

City of Gainesville

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



Meeting Agenda

February 09, 2006

3:00 PM

GRU Administration Building Multi-Purpose Room

Regional Utilities Committee

*Commissioner Ed Braddy, Chair
Commissioner Craig Lowe, Member
Commissioner Jack Donovan, Member*

CALL TO ORDER**ROLL CALL****ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA****APPROVAL OF MINUTES****050883 Regional Utilities Committee Meeting Minutes of November 10, 2005 (B)****RECOMMENDATION**

The Regional Utilities Committee approve the minutes of November 10, 2005 as circulated.

RUC Nov 10 05 Minutes.pdf

COMMITTEE ACTION ITEMS**050283****GRUCom Services to Newberry (NB)**

Explanation: For many years the City of Newberry has operated a cable television system which serves subscribers within its city limits. The existing system is in urgent need of upgrade and repair. Therefore, the City is currently evaluating alternatives for providing video services to its existing subscribers and to additional customers in other parts of its city limits. Newberry also lacks competition in broadband Internet access and telephone services for its residents. Transport of these services would substantially enhance the feasibility of replacing the existing cable television system with a state-of-the-art communications system. The City of Newberry is grandfathered as a video services provider under Florida law, passed during the 2005 Legislative Session (CS/CS/SB1322) "SB 1322", but the City would have to comply with certain administrative provisions included in the law if it desires to also provide advanced data and/or voice services. However, under SB 1322 Newberry may provide transport services to another municipality as government-to-government services are excluded from the bill.

Under SB1322, the City of Gainesville d/b/a GRUCom is grandfathered as a provider of advanced broadband and voice services. Furthermore, GRUCom already provides advanced services to three (3) commercial customers in Newberry. Therefore, a working partnership between the Cities of Newberry and Gainesville may be feasible whereby GRUCom would use the City of Newberry's proposed fiber optic communications system to provide commercial data, broadband Internet, and voice services for residents and businesses in Newberry to the benefit of both parties.

The City of Newberry is very interested pursuing this relationship and has expressed an interest in beginning work on an agreement with the City of

Gainesville. Approval of this recommendation will allow Utility staff to enter into negotiations with the City of Newberry in this regard.

RECOMMENDATION

The Regional Utilities Committee hear a presentation from staff and make a recommendation to the City Commission to authorize the General Manager or his designee to negotiate an agreement with the City of Newberry to allow the interconnection of the City's fiber optic network with Newberry's proposed fiber to the home system and to provide the terms and conditions under which Newberry will transport GRUCom's services to residential and commercial customers in the City of Newberry.

Legislative History

8/8/05	City Commission	Referred (7 - 0)	Regional Utilities Committee
9/8/05	Regional Utilities Committee	Discussed	

050746**General Policy for Sewer Connections (B)**

Explanation: On January 9, 2006 the City Commission referred the issue of General Policy for Sewer Connections to the Regional Utilities Committee. The existing residential extension policy can lead to situations where a single resident bears the entire cost of an extension without financial assistance from neighbors. After the extension is constructed, neighbors then connect and only pay connection fees.

This issue was brought to the attention of the City Commission by Mr. Dale Syfert who had requested a quote for a wastewater extension. He ultimately decided to rework his drain field as it was his least cost option. After Mr. Syfert requested via email to Commissioner Braddy that GRU amend the existing policy to eliminate the chances of inequity in extension cost assignment, the Commission took up the issue and referred it to the Regional Utilities Committee (RUC).

A workgroup consisting of personnel most closely associated with this issue was assembled and tasked with reviewing the existing policy, exploring other policy options, and forwarding a recommendation on whether the existing policy should be retained or amended. The workgroup has concluded this effort and recommends that the current policy be maintained to encourage future connections to existing lines and thereby maximize utilization of existing infrastructure, to maintain a "user pay" policy, and to have a policy that ultimately results in lower customer dissatisfaction than the alternatives considered. It is also noted that special assessments will continue to be an available option to provide a broad neighborhood benefit.

RECOMMENDATION

The Regional Utilities Committee receive a

presentation from Staff summarizing our current extension policies and various policy options, particularly as they relate to extending water or wastewater service to existing residences.

Legislative History

12/12/05	City Commission	No Action Taken	
1/9/06	City Commission	Referred (7 - 0)	Regional Utilities Committee

sewer extension policy matrix ruc feb 9 06.pdf

050791

Undergrounding Utilities in the Fifth Avenue Pleasant Street CRA Area (NB)

Explanation: At the December 19, 2005 meeting of the CRA the members heard concerns from members of the Fifth Avenue Pleasant Street Board regarding undergrounding on the NW 5th Avenue streetscape project and the model block. The CRA requested the City Commission at its January 23, 2006 meeting to refer the issue of the funding of underground utilities in the fifth avenue corridor and model block to the Regional Utilities Committee and bring back a report.

RECOMMENDATION

The Regional Utilities Committee hear a presentation on the streetscape partnership with the CRA to underground facilities along N.W. 5th Avenue from GRU staff and the CRA manager. The presentation will include a review of the six phase plan to place utilities underground in conjunction with the planned streetscape and a discussion of the model block area.

Legislative History

1/23/06	City Commission	Approved as Recommended (5 - 0 - 2 Absent)	
1/23/06	City Commission	Referred	Regional Utilities Committee

MEMBER COMMENT

CITIZEN COMMENT

OUTSTANDING REFERRALS

050457 Streetlights and Electric Rates

Legislative History

9/26/05 City Commission Approved as Regional Utilities
Recommended and Committee
Referred (6 - 0 - 1 Absent)

031086 Utility Policies for Residential Grid-connected Solar Electric Systems

Legislative History

3/29/04 City Commission Referred (7 - 0) Regional Utilities
Committee
3/3/05 Regional Utilities Discussed
Committee
9/8/05 Regional Utilities Discussed
Committee
11/10/05 Regional Utilities Discussed
Committee

NEW BUSINESS

NEXT MEETING DATE - April 13, 2006

ADJOURNMENT