

**Reuse System Ribbon Cutting Ceremony
Historic Riverfront Park – June 15, 2012
Mayor Van W. Johnson, Sr., - Remarks**

On behalf of both past and present members of the Apalachicola Board of City Commissioners and staff, I thank each of you for coming out on this momentous occasion to share with us the completion of the Apalachicola Wastewater Reuse and Land Application Project. A project conceived during the Administration of Mayor Alan Pierce.

Before getting started, I like to acknowledge Mr. Fred Donovan with Baskerville & Donovan, Inc., and his team of engineers who worked diligently to secure funding for the project, designed the project, and oversaw its construction.

I would also like to acknowledge Royal American, the contractor that actually built the system. The company laid over 100,000 feet of reuse pipe, constructed two storage tanks, and built the sprayfields, which included 250 heads and 20 controls all while managing to bring the project in ahead of schedule.

The residents of Apalachicola are truly grateful to both companies for doing an outstanding job.

Now complete and operational, the Apalachicola Wastewater Reuse and Land Application System will afford the city the opportunity to cease the state permitted practice of discharging wastewater effluent into a natural body of water.

A practice that ultimately led to the Teat v. City of Apalachicola lawsuit over 15-years ago and to Mayor Alan Pierce's appointment of an Environmental Advisory Committee made up of local residents to look into alternatives to surface water discharge.

After receiving the go ahead in the year 2000, Baskerville & Donovan obtained monies for planning from the Florida Department of Environmental Protection Small Disadvantaged Communities and Wastewater Grant Program.

Following that allocation, the city was able to tap into the Florida Communities Trust for \$2.5 million dollar for land acquisition to locate the sprayfields, which included the purchase of 200 acres off Pal Rivers Road; 415 acres west of the wastewater treatment plant, and another 160 acres at the end of Jule Road. Also included in the purchase, were the properties that make up the Holy Family Senior Citizens Center off Dr. Frederick Humphries Street.

The city was also fortunate to obtain an additional \$2.5 million dollars to fund the overall project through the support, dedication, and hard working efforts of then State Representative Jane Gayle Boyd.

However, the bulk of funding in the tune of an \$8 million dollar grant came from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act signed into law by President Barrack Obama in 2009. All totaled the project cost a little over \$13 million dollars and from conception to completion took over 12-years.

The finished product is computerized and it incorporates 21st Century green technology to conserve energy by utilizing solar power to operate the controls at remote locations throughout the system. Without a doubt, it was money well spent to guarantee a cleaner environment, greener parks, and public spaces and to replenish and conserve our primary source of potable water, all without burdening the taxpayers of Apalachicola with any additional debt.

In closing, I like to call special attention to the St. Joe Company for selling the city the acreage west of town needed for the sprayfields and to Progress Energy for granting the city the right to cross their easement in order to access the properties purchased from the St. Joe Company. For without such collaboration, the city would have been hard-pressed to fulfill its obligations to complete the project.

Therefore, as mayor of this great historic city, I stand today both privileged and proud, privileged to preside over the completion of a project started by others so many years ago and proud to see that project come to fruition.

To the residents of this great historic city, I now present to you and place into service with the cutting of this ribbon, our newest utility, the Apalachicola Wastewater Reuse and Land Application System.