

AMHERST COUNTY SERVICE AUTHORITY BOARD

MINUTES

AGENDA

May 7, 2019

Administration Building - 153 Washington Street - Public Meeting Room
Amherst, Virginia 24521
11:00 a.m.

- I. Call to Order**
- II. Citizen Comment**
- III. Approval of Agenda**
- IV. Approval of Minutes**
 - A. Minutes – April 2, 2019
- V. Monthly Financial Report**
 - A. March 2019 Financial Report
- VI. Old Business**
 - A. Director's Report
- VII. New Business**
 - A. Amherst County Republican Committee
 - B. ACSA Staff Departure
 - C. Medical Insurance Renewal
 - D. Budget Appropriation
 - E. "Phenomenal ACSA": ACSA Board Meetings
 - F. Director's Schedule
- VIII. Matters from the Members of the Service Authority Board**
- IX. Adjournment**

MINUTES

At a Regular Meeting of the Amherst County Service Authority Board, held at the Amherst County Administration building on Tuesday, the 7th day of May, 2019, at 11:00 a.m., the following members were present:

SERVICE AUTHORITY (ACSA) BOARD:

PRESENT: L. J. Ayers III, Board Chair
David W. Pugh, Jr., Board Member
Jennifer R. Moore, Board Member
Claudia D. Tucker, Board Member

ABSENT: Kenneth M. Campbell, Board Vice Chair

STAFF PRESENT: Robert A. Hopkins, PE, ACSA Director of Public Utilities/Board Secretary
Glenn Micklem, ACSA Operations Manager
Michael W. S. Lockaby, Amherst County Attorney
Regina M. Rice, EA Clerk to Boards

I. Call to Order

Board Chair Ayers called the meeting to order at 11:03 a.m.

Board Chair Ayers stated that Supervisor Campbell was absent at the meeting due to travel.

II. Citizen Comment

There was no public comment.

III. Approval of Agenda

By motion of Director Tucker, and with the following vote, the ACSA Board approved the agenda for May 7, 2019.

AYE: Mr. Ayers, Mr. Pugh, Ms. Moore and Ms. Tucker
NAY: None
ABSENT Mr. Campbell
ABSTAIN: None

IV. Approval of Minutes

By motion of Director Tucker, and with the following vote, the Board approved the minutes of the April 2, 2019 Board meeting with Director Pugh and Moore abstaining due to their absence at that meeting.

AYE: Mr. Ayers and Ms. Tucker
NAY: None
ABSENT Mr. Campbell
ABSTAIN: Mr. Pugh and Ms. Moore

V. Monthly Financial Report

A. March 2019 Financial Report

Director of Public Utilities Hopkins provided the Board with the March 2019 monthly Report regarding ACSA finances. No Board action is required.

Compared to March 2018:

1. Water

Revenues: Sales +5.2%
Total Revenues +2.0%

Summary: Good start to 2019, especially with new service connections down and

several expected soon.

Connections: -56.9% Eight new connections so far in 2019.
2019 new water connections:
12.7% of 2018 total
37.4% of annual 5-year average
12.3% of pre-recession average (65)

2. Wastewater

Revenues: Sales: +44.4%%
Total Revenues: +26.3%%
Summary: Good start to 2019, especially with new service connections down and several expected soon.

Connections: No new connections so far in 2019.

3. Combined Water and Wastewater

Sales: +12.7%
Revenues: +6.9%
All Revenues: +6.8%%
Summary: Good start to 2019, especially with new service connections down and several expected soon.

VI. Old Business

A. Director's Report

Hopkins provided the Board updates on items from past Board meeting discussions.

1. James River Bank Stabilization

- * Contractor change order sent to Corps of Engineers for \$34,239.22, less than 3.5% increase in ACSA cost share (copy of Corps letter provided). Construction is done, so this should be the only change order. In the 2019 ACSA budget preparation, the Director included 5% of ACSA's cost share to cover change orders, so the money for this change order is already in the budget; no appropriation needed.
- * ACSA completed a temporary repair on the first of 5 new erosion areas on both sides of the recent construction (photo provided) and will continue working on the other 4.
- * At the post-construction Corps site inspection, Corps staff tentatively offered help to ACSA regarding extensions of the project (1) downstream, to fill the gap between the 2007 and 2018 construction revetments, and (2) upstream, around the bend.

2. Water and Sewer Upgrade Projects

* Old Town Madison Heights Sanitary Sewer Rehabilitation

- Change Order 1 was submitted by the contractor for a \$1,705.00 reduction in contract price. The Director requested Board approval to execute.

By motion of ACSA Director Tucker, and with the following vote, the ACSA Board approved execution by the Director of the change order.

AYE:	Mr. Ayers, Ms. Tucker, Mr. Pugh, and Ms. Moore
NAY:	None
ABSENT:	Mr. Campbell
ABSTAIN:	None

- Excavation work (point repairs, manholes, etc.) to begin in May.
- Contractor on schedule to be done by DHCD grant funding deadline

* Ridge St. Water Line Replacement

- Installation of new water line along Ridge St, including fire hydrants, finished early April.
- Relocation of existing water services to new 8" water main begun by ACSA mid-April.
- Developer Good plans to start first new home on Ridge St. in May.
- Appropriation from ACSA reserves needed (see New Business).
- Next water line replacement project, along Woodvue Dr. in Madison Heights, has started and should be complete summer 2019. This work was moved up the list of needed replacements to facilitate the new Biscuitville Restaurant development, but will also replace a very old, undersized water main with too many connections on it to meet current regulations, and also provide fire protection along Woodvue.

* Joint ACSA-County Sanitary Sewer Extensions

- American Legion Hall area
 - * Still waiting for VDOT approval of final design.
 - * Easement acquisitions resume with VDOT approval.
 - * Phase 1 construction spring 2019; Phases 2 & 3 later in 2019.

3. Business Friendliness Initiative (Board-adopted priorities) – will be giving Board a monthly report

* Priority 1a - 1d: Availability fees policy evaluation

- Fees evaluation: Annual rates and fees benchmarking study almost done and will be emailed to Board members for familiarization before its presentation at the June Board meeting.
- New policy for paying high fees over several years: Director proposed a developer bond with ACSA, and is waiting for survey respondents (thru the EDA Director) ideas.

* Priority 2: Major upgrade to communications efforts

- ACSA still collecting water-sewer customers phone numbers and email addresses for NOTIFY software.

* Priority 3: Policy for ACSA infrastructure construction

- No progress since last Board meeting.

* Priority 5: ACSA Board re-organization

- Ongoing. Director to meet with County Attorney 5/13 to continue.

* Priority 6: Update Water Office building

- No progress since last Board meeting.

4. Asset Management Plan

- * Progress on written Asset Management Plan
 - No progress since last Board meeting.
- * Infrastructure evaluations
 - Inspections of other sewers ongoing, with Ivanhoe Forest subdivision next.
 - Evaluation of 7 sewage pump stations done
- * Infrastructure improvements
 - Ridge St. water line replacement done.
 - Woodvue Dr. water line replacement started.
 - American Legion Hall sewer extension project waiting for VDOT design approval.
 - Lighthouse Sewage Pump Station upgrade started, for completion later in 2019.
 - Reservoir primary spillway improvements started, with 4/30 inspection dive; waiting for inspection report. Work planned for completion later in 2019.
- * Central Virginia Training Center Sewer Meters
 - All equipment received from vendors.
 - Survey and design/construction drawings done.
 - Hopkins scheduling a pre-construction meeting of all stakeholders for late April.
 - On schedule to be done and billed to CVTC by early June.

5. Board reminders: Director's 2018 performance evaluation

- * Hopkins requested that it be done at the June meeting, so all ACSA compensation adjustment forms could be submitted simultaneously.
- * Director Pugh requested that the information previously sent to the Board be re-sent; Hopkins promised to do it the afternoon after the Board meeting.
- * Board Chair Ayers said the evaluation would be done at the June Board meeting.

6. Amherst County High School Water-Wastewater Operator Apprentice Program

- * Hopkins informed the Board of his communications with the Executive Director of the Western Virginia Water Authority (Salem), which has a 3-year-old operator apprenticeship program. He is reviewing details regarding that program and will be reporting back to the Board later in 2019.

7. VDOT Woodys Lake Road Improvements Project

- * Hopkins accepted VDOT's offer of reimbursement for all ACSA costs for design and construction to relocate public water and sewer lines from beneath existing and proposed road pavement.
- * Hopkins' plan is to use ACSA funds to enhance the public utilities work to enlarge and extend lines, where appropriate.

8. Governor's Infrastructure Funding Conference, Roanoke

- * Hopkins attended (copy of session schedule provided) and is reviewing various possibilities for loans and grants to help fund ACSA sanitary sewer extensions into

developed areas, to speed up that work, and also Hopkins' proposed interconnection of the ACSA and City of Lynchburg water systems to provide sustainability and redundancy of ACSA's facilities in case of an emergency that disables the ACSA water plant. He expects to report back to the Board later in 2019.

VII. New Business

A. Amherst County Republican Committee

- * Hopkins reported that he has been asked to serve in a management position with the Committee regarding getting the vote out in future elections. He decided that, before accepting, he should get Board approval, since he is a public official and the Committee position could be viewed by the public as partisan.

Director Tucker noted that Hopkins had brought this to her attention recently and said that she viewed this as a First Amendment right. She requested the opinion of the County Attorney, who discussed the matter, ending with his opinion that an informal concurrence by the Board would suffice to allow Hopkins to provide this public service.

There was no motion, but a unanimous informal approval by the Board.

B. ACSA Staff Retirement

- * Hopkins reported that a 12 year ACSA employee, Senior Utility Mechanic Brian Tyler, left ACSA in early April to take a job at VDOT. He reported that he conducted an exit interview with Tyler, which resulted in no issues regarding ACSA, just a decision on Tyler's part that the VDOT job might be better for him. Hopkins said that ACSA senior staff had decided not to replace him, at this time.

Hopkins decided to use this opportunity to update the Board regarding ACSA staff turnover. Since he joined ACSA three years ago:

Field staff:	2 persons out of 12 in 3 years	= 5.56% annual average turnover
Office staff:	2 persons out of 7 in 3 years	= 9.52% annual average turnover
Operator staff:	2 persons out of 8 in 3 years	= 8.33% annual average turnover
Total staff:	6 persons out of 27 in 3 years	= 7.41% annual average turnover

Hopkins opined that these numbers are very low, especially compared with other water and sewer authorities. For example, the Western Virginia Water Authority Executive Director told Hopkins that the reason for their operator apprenticeship program (see Directors Report) was to try to address their high turnover rate and have trained apprentices ready for WVWA employment upon high school graduation. ACSA does not have that problem; most staff remain with ACSA for decades, if not their entire careers.

C. Medical Insurance Renewal

- * Hopkins reported to the Board that he needed approval to renew ACSA health insurance with The Local Choice. He said ACSA participated in the benefits consultant evaluation of County health insurance, which resulted in the County switching to Piedmont to save money. He said that the consultant was very involved with the County issue and did not consult with Hopkins until just before the April Board meeting, leaving Hopkins no time to bring this before the Board then. He had to get an extension from TLC and now open enrollment is to end May 15, requiring ACSA to act.

He noted that the consultant recommended ACSA renewal with TLC, due to (1) TLC being the premier health insurance in Virginia for government entities; (2) ACSA's long history with TLC; (3) ACSA staff preference for TLC; and (4) ACSA renewal 2 years ago, when TLC rates increased 12%; last year, when TLC rates increased 4.3%; and no proposed increase in TLC rates for the upcoming year.

Director Tucker asked if the consultant had made any other recommendations and if Hopkins or County Human Resources Director Linda Warner makes HR decisions for

ACSA. Hopkins replied that the consultant made no other recommendations and that Ms. Warner assists Hopkins with ACSA HR work and Hopkins regularly consults her with questions, but Hopkins is trying to relieve her of this responsibility as much as possible.

Director Tucker said she could approve the TLC renewal if Hopkins would get for the Board a letter from the benefits consultant stating his recommendation in writing and the reasons for such recommendation. Hopkins said he would contact the consultant that afternoon to request the letter.

By motion of Director Pugh and with the following vote, the ACSA Board approved the renewal of ACSA's medical insurance with the Commonwealth of Virginia's "The Local Choice" program, and requested information from the benefit's consultation be given to the ACSA Board as soon as possible.

AYE:	Mr. Ayers, Ms. Tucker, Mr. Pugh, and Ms. Moore
NAY:	None
ABSENT:	Mr. Campbell
ABSTAIN:	None

D. Budget Appropriation

- * Hopkins reminded the Board that the County Economic Development Authority had committed \$20,000 to the Ridge St. water line replacement by ACSA, to facilitate an 8 lot developer's project on that road. The EDA sent the money to the County Finance Dept. in September 2018, but the construction by the contractor was delayed by weather to early 2019. This resulted in the money going into ACSA reserves before the contractor's invoice was submitted for payment.

The bill was paid in early 2019 from 2019 budget money that was planned for other water line replacement work. This depleted that budget line item and ACSA needs the money restored as it proceeds with the Woodvue Dr. water line replacement project.

By motion of Director Tucker, and with the following vote, the Board approved the appropriation from ACSA reserves of \$20,000, as requested.

AYE:	Mr. Ayers, Ms. Tucker, Mr. Pugh, and Ms. Moore
NAY:	None
ABSENT:	Mr. Campbell
ABSTAIN:	None

E. "Phenomenal ACSA": ACSA Board Meetings

- * Hopkins requested Board consideration of a relocation of Board meetings to a location in Madison Heights and possibly becoming an evening meeting. He had the following reasons for the request:
 - It would promote the "business friendliness initiative" initiated by the Board and County Board of Supervisors two years ago by facilitating Board meeting attendance by ACSA water and sewer customers and other residents of ACSA's service areas. Typically, Board meetings are poorly attended, if not unattended, by the public, presumably because of (1) the scheduling of the meetings in the middle of a workday and (2) the additional an hour roundtrip from Madison Heights and surrounding areas to attend;
 - It would facilitate Board meeting attendance by the New Era-Progress editor-reporter, who typically does not attend because of his work duties on Tuesdays to get the weekly newspaper printed and distributed on Wednesdays;
 - It makes sense for the meetings to be held in Madison Heights, which is the "hub" of ACSA, which has no facilities, infrastructures, or customers in Amherst, where the meetings are now, and have historically been, held.

Hopkins reported that he has approval from the Madison Heights Public Library to hold the meetings there until another location is determined, and that, in his search for a new Water Office location, one of the criteria is an area conducive to conducting Board meetings.

He said he is not expecting a decision today, despite the motion in the agenda, but that the Board consider this for a future decision.

Director Tucker noted that this had been proposed several years ago and turned down. The reasons were that the Town of Amherst is the County seat and the logical location for County Board meetings and that County tax revenues had been used to construct the new County Administration Building, which should thus be used for County Board meetings.

Director Pugh noted the need for recording equipment to document Board meetings and the logistical difficulties to move the equipment back and forth between Amherst and Madison Heights. He asked the County Attorney about this, who opined that the meeting minutes need to be recorded, but not necessarily with the technological equipment used at the Admin. Building.

A motion was not made or voted on, but the Board informally reached consensus to wait until the annual, beginning of the year, Board re-organization, when the Board meetings schedule for the year is determined, to discuss this matter.

F. Director's Schedule

Hopkins provided the ACSA Board with his recent and upcoming work schedule:

5/6, 5/13, 5/16, 5/20, 6/3 County staff meetings

5/13 Meeting with County Attorney regarding ACSA Board re-organization, etc.

5/13 Chamber of Commerce dinner at Sweet Briar College

5/14 Meeting with Old Town Madison Heights CDBG Project Management Team

5/15 Meeting with County Fair Committee

5/21 Meeting with Board of Supervisors (evening)

5/22 Meeting on Reuses Dam Re-Licensing for Hydro-electric power generation

5/23 to 5/29 Vacation and Memorial Day Holiday

VIII. Matters from the Members of the Service Authority Board

Director Tucker had no matter to discuss.

Director Moore had no matter to discuss.

Director Pugh had no matter to discuss.

Director Ayers had not matter to discuss.

X. Adjournment

By motion of Director Pugh and with the following vote, the Board adjourned at 11:46 a.m.


AYE: Mr. Ayers, Mr. Pugh, Ms. Moore and Mrs. Tucker

NAY: None

ABSENT Mr. Campbell

ABSTAIN: None


L. J. Ayers, III, Chair
Amherst County Service Authority Board


Robert A. Hopkins, PE, Secretary
Amherst County Service Authority Board