

City of Gainesville

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



Minutes

June 5, 2017

3:00 PM

**County Administration Building, 12 SE 1st Street
Grace Knight Auditorium**

Joint Water Policy Committee

City Commissioner Adrian Hayes-Santos (Chair)

County Commissioner Mike Byerly (Vice Chair)

Gainesville Mayor Lauren Poe (Member)

County Commissioner Robert "Hutch" Hutchinson (Member)

Micanopy Mayor Ginny Mance (Member)

CALL TO ORDER**ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA**

The agenda was adopted as drafted.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES**170065. Minutes of the April 3, 2017 Joint Water Policy Committee Meeting (B)**

Attachments: [170065 - JWPC 4-3-17 Meeting Minutes 20170605](#)

The minutes were approved as drafted.

RECOMMENDATION *Approve the minutes as drafted.*

ACTION / DISCUSSION ITEMS**170106. Non-Point Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Permit Implementation Program (B)**

An overview of the NPDES permit and implementation program will be provided.

Attachments: [170106A PPT on GCWP 20170605.pdf](#)
[170106B AC_MS4_NOI_Issuance_Cycle3_Year2_20170605.pdf](#)
[170106C Alachua County Audit Report FY16 20170605.pdf](#)
[170106D COG_MS4_NOI_Issuance_Cycle3_Year2_20170605.pdf](#)
[170106E City of Gainesville Audit Report FY16 20170605.pdf](#)
[170106F NPDES Program Budget 2013 to 17 20170605.pdf](#)

Sally Adkins and Stacie Greco gave a presentation to the Committee about the NPDES Permit Implementation Program. The presentation is posted on the County website. Through the Gainesville Clean Water Partnership, the City of Gainesville Public Works Department, the Alachua County Public Works department, and the Florida Department of Transportation District 2 work collaboratively to meet their individual NPDES Municipal Separate Stormwater Sewer Systems (MS4s) Stormwater Permits. All three entities are required by their permit to facilitate public outreach and involvement, maintain an Illicit Discharge Detection and Elimination program, and map stormwater infrastructure. The City and County are required to have a onstruction Site Stormwater Runoff Control program and manage a Pollution Prevention/Good Housekeeping program. The presentation outlined each permit element with examples of how the Partnership was fulfilling them (e.g. Turf SWAP program, the Clean Creeks Hotline, and pollution prevention training for field employees). Alachua County Environmental Protection Department assists with implementing much of the permit requirements. The NPDES Permits and the Partnership are renewed every 5 years, with reporting due to FDEP every other year.

The current NDPES Permits expire on February 28, 2018.

Commissioner Hutchinson: wanted to know the efforts made at local retailers to distribute information about fertilizers at the point-of-sale.

The ensuing discussion revealed that information about the fertilizer code, irrigation code, and landscaping BMPs has been voluntarily displayed at smaller stores, but not in big-box stores. There may be a State law preempting local governments from enforcing fertilizer requirements at point-of-sale.

Commissioner Hutchinson: wanted to know the efforts made at planting low-maintenance turf species on road-side right-of-ways.

There was a discussion on the high cost of planting and establishing aforementioned species. FDOT had a successful statewide commitment to reduce fertilizer use on plants on right-of- ways. City already does not fertilize right-of-way, but is looking into implementing practices based off FDOT report.

Commissioner Hutchinson: wanted to know about updates to drainage ditch maintenance practices in response to concerns about phosphorous runoff.

Alice Rankeillor responded that the City has changed vegetation management in ditches. Excavation is done reactively to blockages, and in future Watershed Management Plans there will be a systematic approach regarding digging depth.

Commissioner Hutchinson: wanted to know to what extent the City discourages interaction with creeks.

Sally Adkins stated that the Parks Department discourages citizens going into the creeks within parks due to erosion, coliforms, etc. Gainesville Clean Water Partnership does encourage interaction with creek, but not immersion. There are also potential litigious concerns for the City regarding their use. Commissioner Hutchinson wants to encourage use of creeks by children to further motivate clean creek initiatives.

Commissioner Hutchinson: wanted to know if there were conflicts for installing an irrigation well at Grace Marketplace for a community garden.

Neither GRU nor the county was aware of any prohibitions in place. GRU will investigate the issue and report back to the Committee.

Commissioner Byerly: wanted to know how the NDPES permit fits within framework of other water quality programs resulting from the Clean Water Act and how it applies to other municipalities.

Sally Adkins outlined the various NPDES programs and described what an NPDES permit allows. Chris Bird stated that requirements to reduce TMDLs will most likely drive the permits in the future. NPDES MS4 Stormwater Permit requirements are driven by population size/density, and other municipalities in Alachua will be required to obtain NPDES permits as they grow in population.

Commissioner Byerly: wanted to know the frequency and purpose of creek inspections.

It was stated that there are reports every 5 years with the study covering a 2-3 year

period for bioassessments conducted on the creeks. EPD also collects water quality data from select sites on a quarterly schedule. There was a recommendation to increase funding for sites on the Santa Fe River.

Commissioner Byerly: wanted to know how often Outfall Reconnaissance Inventories (ORI) are done. It was stated that ORI's are done periodically, with a focus on one watershed before moving to another. Most of the urban creeks are done on a revolving 5 year basis or as needed, but are supplemented by quarterly hotspot monitoring and an annual Hazardous Materials Facility Inspection Program.

Commissioner Byerly: wanted to know if the County performs street sweeping, and if an enhanced street sweeping regime would improve water quality.

There is one operational street sweeper that responds to complaints, but does not follow a set routine. The county street sweeper is subject to frequent breakdowns and expenses. There was a request to have County staff investigate its further use.

Mayor Poe: wanted to know if there was benefit to merging City/County NPDES permits.

Sally Adkins explained that merged permits mean each entity, the County and City, are held responsible for the other, while still maintaining separate staff. There is already a high degree of collaboration between the two. There also may be legal basis for keeping the permits separate. Mayor Poe would like to further investigate a joint permit if it is economically wise.

Mayor Poe: wanted to know why signs are put up at creeks, by whom, and what the risk of exposure to harmful bacteria is.

County staff explained that the creeks have had coliform levels since testing started. Bacteria can enter through the gastrointestinal or the parenteral route.

Mayor Poe: wanted to know the results of a compost trial that would replace fertilizer.

Philip Mann said he would bring back a report for the next meeting.

Mayor Poe: wanted to know if there had been any analysis on a septic tank replacement program, and what amount of pollution was due to septic leaks and runoff.

Both City and County staff explained that there had been DNA analysis on creeks many years ago to determine the source of the coliforms. Results of the study were inconclusive, with the decision made to combat all sources rather than focus on one. Mayor Poe asked if it made economic sense to encourage a switch based on water quality. Septic tank inspections at point-of-sale was suggested as an alternative.

Mayor Poe: wanted to know if there is money earmarked for NPDES programs

There was discussion of exploring the possibility of using Florida Forever money to support water initiatives in FY 2018.

Mayor Poe: wanted to know more about how the money was split between public outreach and regulatory enforcement.

County staff stated that budget was based off of perceived needs.

Commissioner Hayes-Santos: wanted to explore the possibility of passing an ordinance to require information about fertilizers at stores that sell it in the City.

It was suggested that the current fertilizer ordinance be amended to include that, with a resolution to discuss it further at the next meeting.

Commissioner Hayes-Santos: wanted to know what can be done policy wise to make creeks safe for recreation, and requested that City and County staff look into options; he wanted to know if there are currently enough construction inspectors

Sally Adkins explained that the City has received approval to hire an additional inspector to share with another department.

A motion was made by Commissioner Mike Byerly:

- 1. To have County staff evaluate the environmental benefits of enhanced street sweeping for the County and relay the status of the existing street sweeper and its frequency of use in a report back to the Joint Water Policy Committee*
- 2. To have staff evaluate whether or not a point-of-sale inspection of septic systems is something that the City and/or County can act on unilaterally under current law*
- 3. To have staff determine whether there is a legal basis to require retailers to provide information regarding fertilizers at the point-of-sale*
- 4. To have staff evaluate what theoretically can be done to improve water quality in the urban area that has never been done, regardless of impedance to implementation, and prepare for a focused discussion on the topic at a later meeting*

The motion passed by a 4-0 vote.

RECOMMENDATION

The Committee hear the staff presentation and discuss as necessary.

CITIZEN COMMENT

None

COMMISSIONER COMMENT

None

NEXT MEETING DATE

August 7, 2017 @ 1:00 P.M.

ADJOURNMENT