



Stafford County Utilities Commission
March 28, 2024

- I. Call to Order– Mr. Edwards, Utilities Director, called the meeting to order at 7:01 pm.
- II. Roll Call – Those present at the meeting were; Ms. Tiffany Epple; Mr. Alan Glazman; Mr. Ben Litchfield; Mr. Nathan Reese; Mr. Floyd Bundrant; and Mr. Greg Cox. Ms. Nancy Sullivan was absent. Staff members present were Mr. Chris Edwards, Utilities Director; Andrea Keirstead, Project Manager; Leonor Rodriguez-Guevara, Pretreatment Coordinator; Tyra Fisher, Procurement and Finance Specialist; and Ms. Tyler Girsham, Administrative Specialist.
- III. Approval of Meeting Minutes – Ms. Epple motioned, seconded by Mr. Reese, to approve the minutes from the February 13, 2024 meeting as presented. The motion passed 6 – 0.
- IV. Presentations by the Public – there were no members of the public present
- V. Public Hearing – Proposed Ordinance O24-11

Mr. Edwards gave a brief overview explaining the information on the Chapter 25 Ordinance Amendment handout from the Agenda Packet. Mr. Edwards explained how Chapter 25-71 is currently written, how it doesn't go along with the Comprehensive Plan, what the proposed revisions will be and how they will help resolve items not going along with the Comprehensive Plan. Mr. Cox asked who does the study to determine if a lot has to connect to public water. Mr. Edwards explained that they must connect to county water once they figure out how many lots will be in the development and if that number falls within the threshold, and it financially makes sense depending on the cost to connect to public water. Mr. Edwards then asked if everyone agreed with the amendment; he would like a recommendation from the Commission to take it to the Board of Supervisors for review. No additional questions were asked. Mr. Litchfield motioned, seconded by Mr. Bundrant, to provide a recommendation to take the Chapter 25 Ordinance Amendment to the Board of Supervisors for review. The motion passed 6-0. No public comment was given as no members of the public were present.

VI. Director's Report –

Before Mr. Edwards gave the Capital Project Updates, he introduced Ms. Keirstead and Ms. Rodriguez-Guevara to the Commission members. He gave details about their educational and job backgrounds and current department roles.

- a. Capital Project Updates – Mr. Edwards started updates with the Claiborne Run Force Main project. The project is 95 percent complete. The next project was the Little Falls Run Plant upgrades. Mr. Edwards explained that the bids went out for this project and came back about twice as much as the engineers estimated. They estimated it to be around 40 million, and the bid price came back to be around 71 million. He explained that we are re-



scoping the project to address maintenance items to bring the bid down within the 40 to 45 million budget range. Ms. Epple asked why there was such a disparity. Mr. Edwards explained that construction prices are still extremely high, and we are still seeing increases with other projects that have opened up in the last few months. Mr. Reese asked if the items not included in the new scope for the Little Falls project would be moved to a later phase. Mr. Edwards said that some of the upgrades for the Little Falls plant were for us to meet future regulations that are in the works. However, those regulations have not materialized as fast as we thought they would, which does give us the ability to push off those upgrades for a little bit.

Mr. Edwards continued with the updates. Next on the list was the new elevated water tank on Enon Rd. He said that once a few interior and site piping installations are complete, the tank should be able to go online. The waterline running to the new tank was the next project update. That project is about two months from completion and ready to go. He explained that sometime this summer, those two projects will be connected and, in our system, be able to serve the residents. For the 342 Pressure Zone upgrades, designs are 90% complete and should have bidding out by the end of the year. The 370-02 Pressure Zone upgrades are about to start the final design phase, as the preliminary engineering report has been completed. The Falls Run Gravity Inspector Sewer Phase 2 project has completed the right-of-way/easement acquisition, and the environmental permitting is 100% complete as well. This project will be broken into two parts. The Construction advertisement for the I-95 bore will take place in mid-2024, and the Construction advertisement for the remainder of the phase is TBD.

- b. 3R Updates – Ms. Keirstead started her updates with the Water Distribution and Transmission projects. The Ferry Farm Water Main Replacement is currently in the process of Phase 4, which includes 6800 ft of waterline replacement and 75 water service connections. Installation is about 85% complete, and service connections are 45% complete. The Butler Road Water Main replacement is currently under design and consultants are working on some base mapping and underground utility investigations. The Route 17 Water Main Relocation is complete. Mr. Edwards asked Ms. Keirstead to return to the Butler Road project and asked when the construction would start. Ms. Keirstead said that the design and IFB package could be put together by the end of this year; it should go out to bid roughly in the Spring of next year, 2025, and maybe start construction in the summer of 2025. Mr. Edwards explained to the Commission member that this project would be a big one as it is a high-traffic area, and one lane would be shut down for the majority of the duration of this project. He recommended staying away from Butler Road if possible once construction starts. Mr. Cox asked if this was on the Brooks Park side of Butler Rd. Mr. Edwards said yes. Mr. Glazman and Mr. Edwards both touched on how busy and congested that road can be. Mr. Edwards noted that they will most likely have to get VDOT approval and discussion on working hours and things of that nature. Mr. Reese asked if the same level of effort would be applied to Ferry Road as Butler Rd since it can be equally as congested. Ms. Keirstead said yes and further explained the efforts for Ferry Road and how it could vary from Butler Road, but said from what they



can tell so far, they might have slightly better options. Mr. Reese said he knows it is early, but would one lane closures be expected? Ms. Keirstead said yes. Mr. Edwards asked how long the Ferry Road water line was. Ms. Keirstead said it is roughly 3600 feet long. Mr. Edwards questioningly said the work could take a solid month to complete. Ms. Keirstead said that she thinks Ferry Road's work will be easier to break up than Butler Road. Ms. Epple asked if the County would be ambitious enough to try and do these two projects at the time. Ms. Keirstead said that given the current timeframe, Ferry Road would start construction before Butler Road. Mr. Edwards mentioned that even if Ferry Road is started first, there will be times when both Butler and Ferry will be worked on simultaneously, with lane closures at each site. Mr. Litchfield asked what type of outreach to the public has been done to notify them about these projects and potential closures. Mr. Edwards quickly chimed in that with Ferry Farm, the efforts were pretty exhaustive, and he would let Ms. Keirstead explain more. She explained that the project is in preliminary design and that a lot more outreach will be done when it comes to the project's construction phase. She noted that with Ferry Farm, they used multiple types of communication throughout the project, such as work progress notifications, multiple letters sent to each house, door hangers when we were working on their street and if we needed to reconnect their service. She also noted that multiple internal email communications were made with the Stafford County Departments, VDOT, and the agencies we worked with on the project. Ms. Keirstead also said that our website and the next-door app were used to push out many notifications to the public. Mr. Edwards chimed in, stating that we are a solid year out from the Butler Road project, and many variables can change in that timeframe that could delay the project, so we don't necessarily always put something out because everything is subject to change.

Ms. Keirstead continued by reviewing the Chatham Drive Water Main, Grafton Tank and Duff Park Water Line extension projects. They are all in the IFB process and ready to advertise for construction bids. The next project updates are for the wastewater collection, I&I, and rehabilitation projects. The Sewer Main lining and Manhole Rehabilitation projects are ongoing, and we are currently in the Aquia district for both projects. The pump station projects were next to be discussed in the presentation. The Falls Run pump station has been completed. Hoof and Claw, Claiborne Run, and Tylerton pump stations are currently in different stages in the design phase. The Ingleside and Celebrate Virginia pump stations both have construction task orders that have been issued. They are waiting for materials to come in to start the projects. Lastly, the Hillrup pump station is currently under construction. Mr. Edwards chimed in to explain the job order contract we have in place so we do not have to bid for each project and can complete five to ten pump stations in a year.

The Wastewater and Water Plant projects were the next group reviewed. The Smith Lake Phase 2 project is currently in the design phase. This phase has been delayed as the consultant has discovered more issues during their investigations at the plant so far. We will have to add these issues to the scope of work and amend the design before we can finalize the bid package, which we hope to advertise this summer. Mr. Edwards clarified



that Ms. Keirstead was referring to electrical issues. He explained there is a lot of high voltage electrical throughout the entire plant, how it was originally constructed, and the issues that wear and tear over time are causing. He noted that the entire plant would need to be rewired to ensure the plant's and its staff's safety. Ms. Keirstead said that HVAC and chemical upgrades will also be happening in this construction phase at Smith Lake. The last projects that Ms. Keirstead gave updates on were the Utilities Water and Sewer Planning projects. The Water and Sewer Masterplan is currently underway. We also have updates underway for the Design and Construction Manual, and they are finalizing the comments. We hope to get it approved within the next few months. We have consultants working on a GAP analysis for the Asset Management Plan project. The GIS Utility Network implementation is underway, but we are currently waiting for new software to be purchased to move forward. Mr. Edwards explained briefly how the GIS Utility Network will work and how it will help staff and potential residents in the future.

- c. FOG Updates – Ms. Rodriguez started her presentation by re-introducing herself and explaining what FOG is (Fats, Oils and Grease). She explained why a FOG program is needed in the county. She highlighted that Stafford County spends over 1.5 million dollars annually to remove FOG from the sewer system and respond to FOG-related issues. She explained that we were not only spending a lot of money but also issuing several Notices of Violations for FOG backups. We found that non-compliance problems were often due to a lack of knowledge about FOG, how it affects the system and proper disposal. Ms. Rodriguez showed some photos next in her presentation and explained what was going on in each photo. She explained the timeline of how the FOG program was created. Next, she highlighted some statistics from the 2023 Inspections and the failed inspections and resolutions. While going over the statistics, she explained the process of what happens if a store gets a failed notice, the steps they might follow and the timeline for reinspection. She also explained what would cause a failed inspection. Lastly, in her presentation, she reviewed a few ideas on how we could enhance the FOG program in the future. Mr. Edwards chimed in to explain that Captain Clog's branding and outreach are being submitted for an award, which is why the Commission members were given one of the Captain Clog comic books.

Mr. Cox asked if there were any consequences or penalties. Ms. Rodríguez explained when the store receives a failed inspection, they have to pay a fifty-dollar re-inspection fee each time, and we also have a reinforcement plan. She explained that we can suspend service and continue to issue NOVs if it does get to that point. Mr. Edwards then gave an example of when we had to suspend service until a FOG-related issue was fixed. Mr. Reese asked if we are seeing positive results despite it being in the program's first full year. Ms. Rodriguez said yes and explained how we are seeing positive results. Mr. Bundrant asked if we saw a difference between franchise and family-owned stores. Ms. Rodriguez said definitely. She explained that franchise stores like McDonald's are more likely to have their invoices ready and have them cleaned out regularly. Ms. Eppler asked if we are finding that it is due to a lack of knowledge versus blatantly disregarding proper maintenance and disposal. Ms. Rodriguez said yes and explained her conversations with



stores and how she educated them. Ms. Epple asked if any type of literature is handed out to new businesses in the County as they open. Ms. Rodriguez explained that when a new store opens, she will ask them to fill out an FOG questionnaire to determine if they need to participate in the FOG program. If it is determined that they should be in the FOG program, she will return to give them their permit and required signs and walk them through what an inspection will look like. Ms. Epple asked if she thought, in the future, it could be a requirement before the store received its final OP (Occupancy Permit). Mr. Edwards said it is currently part of the plumbing code, and we will check to ensure a grease control device is in the plans. Mr. Edwards and Ms. Rodriguez explained that not all restaurants are a part of the FOG program or need a grease control device and gave examples of stores like Subway. Mr. Litchfield asked to clarify the penalty structure. Ms. Rodriguez explained that if a store passes inspection, there is no fee; if a store fails inspection, they have to pay a fifty-dollar fee for each time it has to be re-inspected. She said that she does not have many to re-inspect more than twice. She also explained that each store in the program has to pay a one-hundred-dollar annual fee as part of their permit. Mr. Edwards added that COVID hit when we originally got ready to begin it to the Board for approval, so the program approval was delayed until Fall 2020. Once it was approved, many stores were pulling out due to financial hardships from COVID, so we were apprehensive about giving out heavy penalties right out the gate. He said that after a year or two with the program going full-time, we would reevaluate how things are going, and if we are not having any major issues, we will keep moving in the same direction. Mr. Litchfield asked his next question about what resources or approval from the Commission would require the FOG BMP setup. Ms. Rodriguez explained that she is not sure how the enforcement side of that goes and how she is currently educating stores on how to use it. Mr. Edwards asked how the stores submit their records. She said that if they have them, she just looks at them as they are usually in a folder in an office at the store. Mr. Edwards noted that the BMP also provides training, and stores are required to show their training hours. He said the easiest way for stores to train employees on the topic would be to go to the FOG BMP website and create an account. Ms. Rodriguez explained more about the store's capabilities while using the FOG BMP website and how she can see anything the stores upload to their FOG BMP account. Mr. Bundrant asked if she had any ideas on the savings from implementing this program. She said she was unsure but would say it has provided a decent amount of savings.

- VII. Comments/Questions – Mr. Cox asked Mr. Edwards if he knew how much water usage the new building near Stafford High School would have. Mr. Edwards said he is unsure at the moment. He explained the water usage trends he sees with similar buildings.

Mr. Edwards brought up the annual flushing that will be taking place in the County.

Mr. Cox asked if we have anyone that works at night to turn people's water back on. Mr. Edwards explained the turn-off/turn-on process and the hours that the staff works to complete these tasks.



- VIII. Unfinished Business – there was no Unfinished Business Discussed
- IX. New Business – there was no New Business Discussed
- X. Adjournment – Mr. Cox motioned, seconded by Mr. Glazman and approved unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 8:04 p.m.