

Water and Sewer Committee Meeting
March 18, 2013
1:00 pm

The following were in attendance:

Ray Johnson, David Lybrand, Charlie Kerekes; Bob Doub ex-officio. Ray Archibald and Bill Houston were excused.

Ray Johnson called the meeting to order and agendas were distributed.

David Lybrand moved to approve the minutes of February 7, 2013. Charlie Kerekes seconded the motion, which was approved unanimously.

Public Information

Representing the Denarius Group at the meeting are Tom Gardo, President and Glen McCaskey, Senior Advisor. Mr. Gardo thanked the Committee for inviting them to Edisto and stated the purpose of the meeting was to get acquainted and answer any questions, and distributed a handout containing information on the Group, which is attached. Mr. Gardo reviewed page two of the handout, the expected approach to the public information program, and the corresponding dates for the four sections. Adjustments will be made based on community input during initial meetings. Councilman Mann told the Committee that we typically have a turn out between 425 and 500 voters. Mr. Gardo asked the Committee what the usual process was to disseminate information to voters prior to an election. The Committee responded that forums, mailings, yard signs, telephone calls and door-to-door methods were used. Mr. Johnson said the biggest obstacle was that property owners do not have enough information at this time. If there was a distribution of a mailing with correct information concerning the referendum, a positive trend would emerge. There has not been a comprehensive document distributed at this point. Mr. Kerekes said that time was critical, and the sooner we got the information into the hands of voters, the better. The main issue seems to be cost, with some voters thinking the project is too expensive without taking into consideration the total cost savings in terms of appliances, fixtures, conservation, etc. Mr. McCaskey asked what the average life span of a hot water heater or dishwasher was. The Committee agreed that the life span was approximately half of one using quality water. Mr. McCaskey asked if the Town was being fined because of the water quality. Mr. Doub said that the Town had received notice of violations from DHEC and the Town has made the public aware of the violations as required by DHEC. A full disclosure is present in the yearly Consumer Confidence Report that is put out annually, which is posted on the website and available at Town Hall. Councilman Mann stated that since he had been on Council, two deep well pumps have been replaced, but he was not certain of the cost. Mr. Lybrand then asked the cost of valves and other miscellaneous items that have to be replaced and their costs. Councilman Mann said that a replacement scheduled had recently been put into place with a focus on 600 valves that need to be replaced. Money has been allocated in this year's budget for the first time to offset the costs of replacing the valves. Mr. Gardo stated the cost/value factor is going to be an important issue in the public information campaign. Mr. Lybrand brought up the point that one of the reasons the current

rates are so low is that some issues, such as pump and valve replacements, have been ignored. Mr. Kerekes pointed out that salt water intrusion was becoming an issue as well. Market conditions are favorable at this time for the project and may not be as favorable in the future. A discussion on cost/savings ensued. Mr. McCaskey asked about property owners who have R/O systems, either under-sink or whole house. Councilman Mann said that there were approximately 1400 under sink and 110 whole house systems that had been installed or are being maintained, but was unsure of how many of those belonged to voters. Mr. McCaskey asked if the water issues affected the renters, and the Committee said it did not seem to. The Committee did not seem to think it affected home sales either. Mr. McCaskey asked about reported health issues concerning the consumption of Edisto Beach water and the Committee did not know of any. Mr. Lybrand asked if Mr. Gardo thought the Committee should establish a polling committee. Mr. Gardo said that could wait for the time being. Mr. McCaskey and Mr. Gardo thanked the Committee and the meeting was adjourned at 2:53 p.m.