



Office of the
**INDIAN RIVER COUNTY
ADMINISTRATOR**

Jason E. Brown, County Administrator
Michael C. Zito, Assistant County Administrator

MEMORANDUM

TO: Members of the Board of County Commissioners

FROM: Jason E. Brown
County Administrator

DATE: November 12, 2019

SUBJECT: Update on Discussions between County and City of Vero Beach
Staff on Water and Wastewater Issues

Background and Discussion

The City of Vero Beach has made a decision to move their wastewater treatment facility away from its current location on the Indian River Lagoon. During discussion, City Council provided direction to City staff to discuss potential partnerships with County staff. Pursuant to this direction, City Manager Monte Falls requested that the City's Utilities Director, Rob Bolton meet with County Utilities Director, Vincent Burke last month, and the two met to discuss potential mechanisms for the County to potentially provide services.

There were discussions about various potential partnerships. The option discussed in most detail was related to the County providing wastewater treatment services for the City through a bulk wastewater agreement where the City would retain responsibility for collection and customer service. Briefly, this scenario would involve constructing transmission lines to transport wastewater from the City of

Vero Beach collection system to one or more of the County's wastewater treatment facilities. Additional lines would also be constructed to transport reuse water back to the City's reuse distribution system. County staff confirmed that there was capacity today to provide treatment for the City's customer base. This arrangement would, however, utilize some of the County's existing capacity. Such capacity would need to be replaced in order to ensure that the County can provide future capacity for our own growing service area. County and City staff agreed conceptually to the concept that this cost, as well as the cost to construct the new lines and maintain the system, would need to be recovered in the bulk rate. The various costs and further details have not been developed at this time, since County staff has not received policy direction from the Board of County Commissioners regarding a potential partnership. This would take a significant amount of time and resources. Therefore, County staff is presenting this item as an update on our discussions to date in order to solicit input and direction from the Board of County Commissioners prior to undertaking more work on this project. It should be noted that brief discussions were held regarding additional consolidation and partnership opportunities, but County staff would like to request Board direction on the larger issue of potential partnerships prior to exploring other alternatives in detail.

Staff Recommendation

Staff recommends that the Board of County Commissioners provide direction regarding potential partnerships for providing water, wastewater, and/or reuse water for the City of Vero Beach utility system.