



Centerton Utilities

(Water/Wastewater Departments) (Franchised Utility Permitting)

July 30, 2025

CALL TO ORDER – The meeting of the Centerton Waterworks & Sewer Commission called to order by Commissioner Donald Casteel.

(1) ROLL CALL – Commissioners present: Robert Anderson, Donald Casteel & TJ Wells. Centerton Utilities' present: Malcolm Attwood, Chad Klingler, John Daniels, and Thresia Leimberg. Professional Services present: Heather Owens - Attorney, and City of Centerton - Diane Morrison Lloyd & Mayor Bill Edwards

(2) Pledge of Allegiance - Waived by Commissioner Anderson due to no flag being present.

(3) New/Other Business:

- a. **New Developments** - Commissioner Anderson reviewed the Decatur WWTP Capacity Worksheet with the Commission, noting 4,324 total residential units across both the City of Centerton and the City of Decatur that are in various stages of development and permitting wastewater connections. He also reported that the Decatur plant treats sewage from Simmons Foods, further increasing system demand. The rapid growth in both communities is placing significant pressure on infrastructure that is already approaching capacity limits.

Commissioner Anderson explained that, under current permit conditions, the Decatur WWTP must begin planning for additional capacity once flows reach 80% of its permitted limit. Based on the cumulative impact of the developments identified, even with the planned expansion to 5.25 MGD, the Decatur WWTP facility could reach its permit limit at or shortly after the upgrade becomes operational later this year. He further clarified that the expanded capacity is not yet active and remains contingent upon final permit approval from the Arkansas Department of Health. In addition, Decatur is evaluating short-term and long-term capacity needs beyond the 5.25 MGD limit, which may require another plant expansion—an effort estimated to take three (3) to five (5) years to complete.

The Commission discussed potential improvements to the Centerton Utilities Collection System, including the possibility of rerouting flow through Ginn Road to divert a portion of wastewater to other providers. These measures are being explored to help relieve pressure on the Decatur WWTP and address future capacity constraints while Decatur pursues additional expansion beyond its 5.25 MGD limit.

As part of this effort, the Commission has signed a contract with RJN Group, Inc. to conduct flow monitoring throughout the Centerton collection system. This initiative will determine the actual available capacity within the existing infrastructure; however, it may take a year or more of monitoring before the data becomes fully useful for planning purposes. The resulting information will guide both short-term operational adjustments and long-term capital investment planning.

Commissioner Anderson cautioned that, until these improvements are completed and operational, the City may need to consider pausing the acceptance of new sewer connection applications. He also noted that some relief may be possible through a decentralized wastewater treatment system, which will be discussed under item 3b of the agenda.



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Commissioner Wells and other attendees emphasized the importance of proactive planning and forecasting to accommodate continued growth. Rather than imposing a strict moratorium, the group discussed alternative approaches that support coordinated review of pending developments, ensuring that project approvals align with available infrastructure, and promote greater awareness of capacity issues among all parties involved.

Dianne Lloyd with Planning & Development noted that the current application process allows for conditionally approving new development permits when wastewater or collection capacity is limited. Under this approach, planning and design work may proceed; however, construction and physical connections to the wastewater or collection system will not be permitted until adequate operational capacity is confirmed and approved.

The group also discussed the pros and cons of the application process—recognizing that it maintains oversight and awareness of pending developments, preserves the ability to manage growth, and supports long-term planning. The process also provides valuable information to the wastewater partner for capacity planning, ensuring they are aware of and can prepare for the infrastructure improvements needed to support future developments. In addition, it helps keep developers engaged by offering a clear review pathway rather than halting projects outright. By communicating current capacity limitations, developers can move forward with planning, design, and preliminary approvals. This approach allows them to maintain project momentum and adjust schedules as needed—while ensuring they remain informed about potential delays related to wastewater or collection system capacity.

There was discussion that an agreement with the Decatur WWTP may be necessary, along with continued coordination with their engineers, to ensure Centerton maintains consistent communication regarding wastewater capacity, system performance, and planned infrastructure improvements. This approach would help ensure timely planning, accommodate future growth, keep Centerton informed of any additional expansion plans, and, if necessary, secure terms that protect Centerton's interests.

In addition, a recommendation was made to maintain regular communication with the Planning Department regarding wastewater capacity issues and to present these concerns to the City Council to ensure they remain informed of current and potential capacity limitations..

b. Decentralized Wastewater Treatment Systems

The Commission discussed the potential need for an ordinance to allow the temporary use of decentralized wastewater treatment systems within the Centerton Utilities service area when capacity is limited. Members agreed that any such ordinance should clearly outline requirements to ensure public health and regulatory compliance. The ordinance should specify the type of system we allow (Gravity Feed STEP System, and/or Low Pressure Force Main / No leach field), require a contract or agreement with Centerton Utilities and all involved parties, and include provisions for a performance bond or escrow from the developers to cover decommissioning and connection costs. Additional requirements should address permitting procedures, system design standards, ongoing maintenance responsibilities, monitoring and reporting obligations, duration limits, and mandatory connection to the centralized system once capacity becomes available. The ordinance should also require mandatory decommissioning of the decentralized system and restoration of the site to a safe and sanitary condition upon connection to the centralized system.



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Commissioner Anderson made a motion to recommend that Utility Director Attwood, in coordination with Attorney Heather Owens, develop a draft ordinance establishing regulations for the temporary use of decentralized wastewater treatment systems within Centerton Utility service area. Commissioner Wells seconded the motion. All Commissioners were in favor and the motion passed.

c. FLYGT Pump Replacement Quote for Allen Road Lift Station – Email from Collection Wastewater Manager Andy McDowell – In Packet

The Commission reviewed an email from Andy McDowell regarding the need to replace one of the Allen Road lift station pumps with a FLYGT pump. In his email, Mr. McDowell reported meeting with Scott Jones to obtain a quote for the pump replacement. The purchase price for the pump is \$149,107, with an additional \$10,000 estimated for electrical work and adaptation to the existing plumbing.

Mr. McDowell acknowledged the high cost but emphasized the ongoing operational challenges and safety concerns associated with the current Fairbanks pumps. He stated that these pumps require removal for repairs every six months to one year despite all reasonable maintenance efforts, including inspections by licensed electrician Rex Kennedy, tuning and inspection of VFD drives by Schneider Electric, and wet well checks for obstructions.

The email further noted that the failures are due to design limitations of the Fairbanks pumps, which are unable to handle the growing system demands. By comparison, Rogers Utilities operates FLYGT pumps under similar or greater flow conditions, with service lives of 5 to 10 years without major repairs.

Mr. McDowell also highlighted safety risks, explaining that each Fairbanks pump weighs approximately 2,100 pounds and must be manually removed from a 32-foot-deep live wet well, creating fall and confined-space hazards for staff.

He cautioned that repeated failures have left the Allen Road station operating on a single pump multiple times in the past year. If the remaining pump were to fail in such a situation, Centerton Utilities would have less than 24 hours to respond before a major overflow occurred.

In conclusion, Mr. McDowell recommended that Centerton Utilities begin phasing out the Fairbanks pumps at Allen Road and proceed with the purchase and installation of an FLYGT pump to improve reliability, enhance safety, and reduce the risk of service interruptions.

Commissioner Wells moved to approve the purchase and installation of one (1) FLYGT pump for the Allen Road lift station at a cost of \$149,107, with an additional amount not to exceed \$10,000 for necessary electrical modifications and adaptation to the existing plumbing. This action was recommended by Wastewater Manager McDowell and Utility Director Attwood. Commissioner Wells seconded the motion. All Commissioners were in favor and the motion passed.



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(4) Resolutions – None

(5) Public Comment – Mayor Bill Edwards expressed appreciation to the Commission for bringing forward options to address the concerns of developers. Another attendee requested an agenda item update to discuss the procedure for issuing permits. Diane Morrison-Lloyd from the Planning Department stated there has been a significant decrease in development submissions due to the current capacity issues.

Utility Director Attwood stated that sufficient data from RJN's flow monitoring will not be available for at least a year. Commissioner Anderson noted that there have been no reportable overflows indicating the system is currently at maximum capacity.

(6) Announcements – None

(7) Adjournment - Commissioner Casteel asked the attendees if there were any questions. With no further business, Commissioner Anderson made a motion to adjourn, Commissioner Wells 2nd the motion. All were in favor and the meeting adjourned.