

## MINUTES

Spartanburg Sanitary Sewer District Commission, Regular Meeting, held at 200 Commerce Street, Spartanburg, SC, January 28, 2025 at 2:15 p.m.

Copies of the agenda were forwarded to the following news media: Spartanburg Herald-Journal, The Spartan Weekly, Greenville News, The Greer Citizen, Hometown News, WSPA-TV 7, WYFF-TV 4, WLOS-TV 13, WHNS Fox Carolina, WORD News Radio, WOLT-FM Radio, Tribune Times, and the Times Examiner.

Commissioners present were Mses. Barnes and Viney and Messrs. Blanton, Littlejohn, Montgomery, Rice, and Willard. No one was absent.

Attendees: Guy Boyle, Cam Cole, Gene Jackson, Robert Walden, Rick Jolley, Remsen Parrish, Kevin Smith, Kevin Brown, Ken Tuck, Corey Reid, Harriette Stinson, Jennifer Candler, Jon Morgan, Trish Heatherington.

The meeting was opened with the following statement:

This is a regular meeting of the Spartanburg Sanitary Sewer District Commission. Written notice of the date, time, and place for this meeting, along with the agenda, has been posted in the lobby and on the Spartanburg Water website, and copies mailed to local and nearby news media, at least 24 hours prior to this meeting.

### 1. CALL TO ORDER

Commission Chair, Louie Blanton, called the meeting to order.

### 2. INVOCATION

Commissioner Littlejohn opened with a prayer.

### 3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING OF DECEMBER 3, 2024

Ms. Barnes moved and Mr. Montgomery seconded the motion to approve the minutes as written. The motion passed unanimously.

### OLD BUSINESS

NONE

### AGENDA ITEMS 4-8 FINANCE AND PROCUREMENT

#### 4. MONTHLY FINANCIAL REPORT

A financial summary of SSSD expenditures and revenues for the five-month period ending November 30, 2024, and for the six-month period ending December 31, 2024, were reviewed by Cam Cole, the Chief Financial Officer. An explanation was provided for the favorable and unfavorable budget variances.

The above was provided as information to the Commission

**5. CAPITALIZATION POLICY**

Ms. Cole stated that Karyn Lemon with Halliday, Schwartz, & Company presented the Annual Comprehensive Financial Report (ACFR) at the December 3, 2024, meeting. During that meeting, Commissioner Willard asked if the \$1,000 threshold on items that are capitalized was too low. Upon further review of the Capitalization Policy, management recommended an increase to \$5,000. This change would be implemented in the new budget year beginning July 1, 2025.

Mr. Montgomery moved and Mr. Littlejohn seconded the motion to approve management’s recommendation for approval of the threshold of capital assets from \$1,000 to \$5,000. The motion passed unanimously.

**6. BID FOR SEWER FACILITIES MOWING AND MAINTENANCE CONTRACT**

Bids were received on January 15, 2025, for contractor services to mow and maintain 101 selected Spartanburg Sanitary Sewer District facilities. Invitations to bid were forwarded to prospective bidders, publicized in the local media, and posted to the Spartanburg Water website.

Services are currently provided by Forest Edge, LLC, and Heritage Land Management at an annual cost of \$296,280.

Bids were received from seven contractors. A tabulation of the responses is listed below and includes annual costs.

<b><u>BIDDER</u></b>	<b><u>AMOUNT OF BID</u></b>
Heritage Land Management Campobello, SC	\$232,662
Clipping Grounds Lawn Care Una, SC	\$241,210
Roebuck Wholesale Nursery & Landscaping Roebuck, SC	\$252,848
Bruce Lawncare and Landscaping Roebuck, SC	\$255,610
Forest Edge Roebuck, SC	\$269,777
Parris Lawn Management Spartanburg, SC	\$399,870
Jolly’s Lawn Care Service Cowpens, SC	\$400,417

Based on the results of the bid evaluations, management recommended awarding Heritage Land Management at an annual cost of \$232,662. Funding will be provided by the SSSD operating budget.

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Remsen Parrish provided the Commission with an overview of the Bid for the Sewer Facilities Mowing and Maintenance Contract agenda item.

Ms. Viney moved and Mr. Littlejohn seconded the motion to approve management's recommendation to award the contract to Heritage Land Management. The motion passed unanimously.

## **7. ENTERPRISE FLEET MANAGEMENT**

Mr. Parrish provided the Commission with the current vehicle fleet management strategy for Spartanburg Water. Current fleet vehicles are eligible for depreciation and replacement after ten years or 150,000 miles. Replacement is determined by age, miles, and maintenance spend. The average age of current vehicle fleet is 7.1 years and the current life cycle is 11.67 years. The current total fleet size is 133. The estimated annual expense for total maintenance is \$348,000. The total fuel spend is \$420,000 annually. Mr. Parrish provided the fleet replacement plan and estimated vehicle fleet annual expense through the end of FY2031.

Mr. Parrish provided information and explained program benefits about the Enterprise Fleet Management program that management recommended for approval.

This program would allow Spartanburg Water to turn the fleet over every six years and include vehicles with the most up-to-date safety features, as well as less maintenance and improved fuel economy. In addition to age, miles driven, and maintenance cost, resell value will be taken into account in the determination of vehicle replacement. Enterprise will provide insight regarding new vehicle technology and up to 15% cost reduction on new vehicles purchased using Enterprise national purchasing volume. Vehicle resell value through Enterprise is estimated to be 120% of the Commercial Value Index.

Mayor Rice asked if Spartanburg Water is considering electric vehicles. Mr. Parrish stated that Enterprise has informed management that infrastructure is not in place to support all electric vehicles.

Ms. Viney asked about fuel cost and type of vehicles that would be offered. Mr. Parrish responded that Enterprise is knowledgeable of Spartanburg Water fleet needs and it will be inclusive of all makes.

Mr. Willard asked if the Enterprise Fleet Management Program is a lease program. Mr. Parrish stated that Spartanburg Water would purchase the vehicle, but Enterprise would hold the title. Spartanburg Water would provide the insurance, taxes, maintenance, etc.

Mr. Boyle stated that management has researched this program and it can be as specific and as inclusive as Spartanburg Water would like it to be. Mr. Boyle noted that he would also review the contract prior to the agreement being executed and if there is anything to cause concern it would be brought back before the Commission. This would not take effect until the Fiscal Year 2025/2026 Budget, so there will be time to discuss it further in budget work sessions if necessary.

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Mr. Littlejohn asked what the safety record of vehicles is. Mr. Boyle noted that a safety update will be provided to the Commission on an upcoming agenda, and it will include this type of information.

Mr. Willard asked if Spartanburg Water doesn't own the vehicle and Enterprise is holding the title, how would the vehicle be depreciated. Cam Cole and Mr. Boyle stated that capital items can be depreciated. This was later confirmed with the auditor and Mr. Boyle followed up with an email to the Commission on February 7, 2025.

Ms. Barnes moved and Mr. Littlejohn seconded the motion to approve management's recommendation to approve the recommendations of the proposed plan on the vehicle fleet strategy to Enterprise Fleet Management. The motion passed unanimously.

**8. 2024 ANNUAL RECRUITMENT REPORT**

Mr. Boyle stated that the timing of the annual recruitment report to the Spartanburg Sanitary Sewer Commission and Commissioners of Public Works of the City of Spartanburg, comes at a time when there are a lot of changes taking place in our society regarding recruitment practices and values tied to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion. There is also a lot of confusion about what certain terms mean and how certain words apply to us in this culture that we've all chosen to be a part of.

Mr. Boyle read a statement into the minutes:

"Our desire and our strategic focus regarding our team at Spartanburg Water has been and will continue to be one that builds a professional, highly qualified, diverse team of water professionals where all employees feel included and part of this organization and our community. An enterprise framework that is built on fairness, access, inclusion, and representation.

As administrators we will continue to look to identify, hire, and retain the most qualified talent from among the largest, most diverse pool of qualified candidates that we can find for any given role within our organization. People want a more diverse, equitable and inclusive workspace and I believe that if we cast a large enough recruitment net, you tend to catch a wider dispersion of incredibly able talent. Qualified talent that comes from different economic backgrounds, races, nationalities, age, religion, genders, and body types. With this type of dispersion, opportunity often presents itself that enables all of us to learn a little something that we might not otherwise have been exposed to professionally. It takes courage and authenticity and at times you can feel vulnerable and uncomfortable with differences, but holding values that look to find the best talent in different places brings to an organization like ours, in a community like ours, a more rewarding and worthwhile experience. Our community is diverse, and so we are continuing to focus on what we look like as an organization within the larger community. To ensure that we continue to identify the best talent from all areas of our community and continue to develop the next generation of water professionals.

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Diversity and mutual respect at Spartanburg Water is not intended to be political and it's not about numbers. It is about finding great talent, developing and cultivating that talent and measuring that talent in a fair and equitable and respectful manner that will benefit employees and residents of our community. It is about outcomes based results tied to safety, wellness, and promotion rates. It's about a systems focused approach to achieving a healthier workplace. It is about a coalition driven approach focused on engaging our employees who stand to benefit from a healthier, happier workplace and communicating the benefits of progress as that progress is achieved to our employees and Commissioners. And it is about employees that wish to be part of our culture. We do use phrases like, "We have incorporated diverse interview panels into our hiring process". And "Inclusion is worked into the recruitment process" as well as "Spartanburg Water is committed to maintaining policies that help to ensure equal employment opportunity for all people". They are part of our value system here. We also report hiring data because we measure what is important in order to make sure what is being measured aligns with our values. Our programs are focused first and foremost on finding the best talent we can find from the largest available pool of diverse candidates that we can pull from.

Nothing more, nothing less. Our values are important and make us who we hold ourselves out to be as a diverse group of individuals that comprise a large organization that supports our community daily."

The Commission requested a copy of this statement.

Hariette Stinson, Human Resources Manager, provided the Commission with an overview of the 2024 Annual Recruiting Report.

This report included an assessment of the adequacy of Spartanburg Water policies on hiring, retention, promotion, and any recommendation for correcting deficiencies that are identified. The overall assessment of the existing recruiting practices did not reveal any deficiencies.

Ms. Stinson reviewed the recruitment cycle, which included recruitment sources and the selection process. The 2023 Compensation Study implementation realigned salary grades and provided guidance with objectives. Employees are now able to understand how they can expect to be compensated through merit, promotion, transfer, and regression processes.

Spartanburg Water backfilled 57 vacancies from January 1, 2024 through December 31, 2024. There were 14 employees promoted or transferred internally and 43 external hires. Career path progressions were 30, compared to 39 in 2023. In 2023, there were 62 employees that voluntarily or involuntarily terminated employment. In 2024 that number decreased to 25 for a 40% overall improvement. Management believes this is due in large part to the updated compensation strategy and focus on engagement and cultural initiatives. Statistical data including, gender, race, department, position, pay grade, and turnover rates were also reviewed. The

The above was provided as information to the Commission.

**AGENDA ITEMS 9-11 OPERATIONS**

**9. MASTER SERVICES AGREEMENT FOR PROFESSIONAL SERVICES FOR CIVIL ENGINEERING, ENVIRONMENTAL AND REGULATORY CONSULTING SERVICES**

Spartanburg Sanitary Sewer District, South Carolina (SSSD) recently requested a proposal from AECOM for professional services on an as-needed basis. AECOM is a firm which specializes in a wide variety of disciplines related to water and wastewater industries. SSSD has worked with AECOM in the past and had a Master Services Agreement for professional services in place from September 2019 through September 2022.

AECOM has extensive experience, industry qualifications, and familiarity with regulations applicable to SSSD's facilities and systems, and accordingly SSSD desires to utilize AECOM for engineering, environmental, and regulatory consulting services. The proposed Master Services Agreement for professional services is based on a time and expense basis in accordance with an established schedule of fees and provides opportunities for consultant participation in the SSSD Community Benefits Program.

Management recommended the Commission authorize the Chief Executive Officer to enter into a three (3) year Master Services Agreement with AECOM for professional civil engineering, environmental and regulatory consulting services that will be in place for the period February 2025 through January 2028.

Rick Jolley provided the Commission with an overview of the AECOM Master Services Agreement with AECOM for professional civil engineering, environmental and regulatory consulting services agenda item.

Mr. Willard moved and Mr. Littlejohn seconded the motion to approve management's recommendation and authorize the Chief Executive Officer to enter into a Master Services Agreement with AECOM for professional civil engineering, environmental and regulatory consulting services. The motion passed unanimously.

**10. REPLACEMENT OF THE PAGE CREEK WWTF EMERGENCY GENERATOR**

An emergency 400kW 3-phase diesel generator has been in place at the Page Creek WWTF since 2001. The need for this generator is imperative to keep the plant running and in compliance when power outages occur. As it has approached its useful life, the generator's rate of failure has increased. This was most evident during the power outages suffered due to Hurricane Helene.

Management recommended the replacement and purchase of this generator with a Caterpillar 400kW 3-phase generator at the State Contract pricing of \$140,659. This purchase will be funded through depreciation.

Rick Jolley provided the Commission with an overview of the Replacement of The Page Creek WWTF Emergency Generator agenda item.

Mr. Willard moved and Ms. Barnes seconded the motion to approve management’s recommendation for the approval Page Creek WWTF emergency generator replacement. The motion passed unanimously.

**11. HURRICANE HELENE – OPERATIONAL STORM RELATED COSTS**

Rick Jolley and Cam Cole provided the Commission with a summary of storm costs related to Hurricane Helene. Mr. Jolley stated that the current cost is \$1.64 million. Ms. Cole noted that the amount that has already been reflected in the financials for SSSD thru December 2024 is \$209,000 and for SWS the amount is \$527,000. Expenses included trees, equipment, fuel, generator rentals, labor, docks/lifts equipment, fencing, and other expenses which include outside resources, inspections, IT related costs, structures, meals, and lodging.

Mayor Rice excused himself for a prior commitment.

Mr. Littlejohn asked if there were any costs that have been recovered by insurance. Mr. Jolley responded that claims have been filed and \$63,000 have been received for the dock at Lake Blalock. Mr. Jolley and Ms. Cole met with six FEMA representatives and both felt the meeting went well. The deadline for inventory to be turned in to FEMA March 28, 2025. Emergency repair amounts must be spent within six months, with the exception of permanent rebuilds. Permanent rebuilds must be spent within eighteen months.

Mr. Boyle noted that these costs have to be filed as two separate entities.

Mr. Jolley shared photos of the damage from Hurricane Helene.

The above was provided as information to the Commission.

**AGENDA ITEMS 12-14 ENGINEERING**

**12. OWNERSHIP AGREEMENT – DORMAN CROSSING**

SAF Investments, LLC proposes to construct approximately 767 linear feet of 8-inch gravity sewer line to provide service to six commercial lots in Dorman Crossing located off SC Highway 221 and on Felt Drive. The sewer line will connect to the existing SSSD infrastructure. The domestic waste will be treated at the Lower North Tyger River Wastewater Treatment Facility. The developer will bear all costs.

The line will be constructed according to District-approved plans and specifications, with District inspection provided. The owner will provide all necessary right-of-way and easement agreements for this project.

The form of the agreement transferring ownership of the gravity sewer to the District has been reviewed by the District’s attorney and executed by SAF Investments, LLC. Under the terms of the resolution adopted by the Commission on January 26, 2023, this agreement has been executed on behalf of the Commission by the Chief Executive Officer.

The above was provided was information to the Commission.

**13. OWNERSHIP AGREEMENT – SPARTANBURG ZIMMERMAN**

SC Spartanburg Zimmerman I, LLC proposes to construct approximately 1,045 linear feet of 8-inch gravity sewer line to provide service to two commercial lots in Spartanburg Zimmerman located off Zimmerman Road. The sewer line will connect to the existing SSSD infrastructure. The domestic waste will be treated at the A. Manning Lynch Wastewater Treatment Facility. The developer will bear all costs.

The line will be constructed according to District-approved plans and specifications, with District inspection provided. The owner will provide all necessary right-of-way and easement agreements for this project.

The form of the agreement transferring ownership of the gravity sewer to the District has been reviewed by the District’s attorney and executed by SC Spartanburg Zimmerman I, LLC. Under the terms of the resolution adopted by the Commission on January 26, 2023, this agreement has been executed on behalf of the Commission by the Chief Executive Officer.

The above was provided was information to the Commission.

**14. OWNERSHIP AGREEMENT – WILLIAMS RIDGE SUBDIVISION**

Mark III Properties, LLC proposes to construct approximately 8,085 linear feet of 8-inch gravity sewer line to provide service to 222 residential lots in Williams Ridge Subdivision located off Fowler Road. The sewer line will connect to the existing SSSD infrastructure. The domestic waste will be treated at the South Tyger River Wastewater Treatment Facility. The developer will bear all costs.

The line will be constructed according to District-approved plans and specifications, with District inspection provided. The owner will provide all necessary right-of-way and easement agreements for this project.

The form of the agreement transferring ownership of the gravity sewer to the District has been reviewed by the District’s attorney and executed by Mark III Properties, LLC. Under the terms of the resolution adopted by the Commission on January 26, 2023, this agreement has been executed on behalf of the Commission by the Chief Executive Officer.

The above was provided was information to the Commission.

**15. CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER REPORT**

- A. Mr. Boyle informed the Commission that the Union Street Waterline replacement project press release was sent out on December 30, 2024, and project work began January 7, 2025. There is a dedicated web page, including FAQ and updates at <https://www.spartanburgwater.org/union-street>.
- B. Mr. Boyle noted that Spartanburg Water is working with Partners for Active Living (PAL) to create an art installation project on the SSSD sewer pipe that is visible alongside the River Birch Trail. Jennifer



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Candler stated that the first installation will be completed by May 31. There are scheduled committee meetings to discuss the next steps. There will be guidelines on types of materials used and artwork that will be displayed on the pipe. Spartanburg Water communications and operations are involved. Mr. Boyle stated that when the final artwork is approved, it will be provided to the Commission to ensure final approval.

- C. Mr. Boyle reminded the Commission and required staff of the South Carolina Ethics Filing reporting deadline of noon on March 30, 2025.
- D. Mr. Boyle noted that management has been in communication with The County of Campobello regarding long-range sewer planning. The County of Campobello was encouraged to get an engineering report, which they have done with the Appalachian Council of Government. They have been provided three options with the first two working with SSSD and the third option working with Inman.
- E. Mr. Boyle stated that The South Carolina Department of Transportation Utility Relocation Law had a sunset provision expiration date of July 1, 2026, but their Board has agreed to extend that date to July 1, 2031. This bill is for utility relocation requirements relating to highway system construction projects. Mr. Boyle will provide updates as the legislative session moves forward with this bill.
- F. Mr. Boyle shared with the Commission that management is working on beautifying the property around the Glendale Pump Station and details will be presented at the March Commission meeting.
- G. Mr. Boyle informed the Commission that the North Tyger demolition work is completed.
- H. Mr. Boyle noted that senior management will participate in an off-site Strategic Planning Retreat on February 18-19. This will involve strategy sessions and strategic planning for the next three to seven years.
- I. Mr. Boyle stated that budget work sessions will be scheduled in May. The dates management is currently looking at is May 14-15. More information will be provided.
- J. Mr. Boyle informed the Commission that the grant presentation to the Watershed Ecology Center and PAL (Play.Advocate.Live Well.) will take place on Thursday, January 30.
- K. Mr. Boyle informed the Commission that there has been a lot of activity with the new administration in Washington with new executive orders regarding water and sewer. Mr. Boyle mentioned on the water side there has been a lot of discussion about water fluoridation. Mr. Boyle asked that any questions regarding fluoride be immediately directed to him for response. In addition to Fluoride, the immediate freezing of all federal funding that was an executive order as of January 27, 2025, could affect FEMA funding, SRF funding, and

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any grants that the state relies on to provide funding to water or sewer utilities. Management will work with Aqua Law as part of the Water Quality Association, SSSD/SWS general counsel, and they will inform us on any information.

**16. REFERRALS**

Mr. Boyle informed the Commission of referrals that will be on the upcoming agenda in February. Administration will have an Executive Session. Finance and Procurement will have the Wofford Street Rehab Project, Right-of-Way Mowing and Maintenance, Janitorial Services, Community Benefit Program Report, and the Safety Training and Incident Data Report for the 2024 calendar year. Operations and Engineering currently have no referrals for the February meeting.

Mr. Willard inquired about Spartanburg Water projects on Country Club Road regarding open ditches. Management will look into this and respond back to the Commission.

**17. ADJOURNMENT**

Meeting adjourned at 3:41 p.m.

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Camlyn M. Cole  
Secretary-Treasurer

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