

# **City of Gainesville**

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



## **Meeting Minutes**

**Wednesday, January 14, 2009**

**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

*Mr. Hunzinger requested that item #070360 be moved from being the last item on the agenda to being third on the agenda. The Committee approved moving the item forward.*

## APPROVAL OF MINUTES

### **080727. Regional Utilities Committee Meeting Minutes for December 10, 2008 (B)**

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

**This matter was Approved as Recommended. The motion carried.**

RUC Meeting Minutes for Dec 10 2008.pdf

## CURRENT RUC ACTION ITEMS

### **070487. Florida's Electrical Reserve Margins (NB)**

*Mr. Mark Bennett, who serves as GRU's Control Area Manager, gave a brief presentation on the operation protocols used under extreme cases and summarized statewide capacity.*

*Commissioner Lowe asked if this is what others in the industry were doing and Mark Bennett replied that it is all very well coordinated throughout our region.*

**MOTION:**

*Commissioner Poe moved to approve the recommendation and Commissioner Donovan seconded the motion. Commissioner Lowe agreed that the RUC would move forward with the recommendation to request the City Commission remove this item from the referral list.*

**RECOMMENDATION**      *The Regional Utilities Committee hear a brief report from staff and recommend the City Commission remove this item from the referral list.*

**This matter was Approved as Recommended. The motion carried.**

**080520.****Utility Tier for the Elderly in Gainesville (NB)**

*Diane Wilson from GRU Strategic Planning gave a presentation.*

*Commissioner Donovan expressed that he was very much in favor of a needs based assistance program and knows that Project Share is trying to do that. He also asked if it was legal to transfer money from GRU into a program to help people in financial crisis.*

*Raymond O. Manasco, Utilities Attorney, responded that based on his research and opinions from our Bond Counsel it is probably not doable. But once funds are moved through the General Fund Transfer then it would be legal to allocate or appropriate portions of that transfer. It could not be as part of the rate base for one group of residential customers essentially subsidizing another.*

*Commissioner Donovan asked how the General Fund Transfer was established.*

*Commissioner Lowe pointed out that discussion about the General Fund Transfer is a referral on the RUC list. Mr. Hunzinger advised that discussion will probably take place in February or March.*

*There was discussion about the weatherization program and how many low income individuals and families are being helped.*

***MOTION MADE:***

*Commissioner Lowe asked if there was a motion on the recommendation for the RUC to receive a presentation and recommend to the City Commission to remove the item from the referral list. Commissioner Donovan made the motion the recommendation be approved and Commissioner Poe seconded it. Commissioner Poe suggested that staff discuss this with Commissioner Henry.*

**RECOMMENDATION**

*The Regional Utilities Committee: 1) receive a presentation from staff; and 2) recommend to the City Commission to remove this item from the referral list.*

**This matter was Approved as Recommended. The motion carried.**

**080480.****Status Update on the City Commission Strategic Initiative to Monitor the Progress of the Clean-up of Cabot Carbon/Koppers Superfund Site (B)**

**Strategic initiatives have been referred to Standing Committees and the Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA), to promote efficient and effective communication streams between elected officials, city staff and Gainesville residents concerning the implementation of the City's Strategic Plan. This item is a request for the Regional Utilities Committee to receive an update on the progress of Strategic Initiative 7.1: Monitor the progress of the clean-up of Cabot**

**Carbon/Koppers Superfund Site.**

*Lila Stewart, Planner, made some opening comments then turned the presentation over to Fred Murry. Mr. Murry gave an update on what is happening with the Koppers clean up project and proposed scheduling a meeting sometime in March to discuss the issue regarding the land use designation.*

*Commissioner Poe asked when EPA was going to release their recommendations.*

*Rick Hutton responded that EPA was to issue a draft record of decision later on this year.*

*Commissioner Donovan asked if there was an update on the timing of the movement of the contamination towards any point of vulnerability.*

*Rick Hutton responded by stating that one of the things we have been able to accomplish with EPA is getting more testing and the placement of multi-level Floridian aquifer wells. The good news is the contamination doesn't appear to be wide spread throughout the site nor does there appear to be a large highly concentrated plume moving off site right now to where we have a really acute immediate concern. It does not alleviate the long term concern.*

*There was discussion about the impact of a major development like the Springhills project and if it could draw the chemicals more rapidly in a direction that we would not want it to run.*

*Commissioner Lowe expressed his hope that there would be minimum limitation on future land use for the site and he is advocating for a clean up to residential standards.*

*Commissioner Poe stated that it was his understanding that no matter what they do the site would be shut down for two years minimum and that Beazer was putting significant pressure on Koppers to cease operations there altogether.*

*There was discussion about the issue of cleaning the site to residential standards versus mixed use. Fred Murry commented that it was possible if Beazer has to clean the site to residential standards then they may not put anything there but a fence.*

*Commissioner Lowe asked if there were any more questions or comments from the committee or members of the public. He further stated that the recommendation was to receive an update and that the item would remain in committee.*

**RECOMMENDATION**

*The Regional Utilities Committee receive an update on the progress of Strategic Initiative 7.1: Monitor the progress of the clean-up of Cabot Carbon/Koppers Superfund Site.*

**Discussed**

Backup for item #080480 Strategic Initiative on Koppers 1 14 09.pdf

**080482.****Status Update on the City Commission Strategic Initiative to Develop a Coordinated Response at the Local Level to Address Energy Policy and Climate Change (B)**

Strategic initiatives have been referred to Standing Committees and the Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA), to promote efficient and effective communication streams between elected officials, city staff and Gainesville residents concerning the implementation of the City's Strategic Plan. This item is a request for the Regional Utilities Committee to receive an update on the progress of Strategic Initiative 7.3: Develop a coordinated response at the local level to address energy policy and climate change.

*Ed Regan, Assistant General Manager for Strategic Planning introduced Paul Folkers, Assistant City Manager, who gave a brief presentation on the item which included the background and progress to date. Ed Regan handed out a new brochure that had been prepared that explains what we're doing.*

*Commissioner Lowe stated that it was good to see all parts of the City working together. This item will remain in Committee for future updates.*

**RECOMMENDATION**

*The Regional Utilities Committee receives an update on the progress of Strategic Initiative 7.3: Develop a coordinated response at the local level to address energy policy and climate change.*

**Discussed**

Backup for item #080482 Strategic Initiative on Energy Policy 1 14 09.pdf

**071064.****Project Share Program (B)**

*The RUC did not have time to discuss this item. It was deferred to the next meeting. Commissioner Donovan did request that a brief status report be forwarded to the RUC regarding the status of the Project Share program.*

**RECOMMENDATION**

*The Regional Utilities Committee: 1) hear an update on Project Share including initiatives to increase funds and awareness; and 2) recommend to the City Commission that the item be removed from the referral list.*

**Deferred**

Backup for 071064 Project Share 6 10 08.pdf

Backup for #071064 Project Share 2 11 09.pdf

Backup for #071064 Project Share Annual Report 2 11 09 .pdf

**070360.****GRU Rate Structure (NB)**

*This item was moved up to third on the agenda. Diane Wilson from GRU's Strategic*

*Planning Department gave a presentation to the RUC. Mrs. Wilson reviewed the customer's concerns which included the charges for service, tiered rates, apparent subsidy by low users and the business partner discount program.*

*Commissioner Lowe asked if staff had a recent conversation with Mr. Konish regarding this referral.*

*Mrs. Wilson responded that she had spoken with him earlier in the afternoon (1/14/09). She further explained that what initially started his concern, which then opened all of the categories, was when GRU moved to the new billing system (SAP). The bill print was not working correctly so the numbers were not displaying correctly on the bill which did cause some confusion.*

*Commissioner Lowe noted that the recommendation was to recommend removing this item from the referral list. Commissioner Donovan and Commissioner Poe both agreed. The RUC continued to the next item on the agenda.*

*At approximately 4:40 p.m. Mr. Jim Konish arrived at the RUC meeting. After the completion of two other agenda items, Commissioner Lowe recognized Mr. Konish who spoke to this matter.*

*Mr. Konish advised the Committee that he did not know about the item being on the agenda until 1 p.m. on this date (1/14/09). Mr. Konish stated that the issue is not that the bills were not easily understood but the issue is rate structure.*

*Commissioner Lowe stated that the Committee had heard information about the structure of the tiers within residential and how that related to large business program as well and about the monthly customer charges.*

*Mr. Konish stated he had not seen the report and asked to make a couple of comments. Mr. Konish advised the Committee that he has a number of different accounts including large buildings on one meter and apartments. He expressed concern that we are charging late fees if you are only one day late and even if the due date is Sunday. Mr. Konish brought up several issues including: the business partners discount; the annual percentage increase in commercial versus residential rates that seem to go up at a greater percentage every year; high minimum charges; and conservation. Mr. Konish stated that there is a rate structure that would promote conservation and it's not the one we have. He suggested contacting PURC for assistance in developing a conservation rate structure.*

*Commissioner Lowe asked if staff had a response at this time.*

*Ed Regan advised that he would be glad to schedule a meeting with Mr. Konish and go over all of his concerns.*

*Commissioner Lowe stated that the rate structure is addressed essentially on an annual basis during budget time and perhaps Mr. Konish could bring up his concerns during that time.*

**RECOMMENDATION**

*The Regional Utilities Committee recommend the City*

*Commission remove this item from the Regional Utilities Committee (RUC) referral list.*

**Approved as Recommended**

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RUC Rate Structure Presentation October 9 2007.pdf

Backup for GRU Rate Structure Item 070360 Oct 9.pdf

**MEMBER COMMENT**

**CITIZEN COMMENT**

*See item #070360 regarding comments made by Mr. Jim Konish related to that referral. The item had been heard earlier in the meeting prior to Mr. Konish's arrival.*

## OUTSTANDING REFERRALS

**080740. Regional Utilities Committee Outstanding Referral Status Report (B)**

*The RUC did not have time to discuss this item. It will be deferred to the next meeting.*

**RECOMMENDATION**      *The Regional Utilities Committee review the Outstanding Referral Status Report dated January 14, 2009.*

**Deferred**

RUC Outstanding Referrals status report January 14 09.pdf

## NEXT MEETING DATE

## ADJOURNMENT

*The meeting adjourned at 5:45 p.m.*