrate that caring for your health and the health of your families is our number one concern. With that in mind, we must make investments of both time and money to ensure that each system that we operate for you, whether that’s drinking water, fire protection or wastewater treatment, is constantly being monitored for maintenance and upgrades, where necessary. Many of those systems are currently in great need.

We recently updated our 20 year Master Plan in March of 2016. This document is generated in order to ensure that we are prepared for the challenges that face long-term community planning. The Master Plan outlines the infrastructure capital improvement needs (referred to as repair, rehabilitation and capacity expansion) and casts projections of income needed to meet those needs into the future. Rates may need to be revised over time to accommodate fiscally responsible infrastructure development and daily operational costs. Rest assured that being a “best in class” utility serving “high quality H₂O” and environmentally responsible processing of wastewater for the betterment of all citizens in Glynn County, our visiting guests, as well as preparing for our future needs is the core value of all staff, the management and the board members of the Brunswick-Glynn County Joint Water & Sewer Commission.

Boil Water Advisory – Best Practices

In the absence of a formal policy regarding information dissemination, the following ad hoc policy has been prepared to help immediately address concerns related to Boil Water Advisories. Once finalized, the details below will be incorporated into the Public Information & Customer Relations Standards of Practice, which is being drafted now.

Initiating a Boil Water Advisory

Upon determination that water pressure will drop below 20 psi for any length of time caused by either a planned or unplanned water main repair, the Water Distribution Crew Leader, Supervisor or Superintendent will immediately contact me by phone, 24/7, to prepare the official notification for the public. Once the BWA has been posted to the website, immediate notification will be sent to Mr. Junkin, news media, social media, Customer Service, our answering service, Commissioners, staff and any citizen that has opted into the Subscribe to Updates function on our website. A news subcategory has been created specifically for BWAs within the Service Outage category.

Also included in this email 'blitz' will be all members of the Water Production staff, plus Bill Hawthorne and Amy Rammo-Kuhs of the GA EPD. In accordance with EPD BWA guidance, confirmed via email with Bill Hawthorne today, this will be considered *THE* alert that we have initiated a *typical* BWA.

Once pressure has been restored, the Water Distribution representative will contact Water Production Superintendent or on-call operator to pull initial testing samples. If the affected area includes only residential or low-risk commercial (no restaurants), when initial testing has passed as negative for bacterial growth, test results will be sent to Bill, Amy (or their delegate) indicating that an all-clear will be issued via our website, with the same automated email blitz to follow. If restaurants, medical facilities, schools or other high-risk facilities are involved, a second round of testing will be processed. Following the second round of negative tests, the test results will be sent to EPD indicating all-clear will be given. The BGJWSC staff will therefore **not** be requesting from EPD the **right** to announce the all-clear **unless** test 1 and test 2 fail. If, for whatever reason, both tests fail, we will announce the results to the public and seek EPD guidance. Reserving these rights to announce both the BWA and the all-clear should help eliminate the delay that is caused when seeking the all-clear direction from EPD.

Included in the BWA will be a map showing the affected area, the timeframe required for testing, boil procedures and emergency contact information.

Door knob notices will only be used on pre-planned construction projects affecting fewer than 36 service connections, not emergency outages.

Emergency Notification Needs

An Opt-Out system will be created using information stored within the billing system to avoid the weakness of an Opt-In system, such as what is used within the Subscribe to Updates function of our website, the Glynn County website and the CodeRED system. Once we go live with Innoprise CIS and the details are worked out, a notification will be sent to all customers as a bill stuffer to inform them of the opt-out option. This future notification system will only be used for service outages or boil water advisories.

As a board member with the Local Emergency Planning Committee, I am in the process of assuming responsibility for upgrading content on the low power emergency radio station, FM 104.9. That station reaches all of Glynn County. I will be able to record an audio file on my phone and remotely upload that BWA to the radio station.

Proudly Serving High Quality H2O Campaign

Purpose

Promote awareness of the BGJWSC as a lifesaving utility vital in the community. Showcase partnership with restaurants and public facilities that distribute our water to their customers.

Methodology

Pursue agreement wherein the BGJWSC would pay a portion of the advertising cost for a local business that allows us to add a badge to their advertisement and a sticker to their door or window.

Local print media, such as Elegant Island Living, The Brunswick News, The Islander, etc., would be given a voucher by the restaurant, if we contact them, or the media representative would contact us to seek a partnership agreement. Those that do not advertise locally would be asked to allow us to display the badge regardless.

Cost

To Be Determined

Badge Image

