

MID CHARLOTTE STORMWATER UTILITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE

May 8, 2012

2:00 p.m. in B106 Conference Room

Attendees: George Kearns, Bob Logan, Ben Petrone, Douglas Tucker, and Steve Vieira

County: Dawn Harrison, Karen Bliss, James Huish, Joanne Vernon, and Sandy Wright

Guests: Ralph Montgomery-Atkins Engineering, Becky Ayech-Florida Water Coalition Inc.,

Mr. Vieira called the meeting to order at 2:10 p.m. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited and a roll-call of members was taken. Mr. Vieira introduced the County Staff and the Consultants to the citizens.

Minutes: The minutes from the April 11, 2012 were unanimously approved as written.

Unfinished Business:

- Sunshine Lake/Sunrise Waterway Study – Mr. Vieira provided some history on Sunshine Lake and gave a status of the progression of the study. The test results will be provided at today's meeting.

Mr. Montgomery from Atkins reported that there were 3 samples taken from Sunshine Lakes. He stated that the samples did not indicate elevated levels of fecal material. The results would be normal for any lake with birds, dogs, etc. present. The lake is full of organic material. Mr. Huish showed a map of the area and stated that the Utilities Department (CCU) performed smoke tests on 2-3 streets around the lake. The test revealed 25-26 cracked laterals that run from the street to the homes. He stated those repairs are the responsibility of the homeowners. There were 2-3 homes where no smoke came out; he will provide that information to those residents. CCU will line some areas due to some infiltration. There is a lot of infiltration however, no excrement. According to the ordinance CCU can make the repairs and bill the residents accordingly. There was an inquiry about this causing leakage into the ground; Mr. Huish stated yes, however, it would not be a huge amount. The normal flow through the lift station is approximately 150 gallons per day per household. The flow recorded through the lift station is considerably higher. Mr. Kearns asked what would cause that, Mr. Huish it would be from the infiltration which is ground water. The Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) has reported that the lake has been turbid for a long time; however, there have been times of the year where a disk at the bottom is visible. Mr. Montgomery stated a stormwater load would not produce this condition unless it there was a fertilizer plant nearby. There was an inquiry about Hurricane Charlie making a difference and causing this. Mr. Huish stated that Hurricane Charlie did not produce a lot of rain. The life station did overflow at that time; however it was due to no power. CCU has to report all overflows to DEP who keeps those records online. Typically an overflow situation should not happen due to the backup system in place in case there is a failure. Aeration will not break up the algae already there. Bio active compounds have not proven to be successful on this level of pollution. Mr. Montgomery stated that the algae will have to be separated from the water. The park could be used as a spoil site however, there will be an odor and permits would be required. Simply killing the algae with herbicides would be unacceptable because it would eventually end up draining into Alligator Bay. Mr. Montgomery stated that Atkins doesn't recommend taking any steps until the source of the problem has been identified because the problem will only return. There was input from several citizens reporting bad odors, trouble breathing and sores and burning throats. They stated this problem has been reported for a long time and it's only getting worse with time. They want the Health Department to get involved due to the fear of a health hazard existing in the area.

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- Ms. Ayech from Florida Water Coalition stated that the Health Department should definitely be notified due to her findings at the area. A citizen stated that at the very minimum, a no fishing sign should be posted. Mr. Vieira stated that the Committee is concerned. Mr. Tucker advised the citizens to attend the Commission Meetings to voice their concerns then instructed the citizens on how to access the report online at the County's website. Mr. Vieira gave the fecal report to Ms. Harrison and requested that electronic versions be sent to all the Committee members. Mr. Tucker made a motion to forward the report to the Commissioners and to notify the Health Department of the condition of the lake. The motion was seconded by Mr. Petrone and was approved unanimously.
- Deep Creek Desoto Ditch Study – Mr. Vieira stated that over the past several months the Committee had a contractor remove invasive species of vegetation and gopher tortoises and provided hydro seeding where it was necessary. In doing the work, severe erosion problems were revealed. There are about 51 homes on the ditch that will be in danger if steps aren't taken to correct the problem. This is not a beautification project. Ms. Vernon distributed a scope of services report to the Committee members. Tetra Tech is the contractor. She met with them yesterday to discuss the project. They hope to have the survey complete within 90 days which will allow the project to go to purchasing. Once in purchasing it will take 2-3 months to go out to bid. The Public Works Department has been advised of the issues. Citizens expressed concern over the length of time this will take. Ms. Harrison stated that the process must be followed to ensure the Committee gets a contractor that can fix the problem correctly, to ensure that this doesn't happen again in the future. A citizen living at 2324 Mauritania stated that the rear of his property is falling into the ditch and another stated that not all areas of the ditch were trimmed. Ms. Vernon stated that she will have an inspector view the area. A citizen provided Mr. Vieira pictures of the canal that were taken that morning showing the debris stating that it was left after the trimming was done. It was explained to the citizens that the contract was only to remove invasive species of vegetation and tortoises and hydro seed, not to provide debris clean up or remove other types of vegetation, however, the trimmed vegetation was supposed to be removed from the area. A citizen questioned the report provided by the contractor stating that the project was complete and the sign off by the Project Manager. He stated that the Deep Creek side of the canal wasn't done; the job is incomplete and should have never been signed off as such. Again Ms. Vernon stated she will have the area inspected. The Committee is going to do everything they can to make sure this gets done right. There was discussion regarding no interest shown by the citizens until this project was started. There weren't enough volunteers to form a Committee until 2010. The Committee has a very large territory to cover. A citizen complimented the Committee on the work done so far, however he would like to see the issues addressed. Ms. Vernon stated that the Engineering report shows that the water flow is not impeded. Mr. Vieira stated that he disagrees with that report. Ms. Vernon agreed to verify the water flow, observe the Deep Creek side for invasive species and check on the hydro seeding. She will review the contract specifications to see what was supposed to be done.

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- The Committee agreed to get back with each resident. The sign in sheet was passed around allowing the Deep Creek residents to identify themselves as residents of that area.
- Mr. Tucker introduced Ms. Beauchamp from the Health Department who was there to get up to speed on the issues.

Next meeting is scheduled for Thursday June 7, 2012 at 9:30 a.m.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:15 p.m.