

Report on the Activities and Recommendations of the Water and Sewer Working Group

Submitted to the full Environmental Review Commission on March 12, 2014.

Background:

Section 24 of Session Law 2013-413 directed the Environmental Review Commission (ERC) to study the statutory models for establishing, operating, and financing certain organizations that provide water and sewer services in the State. These organizations include sanitary districts, water and sewer authorities, metropolitan water districts, metropolitan sewerage districts, and county water and sewer districts, as well as any similar organizations. The ERC was directed to determine whether, how, and to what extent the number of statutory models should be reduced and consolidated, considering and addressing any impacts that changes would have on the ongoing operations and financing of existing organizations. The ERC was further directed to report its findings and recommendations to the 2014 Regular Session of the 2013 General Assembly.

In response to the study directive, the ERC Co-Chairs established the Water and Sewer Working Group, led by Senator Hartsell and Representative Hager. The following is a summary of the activities and the recommendations of the Water and Sewer Working Group.

November 13, 2013 Meeting of the ERC:

The ERC heard a [background presentation](#) on the different statutory models specified in S.L. 2013-413 from Richard Whisnant from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (UNC) School of Government and Shadi Eskaf from the UNC School of Government Environmental Finance Center.

December 10, 2013 Water and Sewer Group Meeting:

On December 10, the Water and Sewer Working Group met at 1:00 P.M. in Room 421 of the Legislative Office Building regarding the statutory models specified in S.L. 2013-413, financing for organizations operating under those statutory models, and future water supply planning assistance, where it heard from the following:

- [Richard Whisnant](#), Professor, UNC School of Government
- [Jeff Hughes](#), Director, UNC School of Government Environmental Finance Center
- [Tom Reeder](#), Director, Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) Division of Water Resources

January 14, 2014, Water and Sewer Working Group Meeting:

On January 14, the Water and Sewer Working Group met at 1:00 P.M. in Room 421 of the Legislative Office Building regarding the goals of various interested parties, methods available to improve water service and quality, and the DENR's Division of Water Infrastructure, where it heard from the following:

- Erin Wynia, Legislative and Regulatory Issues Manager, North Carolina League of Municipalities
- Daniel Wilson, Executive Director, North Carolina Rural Water Association
 - [Document 1](#)
 - [Document 2](#)
- [Dr. Gregory Characklis](#), Professor, Department of Environmental Sciences and Engineering, UNC
- [Neal Robbins](#), Legislative Liaison, DENR

February 6, 2014, Water and Sewer Working Group Meeting:

On February 6, the Water and Sewer Working Group met at 9:00 A.M. in Room 421 of the Legislative Office Building to discuss the Working Group's recommendations for draft legislation. The Working Group considered recommendations for various studies to be conducted by the General Assembly Program Evaluation Division and DENR.

Recommendations of the Water and Sewer Working Group:

Based on its work, the Water and Sewer Working Group, submits the following legislative proposals on water and sewer services in the State.