

WHITE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

MINUTES OF PUBLIC HEARING HELD JUNE 17, 2009, AT 12:00 NOON,

ON THE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT,

WHITE COUNTY CDBG BEAN CREEK PROJECT COMPLETION

A public hearing was conducted on the White County CDBG (Community Development Block Grant) Bean Creek Project on June 17, 2009, at 12:00 noon in the White County Commissioners' Office, White County Courthouse, Cleveland, Georgia. David Sargent of Georgia Mountains RDC conducted the hearing. See the attached sign-in sheet for a list of all attendees.

Mr. Sargent stated he was serving as the administrator for the White County CDBG Bean Creek Water Project. He further stated the purpose of the public hearing was for him to share the closing figures on expenditures made with the \$500,000 grant over the course of the five year project. Mr. Sargent explained the grant funds were expended in three phases, which made up the entire project. These three phases were:

- Phase I resulted in lines and meters being installed which provided clean and safe water to thirty-two (32) low to moderate income residents who qualified for CDBG funding in the Bean Creek Community. This phase was completed by the White County Water Authority contracting with a private sub-contractor.
- Phase II resulted in additional lines and thirteen (13) additional meters being installed to low to moderate income residents who qualified for CDBG funding in the Bean Creek Community by the White County Water Authority.
- Phase III was an amendment to the original plan and was a result of the White County Water Authority petitioning the Department of Community Affairs (DCA) to utilize the remaining grant funds totaling \$132,000 plus, along with the White County Water Authority's funds, in excess of \$200,000, to run a hard line from the water source to the Bean Creek Community. This was a result of two (2) wells which did not prove out – one due to contamination and one due to less than volume pressure – and instead of drilling a third well, the White County Water Authority petitioned DCA to use the remaining grant funds toward the cost to run a hard line. With Phase III of the project being completed and the final draw down having been done the project grant account balance is \$0.00. Mr. Sargent stated the final quarterly report was available at this time for review.

In summary, Mr. Sargent stated that 100% of the \$500,000 was expended on the water project – with \$480,000 funding construction costs and \$20,000 going toward administrative costs. He also stated forty-five (45) residences were served as a result of the grant and noted the public leverage with this project, being the funds matched by White County Government and the White County Water Authority, was approximately \$900,000 – for a total project cost of approximately \$1.4 million.

Following the summary of grant fund expenditures – Mr. Sargent opened the floor for public comment.

Caroline Crittenden asked if all contractors and engineers had been paid. David Sargent responded that all weekly draw-downs, including the Final Draw have been signed by the contractor and the engineer and processed. Ms. Crittenden asked about the issue with pending claims and litigation. Mr. Sargent responded he had received a legal opinion from White County Attorney, David Syfan that the project contract was between Water Management Systems, Inc. and the White County Water Authority. He was also informed by DCA that federal funds could not be used to satisfy any claims therefore those issues in question had nothing to do with the grant closing.

Ms. Crittenden asked when Phase I of the project was substantially completed and White County Water Authority took responsibility for the lines and meters. Gary Howe, Director of the White County Water Authority stated that he did not recall the dates and David Sargent stated this was all part of the grant file documents – however he did not recall the date.

Ms. Crittenden asked if the Phase I lines were chlorinated and flushed. Gary Howe affirmed the lines had been chlorinated, flushed, and approved by EPD (Environment Protection Division).

Ms. Crittenden asked if the dead end areas of the lines were being flushed. Mr. Howe responded that these areas were being flushed from time to time as complaints were received. He also indicated the hydrant at Bean Creek Missionary Baptist Church was where the flushing took place, since it was the end of the line.

David Sargent emphasized the purpose of this public hearing was to review the flow of the grant funds and not to deal with maintenance type issues, which needed to be discussed with the White County Water Authority in a separate meeting.

Ms. Crittenden asked if the Phase II lines had been chlorinated and Mr. Howe responded that this had been done, as it is a requirement of the EPD. Ms. Crittenden stated her concern was there is substantial mud and debris in the lines, following the installation of Phase II, resulting in the cost for residents to replace filters being more than their monthly water bill.

David Sargent asked Gary Howe if he could schedule time to investigate these complaints and Mr. Howe stated he would look into the situation. Mr. Howe cautioned that some of the debris could be coming from the service line, installed by the contractor, from the residences' existing plumbing, or from sediment in hot water heaters. Gary Howe and Edwin Nix, White County Water Authority Board Member, stated they would check the static pressure in the area as well as do more flushing. Ms. Crittenden said the three residences who have consistently had issues with low water pressure were Leona Dorsey, Neal Dorsey, and Clarence Trammell.

Leona Dorsey indicated she was experiencing the same issues with mud, debris, and low water pressure. Gary Howe indicated he had not received any complaints regarding water pressure; however he would investigate the complaints noted during the meeting.

Caroline Crittenden indicated the problems with mud and debris did not begin until Phase II was added. Gary Howe indicated it was possible there was sediment in the lines, which may have been stirred up when water was added to the Phase II lines. Edwin Nix indicated the water quality should improve as more water is used and passes through the lines.

Ms. Crittenden expressed her appreciation to the White County Water Authority for the assurance the issues discussed would be addressed. Mr. Howe emphasized if there were problems in the service lines running from the meter to residence or with the residences' plumbing that the White County Water Authority could not be responsible for the issues and the residents needed to insure there were no problems with the service line or their plumbing.

Caroline Crittenden asked if a transaction detail of the grant funds was available. David Sargent explained the summary of the transaction information was in the quarterly report and all details were contained in the grant file, which have not yet been audited. Mr. Sargent explained the transaction process and how weekly draw downs were approved by all parties involved and processed. Any outstanding bills which remained in question, not approved by the engineer, and not included in the pay outs made would have to be settled between the contractor and the White County Water Authority.

Alton Brown asked how many potential customers would now have access to public water services with the lines which had been ran. Edwin Nix indicated the potential for additional hook ups was an advantage of this project, with approximately 120 potential customers being located along the lines which were ran, as well as fire protection now being available – which is an advantage to the County's ISO rating.

Ms. Crittenden asked if the residences and businesses in Phase II would just come to the White County Water Authority to apply for water service at any time. Edwin Nix responded this was correct, they would be applying for a typical meter. Mr. Nix also stated Phase II resulted in a fire hydrant being located in front of the Santee Fire Station – leaving only two County Fire Stations without access to County water.

Ms. Crittenden asked Edwin Nix and Gary Howe if they thought, in their professional opinion; there would be bacteria in the water with the filters looking as they do. Both Mr. Nix and Mr.

Howe indicated the water was chlorinated and they did not believe there would be bacteria present with the chemicals used. Mr. Howe stated he would have the lines flushed and install a flusher valve, if he had one available, toward the end of the line.

Gary Howe asked if the residents were experiencing any odors. The residents stated they were experiencing odor problems. Mr. Howe explained this odor was indicating the water was not moving through the lines due to the low usage in the area and through the seven (7) miles of pipe included in the project. He stated with flushing and more customers accessing the system – the increased circulation should resolve all the issues of debris and odor.

David Sargent emphasized the White County Water Authority was not able to accept customers on the four (4) mile portion of line dedicated to the Bean Creek project until the grant process was closed and with the grant process now being closed additional customers, outside the scope of the grant, can be added.

Edwin Nix, David Sargent, and Caroline Crittenden all expressed their pride in the project and the work which has gone into making the project a reality.

Leona Dorsey asked if the information regarding this grant was available to the public for review. Mr. Sargent indicated all the information including the application and expenditures was in the grant file and available to the public if they wanted to take the time to go through the documents.

There being no further questions or comments; the meeting was adjourned at 12:30 P.M.

The minutes of the June 17, 2009 Public Hearing on the CDBG Bean Creek Project Completion are approved as stated this the 2nd day of July, 2009.

s/ Travis C. Turner
Travis Turner, Chairman

s/ Joe Campbell
Joe R. Campbell, Post 1

s/Craig Bryant
Craig Bryant, Post 2

s/ Shanda Smallwood
Shanda Smallwood, County Clerk