

City of Gainesville

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



Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, July 9, 2008

3:30 PM

CITY HALL ROOM 16

Regional Utilities Committee

*Commissioner Craig Lowe, Chair
Commissioner Lauren Poe, Member
Commissioner Jack Donovan, Member*

Persons with disabilities who require assistance to participate in this meeting are requested to notify the Office of Equal Opportunity at 334-5051 or call the TDD phone line at 334-2069 at least two business days in advance.

CALL TO ORDER

Present: Craig Lowe, Jack Donovan and Lauren Poe

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

Commissioner Donovan requested that the agenda be modified to have staff give an update on the timing of a project being worked on by the Alachua County Energy Strategies Commission regarding a weatherization program. This is related to referral item #061214 regarding photovoltaic policies which was discussed at the June 10, 2008 RUC meeting.

Item #061214 - Photovoltaic Policies

Following the presentation on Project Share (#071064) the RUC discussed the weatherization program being considered by the Alachua County Energy Strategies Commission. Commissioner Donovan asked when the report was to be released and if the City needed to wait on its completion before we start.

There was discussion regarding GRU's current weatherization program and how the program is administered including the idea of putting the loan on the GRU bill and the issues related to doing that.

Per Commissioner Donovan's request the RUC asked for staff to report back on the due date for the proposal from the Alachua County Energy Strategies Commission and provide a report on the weatherization program when its been in place long enough to evaluate it.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

080156. Regional Utilities Committee Meeting Minutes for June 10, 2008 (B)

RECOMMENDATION *The Regional Utilities Committee approve the minutes for June 10, 2008 meeting as circulated.*

This matter was Approved as Recommended. The motion carried.

RUC Meeting Minutes for June 10 2008.pdf

CURRENT RUC ACTION ITEMS

071064. Project Share Program (NB)

The Regional Utilities Committee heard a presentation by Nona Jones, GRU Community Relations Director, regarding recommendations for increasing participation in the Project Share Program.

Commissioner Poe asked what our hard goal is for the program. Mrs. Jones responded that there is not a dollar figure at this time but one will be established in the future. Commissioner Poe further commented that he feels it's important to have a hard number and the way to arrive at that number would be to determine how many of our rate payers are in need of the program and what is our target group. Mrs. Jones replied that staff feels the same but right now our data collection mechanisms make it difficult to do that.

Commissioner Lowe suggested setting the bar a little over what we're doing now and raise it as we achieve success.

Commissioner Donovan asked that staff do some research on what the need is, then we could make a statement on how many families are in need in our appeal for help.

Kathy Viehe recommended that we think in terms of a community goal and not a GRU goal because in order to achieve success we will need a whole community effort.

Commissioner Lowe recognized Tom Cunilio who asked if anyone had ever thought of having a graduate student in social work analyze the data on this. Kathy Viehe replied that we would have to look at what we would use that information for.

Commissioner Lowe asked if customers can go from agency to agency. Kathy Viehe replied that yes they could and that the United Way had discussed having a data base system to help control some of that. Commissioner Donovan advised that they did have a system, but wasn't sure if they were still using it. Kathy Viehe added that it might be worth contacting the United Way to see what kind of data they have.

Commissioner Poe asked if they wanted to recommend a certain goal or hold off? Commissioner Donovan advised he would like to get some data back from staff before doing that. Commissioner Lowe agreed that we should get the data and perhaps have staff recommend a starting goal. He also agreed with the concept of a community goal.

Commissioner Lowe asked if the Committee was interested in approving the recommendations presented by the staff in the handout. Commissioner Donovan moved that the recommendations presented could go forward to the City Commission and whatever data staff comes back with could perhaps include a recommended goal.

Kathy Viehe asked for clarification if the RUC would be comfortable with staff getting started on the recommendations right away. Commissioner Lowe replied that he didn't think any of them required Commission approval. Bob Hunzinger stated that discussing this with the City Commission will be an opportunity to publicize it.

RECOMMENDATION *The Regional Utilities Committee receive an update on this item.*

This matter was Recommended for Approval, as shown above. The motion carried.

Backup for 071064 Project Share 6 10 08.pdf

070528.**Nuclear Energy Option (NB)**

The Regional Utilities Committee heard a report on the status of the nuclear plant being proposed by Progress Energy. There was discussion about the time line for plant operation and the type of reactor that might be used. There was also discussion about where the various members of the coalition are in terms of being ready to make commitments to the project.

Commissioner Donovan asked for a report from Ed Regan about his European solar tour. It was suggested that the RUC request using one of the workshop meetings that are being scheduled for receiving this report.

Commissioner Donovan brought up the issue of having another workshop to bring in other outside experts that could speak subjectively about all the different factors we need to be considering. Commissioner Lowe moved that at our next meeting we pool the names from the RUC, staff and citizens and select presenters for an upcoming workshop. Commissioner Donovan and Commissioner Poe both agreed.

RECOMMENDATION *The Regional Utilities Committee receive an update on this item.*

Discussed

070181.**Forest Stewardship Issues (NB)**

The RUC heard an update from Ed Regan on Forest Stewardship issues. Commissioner Lowe brought up the issue of obtaining biomass from Alachua County Forever Land, the Alachua Conservation Trust lands and City of Gainesville land because of encroachment of hardwoods in what would naturally be a pine forest.

Commissioner Poe asked how cooperative Nacogdoches was with other communities where they have built plants and if they were using stewardship practices where they've been. Ed Regan replied that they had.

There was discussion about the use of rail to deliver wood to the plant.

Commissioner Lowe recommended that we bring this item back to the next meeting and invite all the members of the ad hoc committee to attend. Ed Regan recommended inviting a representative from Nacogdoches to attend as well.

RECOMMENDATION *The Regional Utilities Committee receive an update on this item.*

Discussed

RUC Forestry Presentation October 9 2007.pdf
Backup for Forest Stewardship Item #070181 Oct 9.pdf
Memo to RUC re Backup for Item #070181 Feb 12 2008.pdf
Forest Product Procurement Standards Item #070181 Attachment Feb 12 2008.pdf
Backup for 070181 Draft Forest Certification Standards May 13 08.pdf
Backup for Aug 13 2008 RUC Meeting Item #070181.pdf

OUTSTANDING REFERRALS

080159. Regional Utilities Committee Outstanding Referral Status Report (B)

There was a brief discussion about how some of the outstanding referrals intertwine and the possibility of discussing some of them at a future City Commission workshop.

Mr. Hunzinger presented the RUC with an idea he had about having a Commission retreat toward the end of summer.

Commissioner Donovan requested that staff bring the RUC copies of the last two vision statements.

RECOMMENDATION *The Regional Utilities Committee review the Outstanding Referral Status Report for July 9, 2008 and select items for discussion at the next meeting.*

Discussed

RUC Outstanding Referrals status report July 9 08.pdf

MEMBER COMMENT

CITIZEN COMMENT

NEXT MEETING DATE

The next meeting is scheduled for August 13, 2008.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 5:40 p.m.