Albemarle County Service Authority

Serving Conserving

MEMORANDUM

To: Albemarle County Board of Supervisors
From: Gary O'Connell, Executive Director
Date: January 11, 2023
Re: Albemarle County Service Authority (ACSA) Quarterly Briefing
cc: Mr. Jeff Richardson, County Executive; Mr. Lance Stewart, Director of Facilities, ACSA Board of Directors; ACSA Leadership Team and Operations Council

We do thank you for the continuing opportunity to share with the Board of Supervisors and the broader community what is happening at your water agency, the Albemarle County Service Authority. We pride ourselves on safe, clean, reliable Albemarle water. Here are some recent updates from the ACSA:

1. **FY'24 Budget** – We have begun the annual preparation of our proposed budget, rates, and capital improvements. Our budget schedule is as follows:

   - March – present the proposed Capital Improvements Program;
   - April – present the proposed Operation Budget and Rates;
   - May – Board Budget Workshop;
   - May – Customer Budget Newsletter;
   - June – Public Hearing and Board consideration and adoption.

   Since over 60% of our budget is in RWSA treatment costs and capital projects, we work closely with their budget and rate setting process.

2. **Customer Bill Assistance** – As a result of discontinuing our disconnections of water service for late payments policy during COVID, we have had a number of customers that were behind on their water bill payments. Many were late due to COVID period economic hardships. We have provided over $385,000 in customer assistance grants for eligible customers, and have a new low-income assistance grant program under the state funded Promise initiative. We are working closely with our customers to get their accounts current, and employing a variety of repayment plans to do so.

3. **ACSA Capital Projects Update** - The approved FY 2023 Capital Improvements Program totals $8 million. Highlights and current major projects are detailed below:

- **Madison Park Pump Station Upgrade** - Constructed nearly 40 years ago by a private development, and the original equipment is wearing down, building is undersized, and we are not able to install SCADA (computerized monitor). The project construction phase is underway, but delayed by long lead times for some critical pump station parts.
- **Jefferson Village Water Main Replacement** - Replacing older (49 years) water mains made of inferior pipe product. Since originally part of a former well system, many of the mains are undersized. Project is nearing completion.
- **SCADA (computerized monitoring)** - A three phased project is nearing completion for over 40 water and wastewater facilities in the ACSA system. This is another of our projects to provide emergency alerting and monitoring to assure reliable water and wastewater service. The third phase construction is about to get underway.
- **Crozet Phase 4 Water Main Replacement** - Our Strategic Plan calls for the eventual replacement of all asbestos-cement water mains in our system, as they are older and made of a weaker material than the current industry norm. This project continues our systematic program to replace the aging and undersized water mains in the Crozet Water System. This is the fourth of five phases that have been defined to carry out these improvements. Easement acquisition is nearly complete. Planned spring bid for construction.
- **Risk Assessment Improvements** – As part of an on-going emergency preparedness program, the ACSA is in a multi-phase effort to reduce risk and increase resilience. Projects include additional security measures, fencing and access gate enhancements, cybersecurity measures, and additional tank protection. Work is focused on our tanks and pump station locations.
- **Energy Audit** - This project consists of a comprehensive energy audit of the Operations Center and all pump stations (20). It evaluates current energy consumption and the factors that drive it, as well as an analysis of utility rate structures to identify potential cost savings. Surveys have been conducted of all systems, including operation and maintenance procedures to determine where energy conservation can be improved.
- **Avon Street Maintenance Yard** - The Avon Street property has long been held as a future location to build additional facilities in a central location, as needed. The current Maintenance Yard at our Pantops Operations Center is becoming overcrowded with equipment and materials, causing us to relocate some equipment and larger materials to the former ACSA Maintenance Yard at the Crozet Water Treatment Plant, which we lease from RWSA. This project will develop the ACSA owned Avon Street property into a satellite facility for larger vehicle and materials storage. This site creates the opportunity for some sustainable and conservation oriented applications. A Site Plan has been submitted to Albemarle County for review.

- **Ragged Mountain Phase 1 Water Main Replacement** - This project will replace the oldest active water main remaining in our system, which was part of the water main that served customers on Reservoir Road. This cast iron pipe is over 90 years old and is severely tuberculated, which greatly reduces the flow capacity in this section. Design work is 90% complete. We are coordinating with VDOT where their bridge replacement project overlaps with ours. Recent VDOT bidding on the bridge replacement, which the ACSA coordinated with, has not been successful. We are waiting on a spring VDOT discussion on whether to move forward or not.
- **Northfields Water Main Replacement** - This project addresses the goal in our Strategic Plan for the eventual replacement of all asbestos-cement water mains in our system. The existing water mains are approximately 54 years old and have reached the end of their useful life. As a former well system that was connected to public water, most of the mains are also undersized. Field surveying is complete, with design under way at the 50% stage.
- **Exclusion Meters Replacement** - In the mid 1990's with the development of Glenmore, many new customers installed irrigation systems for their properties and wanted to have their sewer bills reduced by the amount of water that was diverted to irrigate their properties. Private meters were installed behind their ACSA meter to record this volume and it was "excluded" from the calculation of their sewer charges and these became known as exclusion meters. On January 1, 2006 the ACSA Rules and Regulations were modified to no longer allow exclusion meters, and required that all future irrigation meters would be tapped separately off our water mains to be owned and controlled by the ACSA. This project is a multi-year replacement program by our in-house CIP Crew to install dedicated, ACSA owned irrigation meters that will eliminate all remaining private exclusion meters in our system. The number of exclusion meters in the ACSA system has been reduced to 343. Work this fall and winter is primarily in Glenmore.
- **Scottsville Phase 4 Water Main Replacement** - Continues our systematic program to replace undersized and deteriorating water mains in the ACSA system. At the 90% design stage.
- **Briarwood Water Main Replacement** – Our Strategic Plan calls for the eventual replacement of PVC (pre-1990) water mains in our system, as they are older and made of weaker material than the current industry norm. This project will replace the PVC water mains that have been in service since the early 1980's. The field surveying work has been completed. Design work is nearing the 90% stage.
- **Broadway Street Water Main Replacement** – This project will replace the ductile iron water main that was installed in the early 1970's and has been found to be in deteriorating condition based upon recent excavations. With the redevelopment of the Woolen Mills Factory and Albemarle County's increased attention on economic revitalization of this corridor, replacement of this water main is crucial to transforming this area. Design work is at the 90% stage.

- **Raintree and Fieldbrook Water Main Replacement** – Our Strategic Plan calls for the eventual replacement of PVC (pre-1990) water mains in our system, as they are older and made of weaker material than the current industry norm. This project replace the PVC water mains that have been in service since the 1980s and will eliminate pipe saddles at the water service connections that have been failing due to corrosion. Field survey work is being completed. Project is at the 50% design stage.
- **Airport Trunk Sewer Upgrade** – With the continued growth in the Hollymead Town Center area, the existing sewer collector serving the airport and the area west of Route 29 is in need of upgrading to handle full build-out. The existing sewer was originally sized to serve the light industrial zoning designated for that area at the time of construction. The increased density specified in the County Comprehensive Plan for the same drainage basin will exceed the capacity of the existing sewer. A study of the drainage basin was completed in 2016, with the recommendation the sewer main be increased in size by replacing it in place. Easement acquisition underway for this project. Design work is at the 90% stage.
- **Bellair – Liberty Hills Sewer** – Over the past several years there has been an increase in residents of the Bellair Subdivision seeking to connect to public sanitary sewer service, since most residents are currently served by private septic fields. In an effort to gauge community interest for such a project, ACSA staff mailed out a survey to the residents seeking feedback on their interest. Based on initial feedback received, a majority of the property owners are interested in connecting to public sewer if it was made available. We are at the 50% design phase for this project.
- **Barracks West Water Main Replacement** – This project will replace the undersized and aging cast-iron and galvanized water mains that were installed in the late 1960s. These water mains are original to the Old Salem Apartments development, now called Barracks West. This project follows our Strategic Plan goal to replace aging and undersized water mains throughout our system and will provide for an opportunity to improve fire protection to these multi-family apartments. This project is at the 90% design phase, with identification of boring and test hole locations underway.

Let us know if you have further questions or comments. We are more than glad to meet with you or hold a virtual meeting to talk about any of our projects, or facilities, or provide a tour if that would be useful.