

MINUTES

Spartanburg Sanitary Sewer District Commission, Regular Meeting, held at 301 South Avenue, Spartanburg, SC, December 1, 2020, at 2:15 p.m.

Copies of the agenda were forwarded to the following news media: Spartanburg Herald-Journal, The Spartan Weekly, Greenville News, The Greer Citizen, Hometown News, WSPA-TV 7, WYFF-TV 4, WLOS-TV 13, WHNS Fox Carolina, WORD News Radio, WOLT-FM Radio, Tribune Times, and the Times Examiner.

Commissioners present were Mses. Barnes and Viney and Messrs. Blanton, Horton, Littlejohn, Montgomery, and White. No one was absent.

The meeting was opened with the following statement:

This is a regular meeting of the Spartanburg Sanitary Sewer District Commission. Written notice of the date, time, and place for this meeting, along with the agenda, has been posted in the lobby and on the Spartanburg Water website, and copies mailed to local and nearby news media, at least 24 hours prior to this meeting.

1. PRAYER

Mr. Blanton called the meeting to order and Ms. Viney opened with a prayer.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING OF OCTOBER 27, 2020

Mayor White moved and Mr. Montgomery seconded the motion to approve the minutes as written. The motion passed unanimously.

3. MONTHLY FINANCIAL REPORT

Newt Pressley presented a financial summary of SSSD expenditures and revenues for the four-month period ending October 31, 2020. An explanation was provided for the favorable and unfavorable budget variances.

Mr. Pressley provided the Commission with a summary of the number of taps sold compared to new connections reflecting residential equivalent units.

Mr. Pressley provided the Commission with an update of the Customer Assistance Program.

The above was provided as information to the Commission.

4. COMPREHENSIVE ANNUAL FINANCIAL REPORT FOR FISCAL YEAR ENDING JUNE 30, 2020

Cam Cole, Director of Financial Services, provided an overview of the Comprehensive Annual Financial Report process and introduced Karyn Lemon and Kyle Eubanks of Halliday, Schwartz & Company to review this report.

Karyn Lemon reviewed the Comprehensive Annual Financial Report and communication letter for SSSD with the Commission and offered an unmodified audit opinion for fiscal year ending June 30, 2020, in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles.

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Mr. Blanton noted that the Audit Committee recently met with the auditors. The meeting went well and it was a good report.

The above was provided as information to the Commission.

5. COVID-19 REPORT

Ms. Schneider provided the Commission with an update on COVID-19.

Ms. Schneider noted that during a press conference on November 19, the Governor encouraged the citizens of South Carolina to be tested prior to the holiday. Governor McMaster debuted a new motto for South Carolinians this Thanksgiving: “test before turkey.” The governor said he would be issuing an executive order for the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control to provide school districts with COVID-19 rapid testing kits. Officials with DHEC said they would be authorizing school nurses to be trained on how to perform the tests, which are BinaxNow rapid antigen tests made by Abbott and have been provided to South Carolina from the federal government.

Tracking of Spartanburg County COVID- Data

Management actively tracks daily positive case and death numbers in Spartanburg County. Average daily cases and death rates were:

Month	Positive Cases/Day	Death Rates/Day	Potential Drivers
April	8.3	0.3	Start of data
May	10.6	0.4	Upswing toward the end of May due to Mother’s day and warmer weather.
June	33.0	0.9	Memorial day, graduations, outdoor activities, beaches, weddings, more openings.
July	67.3	1.1	Continued openings, more indoor dining, vacations, travel.
August	42.0	2.1	More masking, countered by more openings.
September	42.7	1.7	Continued efforts with community orders to mask.
October	57.8	1.3	Upswing in infection rates in county and state.
November	91.5*	1.3*	More cases as we go into the holiday Season. The trend is nationwide.

**As of November 30, 2020*

Spartanburg Water has had ten positive employee cases. There has been a total of 108 quarantines. A workforce snap shot on November 30, 2020, revealed four current potential exposures and two current positive cases.

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Management has continued to monitor cases in the school districts in Spartanburg County, as this could lead to potential impacts on workforce. Absences could be from an exposure standpoint or a need for employees to stay at home with their kids if schools change schedules or close. Active cases for students and staff in Spartanburg County Schools are: District 1 (10), District 2 (34), District 3 (19), District 4 (7), District 5 (37), District 6 (0), and District 7 (37). Higher education institutions are tracked periodically. The trend within the state is a decrease in cases since the beginning of the school term, with most of the cases occurring in the first month of classes.

Staff continues to have weekly COVID-19 meetings, where we report activities within our divisions, review pending actions, SC Governor Executive Orders, discuss the "Health of the Organization," review current changes and topics e.g. communications to employees, guidance, PPE, and other topics related to COVID-19 that are affecting or could affect Spartanburg Water. The weekly dashboard providing current Spartanburg Water employee data as it applies to COVID-19 is published each Monday to monitor the workforce.

Holiday guidance from the CDC and DHEC has been communicated to employees. Travel and off-site meeting guidance was written and communicated through leadership. Visitors are allowed at facilities on an as needed basis. Visitors are required to complete a COVID-19 questionnaire, and some areas require temperature checks for visitors. Managers and supervisors are being given COVID-19 training in an effort to aide them in handling the initial assessment of pending cases. Employees have been given information on free testing sites for COVID-19 and information on insurance coverage related to non-free testing sites. Management is closely watching the distribution strategy for COVID-19 vaccines from DHEC to determine critical infrastructure distribution. Employees have also been encouraged to get flu shots. Supply chain is monitored and there are no issues at this point. Staff continues to attend virtual events and webinars that are COVID-19 related (e.g. NACWA, WATERISAC, WEF, ARCOS, etc.).

The Leadership Meeting in October was held virtually on Zoom with 55 + attendees. Certification support training has continued by using web-based training through water/wastewater support agencies, consultants, and vendors. Industrial flows have stayed relatively flat. There was a 3% reduction, comparing February flows to those in October. Industrial inspections have stayed on schedule throughout the pandemic. All facilities have remained compliant throughout the pandemic.

Management continues to run a robust assessment of all cases, reviewing and using the most up to date CDC and DHEC guidance. Based on our numbers, we are doing better than other utilities in the state. Based on the state and local positive numbers, we expect to see an increase over the next few months.

The above was provided as information to the Commission.

6. MWBE REPORT

Remsen Parrish, Purchasing Manager, provided a 2020 report on the MWBE Program.

Spartanburg Water spent \$1,057,511 with certified MWBE suppliers in 2020. In 2020, there was a 3.5% increase in solicitations and an 8.1% increase in purchasing transactions with MWBE vendors compared to 2019. Spartanburg Water continues to increase the number of MWBE vendors to the approved vendor list, with four additional vendors added in 2020. These vendors provide a wide variety of goods and services including security services, janitorial services, and right-of-way clearing. An MWBE approved vendor list is updated and distributed to the Budget Managers on a monthly basis.

The above was provided as information to the Commission.

7. COMMUNITY BENEFIT PROGRAM REPORT

Remsen Parrish, Purchasing Manager, provided a 2020 report on the Community Benefit Program.

In April 2015, the Spartanburg Sanitary Sewer District Commission and The Commissioners of Public Works of the City of Spartanburg, SC approved a revision to the procurement policy to incorporate the Community Benefit Program. The Community Benefit Program provides vendors the opportunity through contracts, agreements, and requests for sealed bids or proposal to propose a program that will benefit the local community. Programs can include monetary donations, in-kind contributions, volunteering, etc. The programs are centered on five areas: Workforce Development, Economic Development, Environmental Programs, Education, and Community Pride. Participating vendors contributed or plan to contribute over \$11,950 to the local community in 2020 through fifteen different Community Benefit Programs. Since April of 2015, vendors have contributed over \$94,900 in either monetary donation, volunteer hours, or in-kind contribution as a part of the Community Benefit Program.

The above was provided as information to the Commission.

8. PROPOSED 2021 COMMISSION MEETING SCHEDULE

January 26	February 23
March 23	April 27
May 25	June 22
July – No Meeting	August 24
September 28	October 26
November – No Meeting	December 7

The Commission agreed to meet on January 26, 2021, and to vote on the remaining monthly meetings at that time.

9. SPARTANBURG AREA CONSERVANCY (SPACE) GRANT PROPOSAL

The Spartanburg Area Conservancy (SPACE) was formed in 1989 to protect and preserve Spartanburg area lands and the water resources that run through them. The mission of SPACE is to promote, protect and preserve natural resources and open space in the Spartanburg community.

SPACE has made inroads in protecting the Pacolet Rivers and Lawson Fork Creek, as well as lands throughout Spartanburg County. To date, SPACE has protected over 5,000 acres in the Spartanburg region. Properties SPACE has protected encompass varied, unique features, including watershed protection, wetlands, historically significant land, farms, forests, geological formations, and habitat for numerous rare and/or threatened flora and fauna.

The pandemic has spotlighted the importance of how outdoor recreation systems can connect fellow citizens safely with fresh air and space to roam. Spartanburg Area Conservancy's grant request includes the development and launching of a children's nature exploration course called, "SPACE to Learn". In partnership with the John F. Green Spartanburg Science Center, this program will provide free outdoor learning opportunities along the Cottonwood Trail for Spartanburg County Pre-K to High School students on the importance of preserving and caring for the Pacolet River Watershed. Designed around South Carolina's science educational standards, these programs would provide an alternative outside the classroom box for science teachers, homeschooling groups and children's organizations.

Specific curriculum proposed for this outside classroom field experience include the following:

- The Pacolet Watershed and How it Impacts Your Family
- What's Out of Your Tap
- Your Every Day Choices – How it Affects Our Watershed

Research has shown that teaching children in an outdoor space is more than a fun, novel experience for kids – it actually helps them focus once they return to the classroom or virtual learning format. Teaching them about watershed topics, including weaving in the importance of water and wastewater treatment systems in protecting health and the environment, should provide an impactful learning experience for the youth of Spartanburg County.

Ken Tuck, Drinking Water Treatment Manager, reviewed the SPACE Grant Proposal request that includes the development and launching of a children's nature exploration course called, "SPACE to Learn".

In partnership with the John F. Green Spartanburg Science Center, this program will provide free outdoor learning opportunities along the Cottonwood Trail for Spartanburg County Pre-K to High School students on the importance of preserving and caring for the Pacolet River Watershed. Designed around South Carolina's science educational standards, these programs would provide an alternative outside the classroom box for science teachers, homeschooling groups, and children's organizations.

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Specific curriculum proposed for this outside classroom field experience include the following: The Pacolet Watershed and How it Impacts Your Family, What's Out of Your Tap, Your Every Day Choices – How it Affects our Watershed. This curriculum will show how water systems and wastewater systems play an integral role in protecting our environment and our water resource.

Management recommended the approval of targeted funding for the outdoor educational programs proposed by SPACE in the amount of \$12,606, with an equal allocation of \$6,303 of the funding from SSSD and \$6,303 of the funding from SWS. Funding will be allocated from SSSD and SWS operating funds.

Mayor White moved and Mr. Littlejohn seconded the motion to approve management's recommendation to approve the targeted funding for the outdoor educational programs proposed by SPACE in the amount of \$12,606, with an equal allocation of \$6,303 of the funding from SSSD and \$6,303 of the funding from SWS. The motion passed unanimously.

10. WATERSHED ECOLOGY CENTER GRANT PROPOSAL

The Watershed Ecology Center's mission is to encourage watershed awareness through education, experience, and community outreach. Special emphasis is placed on water conservation, watershed education, water quality, and the study of organisms living in the area encompassed by a watershed. All of the Watershed Ecology Center's educational programming meets state standards and incorporates hands-on learning activities. Last year, programs that focus on water served thousands of students in both (limited) classroom and virtual formats for students throughout Spartanburg County. The success of last year, despite COVID-19 restrictions, showcase the resilience and adaptability of programmatic efforts of the Watershed Ecology Center to reach children and adults through multi-media formats.

Watershed Ecology Center's annual goal for 2021 is to reach 22,000 K-8 students through watershed based educational programming. In addition to expanding the virtual classroom, the Watershed Ecology Center endeavors to promote other programs related to watershed awareness by expanding monitoring in the Pacolet River Watershed through the Adopt-A-Stream program, a credentialed citizens monitoring network.

Building on the success of their program to promote watershed learning for educators, they will continue to facilitate teacher success in the classroom by providing tools to incorporate both virtual formats, individual student supplies, and more hands on education of science and math. This will complement their teacher certification program in elementary schools and will provide teachers an in-depth understanding of the natural world and provide them guidance on the use of STEM tools to support their curriculum for students. The continuation of this watershed focused certification initiative will expand teacher knowledge of the aquatic world and equip them to explain it to their students.

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The Watershed Ecology Center plans to continue to leverage technological innovations with the development of a virtual reality curriculum that supplements student's learning and understanding of the natural world. With this technology, the Watershed Ecology Center intends to bring interactive programs and concepts into the classroom such as virtual water and wastewater treatment plant tours, and development of "virtual field trips" for various watershed ecosystems in South Carolina.

Ken Tuck, Drinking Water Treatment Manager, reviewed the Watershed Ecology Center Grant Proposal. The Watershed Ecology Center's mission is to encourage watershed awareness through education, experience, and community outreach. Special emphasis is placed on water conservation, watershed education, water quality, and the study of organisms living in the area encompassed by a watershed. All of the Watershed Ecology Center's educational programming meets state standards and incorporates hands-on learning activities. Building on the success of their program to promote watershed learning for educators, they will continue to facilitate teacher success in the classroom by providing tools to incorporate both virtual formats, individual student supplies, and more hands on education of science and math. This will complement their teacher certification program in elementary schools and will provide teachers an in-depth understanding of the natural world and provide them guidance on the use of STEM tools to support their curriculum for students.

Management recommended the approval of targeted funding for the aforementioned K-8 educational programs and watershed based program initiatives offered by the Watershed Ecology Center in the amount of \$16,000, with an equal allocation of \$8,000 of the funding from SSSD and \$8,000 of the funding from SWS. Funding will be allocated from SSSD and SWS operating funds.

Ms. Barnes moved and Mr. Horton seconded the motion to approve management's recommendation for approval of targeted funding for the aforementioned K-8 educational programs and watershed based program initiatives offered by the Watershed Ecology Center in the amount of \$16,000, with an equal allocation of \$8,000 of the funding from SSSD and \$8,000 of the funding from SWS. The motion passed unanimously.

11. OWNERSHIP AGREEMENT – BERKELEY SUBDIVISION

Mark III Properties, Inc., proposes to construct approximately 13,958 linear feet of 8-inch gravity sewer line, one 550 GPM pump station and 2,463 linear feet of 8-inch force main to provide service to 316 residential lots in Berkeley Subdivision located off of Cannons Campground Road. The sewer line will connect to the existing SSSD infrastructure via New Berkeley Regional Pump Station. The domestic waste will be treated at the A. Manning Lynch Wastewater Treatment Facility. The developer will bear all costs.

The line will be constructed according to District-approved plans and specifications, with District inspection provided. The owner will provide all necessary right-of-way and easement agreements for this project.

The form of the agreement transferring ownership of the gravity sewer to the District has been reviewed by the District’s attorney and executed by Mark III Properties, Inc. Under the terms of the resolution adopted by the Commission on May 29, 1990, this agreement has been executed on behalf of the Commission by the Chief Executive Officer.

The above was provided as information to the Commission.

12. OWNERSHIP AGREEMENT – NORTHSIDE TOWNHOMES

Spartanburg RE Investments, LLC proposes to construct approximately 630 linear feet of 8-inch gravity sewer line to provide service to 47 townhome units in Northside Townhomes development located off of Howard Street. The sewer line will connect to the existing SSSD infrastructure. The domestic waste will be treated at the A. Manning Lynch Wastewater Treatment Facility. The developer will bear all costs.

The line will be constructed according to District-approved plans and specifications, with District inspection provided. The owner will provide all necessary right-of-way and easement agreements for this project.

The form of the agreement transferring ownership of the gravity sewer to the District has been reviewed by the District’s attorney and executed by Spartanburg RE Investments, LLC. Under the terms of the resolution adopted by the Commission on May 29, 1990, this agreement has been executed on behalf of the Commission by the Chief Executive Officer.

The above was provided as information to the Commission.

13. OWNERSHIP AGREEMENT – PINE VALLEY (a.k.a. “The Springs”)

Mark III Properties Inc., proposes to construct approximately 17,423 linear feet of 8-inch gravity sewer line to provide service to 781 residential lots in Pine Valley Subdivision located on Hanging Rock Road. The sewer line will connect to the existing SSSD infrastructure. The domestic waste will be treated at the A. Manning Lynch Wastewater Treatment Facility. The developer will bear all costs.

The line will be constructed according to District-approved plans and specifications, with District inspection provided. The owner will provide all necessary right-of-way and easement agreements for this project.

The form of the agreement transferring ownership of the gravity sewer to the District has been reviewed by the District’s attorney and executed by Mark III Properties, Inc. Under the terms of the resolution adopted by the Commission on May 29, 1990, this agreement has been executed on behalf of the Commission by the Chief Executive Officer.

The above was provided as information to the Commission.

14. OWNERSHIP AGREEMENT – POINTE GRAND SPARTANBURG APARTMENTS

Pointe Grand Spartanburg, LLC proposes to construct approximately 178 linear feet of 8-inch gravity sewer line to provide service to 300 units in Pointe Grand Spartanburg Apartments located off of Highway 29. The sewer line will connect to the existing SSSD infrastructure. The domestic waste will be treated at the Lower North Tyger River Wastewater Treatment Facility. SSSD will participate in the off-site sewer construction cost in accordance with the Sewer Extension Policy adopted December 17, 1996.

The line will be constructed according to District-approved plans and specifications, with District inspection provided. The owner will provide all necessary right-of-way and easement agreements for this project.

The form of the agreement transferring ownership of the gravity sewer to the District has been reviewed by the District's attorney and executed by Pointe Grand Spartanburg, LLC. Under the terms of the resolution adopted by the Commission on May 29, 1990, this agreement has been executed on behalf of the Commission by the Chief Executive Officer.

The above was provided as information to the Commission.

15. NEGOTIATIONS AND MISCELLANEOUS ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

- A.** Ms. Schneider stated that the Volunteer Committee led a fourth quarter United Way project, which was a food drive. Employees donated 18 food boxes that was delivered to families in need within the community.
- B.** Mr. Blanton recognized Commissioner Viney for her 5-year service award. Mr. Montgomery thanked Ms. Viney for her service to the community. The Commission congratulated Ms. Viney.
- C.** Ms. Schneider noted that the Outlook Spartanburg Conference will be held virtually on December 3-4 and will feature legislative, economic and community forecasts at the local, regional, national and global level to enable attendees to make informed decisions in 2021.
- D.** Ms. Schneider stated that normally Spartanburg Water Week is held the first week of October, however, 2020 has not been typical. This recognition and appreciation of our staff was delayed until December 7–11, 2020. Spartanburg Water Week remains an opportunity to recognize our employee's dedication to Spartanburg Water's mission. Our celebration may look a little different this year, but we still have the opportunity to show each employee appreciation for their hard work and contributions throughout the year. Each employee will receive a fleece vest and a Zaxby's or Jersey Mikes gift card as an appreciation gift this year.
- E.** Ms. Schneider informed the Commission that there will not be a Christmas luncheon due to safety protocol in place for COVID-19.

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- F.** Ms. Schneider noted that the office will be closed for Christmas on December 24-25 and for New Year's holiday on January 1.
- G.** Ms. Schneider stated that MLK events will begin in January. This year a series of weekly virtual community conversations will be held on every Tuesday in January at 7:00 p.m. live from the City of Spartanburg's Facebook page. The annual Unity Celebration will take place virtually as a panel discussion on January 18, 2021, where they will recognize their Virtual Art Contest and Unity Week Scholarship winners. The previous years' Unity Celebration will begin streaming in December.
- H.** Ms. Schneider reminded the Commission that due to the current safety protocol in place for COVID-19, Spartanburg Water is not offering onsite flu shots this year. However, the flu shot is provided at no cost for employees, spouses and/or dependents over 16 years of age covered on our health insurance with no copay at many provider locations.
- I.** Ms. Schneider introduced Glen McManus, Director of Collection and Distribution. Mr. McManus provided an overview of an article that the Journal publication was featuring that would highlight challenges water and wastewater operators have experienced during the COVID-19 pandemic. Mr. McManus introduced Matthew Jamison, Field Operations Manager. Mr. Jamison's article was selected for publication and Mr. Jamison was featured on the cover page of the Journal publication. Mr. McManus presented him with a framed version of this article. The Commission congratulated Mr. Jamison on this achievement.

Meeting adjourned at 3:29 p.m.

G. Newton Pressley
Secretary-Treasurer

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