

Cary Engineer Explains Delay In Long-Awaited Water Study

BY RAHN ADAMS

The engineer whose firm was hired 18 months ago to do a long-range study of the Brunswick County Water System apologized to county utility officials Monday night for being "painfully behind schedule."

Bill Daniel of William G. Daniel & Associates of Cary spoke at length during the Brunswick County Utility Operations Board's 90-minute regular meeting Monday in Bolivia.

Discussion of the study consumed a major portion of the meeting, which also included the swearing-in of new UOB members Al Morrison of Sunset Beach and John Jones of Leland. UOB Chairman Robert Nubel was the only voting board member absent.

The board also went behind closed doors for 15 minutes to discuss "contractual relations," at the request of Public Utilities Director Jerry Webb. Board member Ernest McGee, who chaired the meeting in Nubel's absence, said no action was taken in executive session.

Daniel's appearance was requested last month by the UOB, after Webb informed board members that preliminary findings in the \$20,000 long-range study

would not be available until January and that the final report would be delayed until July—more than a year overdue.

The study was initially expected to be finished in March or April; however, it was delayed until June, when additional work not included in the original contract was added by the county. In June, the county agreed to an extension until October. Daniel notified Webb last month that the study remained unfinished.

At last month's meeting, county commissioner and ex-officio UOB member Frankie Rabon said he felt Daniel owed the county an explanation concerning the delay, since county officials have been waiting to use the study in decisions on proposed capital improvement projects. Rabon was absent Monday.

Commissioners, in fact, have cited the anticipated study in deciding not to pursue certain projects now, such as the proposed extension of water service in the Shallotte Point area and UOB-recommended improvements to the water system southwest of Shallotte. The study is supposed to address system needs through the year 2010.

McGee reiterated the county's position Monday and

commented that certain communities are "putting pressure" on both the UOB and county commissioners to initiate expansion and improvement projects. Shallotte Point residents requested service in their area; Sunset Beach town officials urged the county to make the system improvements.

"The main point I want to get across is that we're really sorry we're so far behind on it," Daniel said of the report's delay. After outlining the complexity of the study, he noted that his firm simply underestimated the amount of time needed to do the work. "The report you receive in the summer will be a dynamic thing," he added.

Later in the meeting, UOB consulting engineer Jay Houston noted that the study will identify major "missing links" in the water system and prioritize potential projects that would fill those gaps. The study will not necessarily recommend areas of the county—such as Shallotte Point—that should receive water service based on the areas' respective water needs.

Daniel also stated that the basis of his firm's study is an "immediate needs" report that was prepared and submitted to the UOB in September 1988 by Houston

& Associates of Shallotte. The \$7,500 Houston study addressed system needs southwest of Shallotte and recommended a \$5 million capital improvement project that the UOB, in turn, recommended to commissioners.

The proposal involves construction of a 2,200-gallon per minute booster station near the intersection of N.C. 179 and N.C. 904; a one million gallon elevated storage tank near the intersection of N.C. 904 and Old Georgetown Road; and a 12-inch trunk line on Old Georgetown Road from N.C. 904 to N.C. 179 near Calabash.

In other business Monday, the utility board approved the following recommendations to commissioners:

•To approve the final assessment roll for Special Assessment District 8 (Calabash area), with an assessment rate of \$6.46 per assessable foot.

•For the county to pay the estimated \$3,655 cost of oversizing a 1,180-foot water line to The Beach at Brick Landing subdivision, to complete a loop line in the Brick Landing area.

•And to authorize additional surveying work in SAD 9 (Holden Beach area).



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Arts Council Receives Grant

Carolina Power & Light Company has donated \$500 to the Brunswick Arts Council. Presenting the check is Joe Harness, general manager of the CP&L Brunswick Nuclear Plant, left, to Stephanna Tewey, president of the Brunswick Arts Council. Looking on, from left, are board members Sally Case and Pat Pittenger. The money will be used for a jazz concert in the spring.

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