

# City of Gainesville

*City Hall  
200 East University Avenue  
Gainesville, Florida 32601*



## **Minutes - Draft**

**Tuesday, December 16, 2014**

**1:00 PM**

**City Hall, Room 17**

## **Base Rates and Fuel Adjustment Committee**

## CALL TO ORDER

*The meeting was called to order by Commissioner Poe at 1:06pm.*

## ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

*The agenda was adopted, as modified. General Government's refuse and stormwater items were discussed first, then GRU's multi-family water rates.*

## APPROVAL OF MINUTES

*The minutes of the 11/4/2014 Base Rates & Fuel Adjustment Committee Meeting were adopted, no comments.*

[140583.](#)

### **Minutes of the November 4, 2014 Base Rates & Fuel Adjustment Committee Meeting (B)**

**Attachments:** [140583 BRFA Meeting Minutes 20141216](#)

**RECOMMENDATION**

*Approve the minutes of the November 4, 2014 Base Rates & Fuel Adjustment Committee meeting as drafted.*

## CURRENT ACTION ITEMS

[140428.](#)

**GRU Residential Electric Tiering (B)**

**Attachments:**    [140428 GRU Residential Electric Tiering 20141021](#)  
[140428 GRU Residential Electric Tiering 20141104](#)  
[140428 GRU Multi-Family Water 20141216](#)

**RECOMMENDATION**        *The Committee receive supplemental information on tiered rates requested at the 11/04/2014 meeting.*

Scott Schlossman, GRU Lead Utility Analyst, gave a presentation on multi-family water rates. It was suggested that slide 9 should reflect 3 Kgals. David Richardson, Interim GRU CFO, stated a two year phasing solution was half way complete to ease the burden, but to ultimately recover costs.

Kathy Viehe, GRU Interim GM, reiterated the discussion stating the commission would like to have involvement, whether it's through a customer charge or the way it's already been proposed or some third option, and will hopefully stay involved during the Cost of Service Study. Confirmed that the Chair, Commissioner Poe, is also open to consider a third type of phasing. Once we get through the Cost of Service Study and get the methodology, we can figure out the phasing. Ms. Viehe also stated a referral has been made to the Regional Utility Committee to develop a Citizen Rate Advisory Committee. Discussion may begin this spring.

Commissioner Poe stated a recommendation should not be made until the Cost of Service Study is complete, which is anticipated to occur in mid-March 2015.

**140584. Stormwater and Refuse Billing/Collections Options (NB)**

RECOMMENDATION

*Discuss options for billing and collecting stormwater and refuse fees.*

Liz Waratuke, City Attorney, discussed the legal perspective of billing and collection for refuse and stormwater. There are two options to bill: (1) Add to the annual tax bill assessed by the Alachua County Tax Collector; or (2) set up a separate bill for these services, which duplicates existing billing services. She stated the stormwater fee cannot be placed on a tax bill; it would have to be a special assessment. Tax bills go to the owner, not the tenant. It would then be an annual fee instead of monthly. General Government could issue a separate bill, but that would require administrative staff and would duplicate the function currently provided by GRU. Can't stop collecting refuse just because someone stops paying; this would cause a public health issue. Commissioner Poe stated if the fee is placed on a tax bill, a request can still be made to change the size of container, but harder to do. Some questions were posed, such as: Is it in the best interest of the customer to continue billing as is, or put on the tax bill? Is the appropriate amount being charged? Can it be more efficient?

Commissioner Poe asked if we were violating the Anti-Trust Law. Liz Waratuke confirmed no, because a utility bill is being sent out every month with all of the services listed. Commissioner Wells stated he is open to consideration, but this would be difficult to justify since it's not a customer benefit. Does not want to move forward. Commissioner Poe agreed, stating he does not think it would affect the disconnects. Annual billing would not be as good as monthly.

Becky Rountree, GG Administrative Services Director, was in attendance and provided clarification on the billing and collection of refuse. Bill Shepherd, Interim AGM for GRU Customer/Administrative Services, and Herb Firsching, GRU Customer Operations Director, were also in attendance to provide additional information on how GRU currently bills and collects for these services.

**MEMBER COMMENT**

**CITIZEN COMMENT**

*Citizens spoke to the matter.*

**NEXT MEETING DATE**

*January 27, 2015 at 1:30pm*

## ADJOURNMENT

*The meeting was adjourned by Commissioner Poe at 2:50pm.*