

**CITY OF COLUMBIA
ENVIRONMENT AND INFRASTRUCTURE COMMITTEE
MEETING REPORT
FEBRUARY 24, 2015 – 9:00 A.M.
CITY HALL 2ND FLOOR CONFERENCE ROOM
1737 MAIN STREET**



Members of the Columbia City Council conducted an Environment and Infrastructure Committee Meeting on Tuesday, February 24, 2015 at City Hall, 1737 Main Street, Columbia, South Carolina. The Honorable Tameika Isaac Devine (Chair) called the meeting to order at 9:14 a.m. The Honorable Leona K. Plaugh, The Honorable Cameron A. Runyan and The Honorable Moe Baddourah (Non-committee member) were present.

COMMITTEE DISCUSSION

1. [Discussion of the Merits of Drinking Water Fluoridation](#)

Mr. Jonathan D. Sherer, P.E., Water Works Specialist for the Utilities and Engineering Department presented the Merits of Fluoridation in the City of Columbia Drinking Water. He said fluoride drinking water was added since 1967 and the City is meeting the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) recommendations, which are below the maximum contaminant level. He said fluoridation has been endorsed by many public health organizations and is encouraged by the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control (DHEC). He introduced Mr. James Mercer, DDS to give a summary about fluoridation drinking water from a dentist's perspective.

Mr. James E. Mercer, DDS presented an overview of the Water Fluoridation Advocacy Training. He said community water fluoridation is a natural occurring mineral in the water; it is safe and effective. He reported that fluoride helps prevent tooth decay and it helps keep tooth enamel strong and solid for both children and adults. He pointed out that water fluoridation benefits are for everyone regardless of income, education, race or access to dental care. He said water fluoridation is the cornerstone of the community oral health programs.

Councilor Plaugh asked did the schools stop the program for fluoride treatment.

Mr. James E. Mercer, DDS said they haven't stopped the program. He said certain schools either have an agreement with DHEC or operate independently to complete screening exams, cleanings and fluoride applications.

Mr. James Irvin, Concerned Citizen referenced pilot studies regarding drinking water fluoridation being toxic and harmful to the health. He expressed concerns about fluoride being put into toothpaste.

Councilor Devine asked if staff considered the studies that have been evaluated by the EPA and DHEC.

Mr. Jonathan D. Sherer, P.E., Water Works Specialist for Utilities and Engineering Department said yes; the data discussed on how to manage the risks.

Mr. John Wilkinson, Concerned Citizen said drinking fluoride water is ingesting poison and we have an obligation to our children to know what they are consuming.

There was a consensus of the committee to have staff research data regarding high diffusion versus low diffusion of diseases from water fluoridation in the states of South Carolina, New Jersey and Oregon and to bring a report back at the next meeting.

- **The meeting was adjourned at 10:09 a.m.**

Respectfully submitted by:

Niki Daniels
City Clerk's Assistant