

The Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the  
Commission of the Combined Utility System  
held at the office of the Combined Utility  
System on Monday, February 13, 2023.

The meeting was called to order with all commissioners present. Also present were Joel Ledbetter, General Manager; Ginnye Lusk, Administrative Assistant, Andy Sevic, Finance Manager; Alex Dye, Operations Engineer; and Robin Gore, Powdersville Water District.

The minutes of the meeting of January 9, 2023 were read. A motion was made by Jeff Fogle to adopt these minutes with a second by Eric Goodwin. The motion was unanimous.

January invoices were reviewed by Nick Caldwell. The sales report and financial report for the month of January were reviewed. Electric sales were 13.9% above budget, water sales were above budget 26.5% and sewer sales were above budget at 21.9%. These reports were taken as information only.

The commission was presented with the proposed Fiscal Year 2024 Budget for consideration and adoption. No retail rate increases are included in the budget. A 10% wholesale water rate increase was included for all-requirement wholesale water purchasers with a contract. Jeff Fogle made a motion to adopt the FY 2024 Budget with a second by Eric Goodwin. The motion was unanimous. The budget is attached to and incorporated in these minutes.

The commission discussed increasing sewer capacity fees. Currently ECU sewer capacity fees are \$2,100 per REU for all discharges into a ECU treatment facility. For discharges into a ReWa facility the sewer capacity fee is \$2,500 per REU. Making the sewer capacity fee the same for regardless of receiving plant allows for ease of administration and recognizes the increase in cost of plant capacity. Eric Goodwin made a motion to set all sewer capacity fees at \$2,500 per REU regardless of the receiving treatment plant. Jeff Fogle seconded the motion and it was unanimous.

The commission was presented with a proposed revision to the Electrical Service Extension Policy. The revision establishes electrical contribution by developers at \$1,000 per unit for single-family home developments, and \$750 per unit for multi-family home developments. This is a change from the current 25% contribution based on estimated costs. Eric Goodwin made a motion to adopt the revision with a second by Jeff Fogle. The motion was unanimous. The revised policy is attached to and incorporated in these minutes.

The commission was presented with the level of cash reserves based on the prior approved Cash Reserve Policy. Based on the Policy, the target level of reserves is \$15.4 million. Jeff Fogle made a motion to approve this cash reserve target level for FY 2024. Eric Goodwin seconded the motion and it was unanimous.

The commission was presented with a request to apply a refund from the River Road/Highway 25 property contribution to another tract within the Saluda River watershed. Naturaland Trust received grant monies from other sources to help with the purchase of the River Road/Highway 25 property. Therefore, ECU will be receiving a refund from the contribution to conserving this property. ECU's watershed manager and Naturaland Trust have requested that ECU allocate the \$50,000 refund to the purchase and conservation of the Parker Tract in the North Saluda watershed. The tract is 26 acres and cost \$230,000. Jeff Fogle made a motion to allocate the \$50,000 to the Parker Tract with a second by Eric Goodwin. The motion was unanimous.

The commission was presented with the Inter-governmental agreement between the City of Easley and Easley Combined Utilities. The agreement has been approved and executed by the City of Easley. The initial term for this agreement shall be five (5) years and will commence upon signing by both parties. This agreement supersedes the prior Inter-Governmental Agreement entered into by the City of Easley and ECU. Eric Goodwin made a motion to approve the Inter-Governmental Agreement as written giving the general manager the authority to make modifications as necessary. Jeff Fogle seconded the motion and it was unanimous. The Agreement is attached to and incorporated in with these minutes.

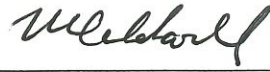
In other business:

1. ECU will debut a new website in the coming weeks.
2. Joel Ledbetter and Melanie Ruhlman have been named to the Saluda River Basin Council for water basin planning.
3. The watershed management report was reviewed. Items in the report include Upper Saluda Watershed 319 program update, Hwy 25/River Road refund, and the Jopoco property update. The full report is attached to and incorporated in with these minutes.
4. Project map has been updated and will be placed in the 2023 Agenda Dropbox folder.
5. The proposed traffic circle at Sheffield Road and Crestview Road will impact existing ECU electric and water infrastructure. The cost to relocate electric facilities is estimated to be around \$25,000. The proposed upgrade to the Sheffield Rd. water line will eliminate conflicts with the traffic circle. ECU will proceed with the installation of the Sheffield Rd. water upgrade.
6. The lead time for obtaining Ductile Iron Pipe (DIP) for the Georges Creek Outfall project is 8 to 9 months. Without objection the Commission gave approval to order the DIP for this project in preparation for construction.
7. ECU is requiring that a gravity line be installed to serve the proposed Saluda Village development that will discharge into the planned Georges Creek Outfall line. Requiring the gravity line will allow the existing Saco Lowell Road pump station to be decommissioned and discharge into this new line. The gravity line will cost approximately \$250,000 more than a pump station and force main but will allow for the decommissioning and removal of the Saco Lowell pump station. The Commission concurred with ECU spending the \$250,000 for the cost differential between a pump station and gravity line.

The commission entered into executive session to discuss legal issues. The Commission returned to public session with no action being taken in executive session.

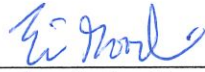
Upon returning to open session the Jeff Fogle made a motion to approve ECU joining in a lawsuit along with other waste treatment providers against the manufacturers of PFAS and PFOA. Eric Goodwin seconded the motion and it was unanimous.

The next meeting was scheduled for Monday, March 20, 2023.



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Nick Caldwell, Chairman



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Eric Goodwin, Commissioner



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Jeff R. Fogle, Commissioner