



**Budget, Governance, and Intergovernmental Relations Council
Committee Meeting Summary**

**Monday, March 3, 2025
CH-14 at 2:00 pm**

COMMITTEE AGENDA TOPICS

- Agenda Overview
- I. Water and Stormwater Budget Outlook
 - II. MWSBE Participation in Capital Projects

COMMITTEE INFORMATION

Committee Members Present: Dimple Ajmera (Chair), Tariq Bokhari (Vice Chair), Lawana Mayfield and Tiawana Brown were present, James Mitchell was absent.

Staff Resources: Shawn Heath, City Manager's Office
Monica Allen, City Manager's Office
Angela Charles, Charlotte Water
Mike Davis, Charlotte Water
Steven Coker, Charlotte Business Inclusion
Sheila Anderson, General Services - Procurement

DISCUSSION HIGHLIGHTS

Committee Chair Ajmera called the meeting to order and asked everyone to introduce themselves.

Ms. Angela Charles introduced a budget outlook for Charlotte Water. She highlighted the "One Water" philosophy, which integrates water, wastewater, and stormwater management to improve service efficiency. A video showcasing key accomplishments was shared. Ms. Charles emphasized the city's national leadership in water management, mentioning her recent invitation to speak in California. She highlighted key achievements, including maintaining a AAA financial rating, managing 38 active stormwater projects, and increasing business inclusion efforts, with One Water accounting for \$74 million of city spending. Performance metrics showed improvements in watermain break reductions and stormwater reviews, though sewer overflow targets remain a focus. She also noted a \$568 million investment within the city's corridors of opportunity, reinforcing the city's commitment to infrastructure and equity. Concluding, she acknowledged council members and reaffirmed Charlotte's dedication to continuous improvement in water services.

Mr. Mike Davis provided an overview of Charlotte's stormwater management efforts, highlighting the city's infrastructure, budget considerations, and future planning. He emphasized the role of the city in maintaining stormwater systems, which focus on protecting water quality and mitigating flooding. The system spans 1,400 miles and is designed to manage Charlotte's high annual rainfall. He detailed how infrastructure investment involves natural water pathways into underground systems and the

importance of proactive maintenance to prevent failures. The presentation highlighted accomplishments such as the elimination of a backlog of private property assistance projects, a FEMA rating upgrade that reduces flood insurance costs, and a shift to a data-driven asset management approach to predict infrastructure needs. Mr. Davis also addressed regulatory updates, including new land development policies aimed at preventing drainage issues in growing urban areas. He stressed the importance of adapting to changing weather patterns through flood monitoring partnerships with national agencies. Lastly, he discussed financial sustainability, advocating for moderate annual fee increases to ensure long-term system viability while preserving debt capacity for future challenges.

Ms. Charles then provided an overview of Charlotte Water's operations, investments, and financial outlook. She emphasized the utility's AAA rating and its role as a regional provider, serving 1.2 million people across multiple counties. In FY24, \$57 million was invested in infrastructure, including major projects like the Mallard Creek expansion (\$113M) and partnerships such as the Little Sugar Creek improvement. She highlighted innovation, such as the Renew Brew initiative, and ongoing research to enhance efficiency and reduce costs. Financially, the proposed FY25 budget is \$646 million, with 42 percent for operations and 58 percent for capital improvements. Despite rising costs, Charlotte Water remains competitively priced compared to regional utilities. Ms. Charles addressed affordability, noting that most customers' bills remain below 4.5 percent of household income. She also introduced the Helping Hands Outreach Foundation, aimed at streamlining assistance for residents struggling with water payments. Finally, she reassured that Charlotte Water proactively monitors water quality and is prepared to adapt to regulatory changes.

Mr. Steven Coker outlined key MWSBE initiatives and strategies for increasing engagement in capital projects. The discussion focused on four main areas: expanding outreach, creating additional work processes, strengthening accountability, and ensuring continuous monitoring and strategy adjustments. The plan includes a modified outreach strategy, developing a goal-setting and waiver committee, increasing transparency in contract tracking, and implementing quarterly performance reviews. Objectives include early engagement, project development, targeted outreach, and removing barriers such as improving access to bonding, licensing, and financial support. Accountability measures will track contract performance, participation goals, spending, business growth, and good faith efforts. The next steps involve implementing these strategies between March and December, with performance reports presented at year's end. The collaborative effort between city leadership, General Services, and CBI aims to enhance transparency and opportunities for MWSBE participation, fostering long-term business growth and equitable access to contracts.

Vote: Motion was made and passed unanimously by the members present to present the draft CIP Master Utilization Plan to the City Council.

Meeting adjourned at 3:30 p.m.