



Minutes of February 4, 2020

A meeting of the Wausau Water Works Commission was called to order at 1:30 p.m. in City Hall on February 4, 2020. In compliance with Wisconsin Statutes, this meeting was posted and receipted for by the Wausau Daily Herald on January 31, 2020.

Members present: President Mielke, Commissioners Force, Miller, Herbst.

Others present: Eric Lindman, Dave Erickson, Scott Boers, Valerie Swanborg, Steve Opatik/Becher Hoppe, Tonia Westphal/Clark Dietz, Mike Gerbitz/Donohue.

1) Approve Minutes of the January 7, 2020 Meeting.

Miller moved to approve the minutes of the January 7, 2020 meeting. Seconded by Herbst and the motion carried 4-0.

Force questioned the 30 day extension for the review of the Wastewater Plant by the DNR. That was 30 days ago, are they still delaying? Lindman advised they've asked for another 15 days.

2) Director's Report on Utility Operations.

Force advised that one of the things we talked about last time was rates being charged to individual homeowners and the rates being charged to commercial and industrial establishments. He's not sure where we're at on reviewing that. Lindman advised he's talked with Ehler's about it. They're finishing up our rate case first and then they're going to help us break some of that apart. Force asked if we'd have something for our next meeting. Lindman responded that he will try.

Mielke advised that this will be presented to residents, commissioners, etc. so everyone can see what's happening. There's going to be an increase but compared to other cities it's not going to be as bad as some think.

Force explained that his main concern is that we are charging the residents fairly compared to our commercial/industrial customers.

Force also thanked Boers for including the water usage numbers in the newsletter.

Director's Report placed on file.

3) Membership to The Water Research Foundation, Invoice Attached. Dues have increased about \$250.00 from 2019.

Boers explained that this is an organization that does a lot of research for water and wastewater. The \$250.00 is just an annual increase that typically happens with things like this. We would typically just move this forward however it's getting to the point where it's a few

thousand dollars for the water side and a few thousand for the wastewater side. Erickson and Boers agree that it's a useful tool and has helped with the facility plans. Becher Hoppe has contacted them for information. They are always willing to share their studies and it is helpful information. Force asked what specific information we are getting from them. Boers advised it's helping with the plant in terms of manganese removal, surface water and the typical numbers across the board that we can use for comparison.

Motion by Herbst to approve membership. Seconded by Force. Motion carried 4-0.

4) Discussion: WDNR Enhanced Disinfection Requirements for Proposed DWTF.

Lindman advised they had a conversation with the DNR last year when we were going through the preliminary design of the drinking water treatment facility. They were taking a look at our ground water history and indicated that Wausau appears to have the potential classification of ground water under the direct influence of surface water. This requires us to have more strict disinfection requirements. The letter in the packet is formally confirming that. They want the drinking water facility to be designed like we would be treating surface water or ground water under the direct influence. A lot of this was put in as an add alternate in the bid package and was designed. Depending on the bid environment that we have we'll see what those costs come in at. The DNR is basically telling us we need to install this in the new facility. Force asked if this is connected to wells 10 & 11 as he sees those mentioned in the letter. Lindman responded it's not just those wells, it will be us as a water utility potentially having this classification. The DNR is preparing a policy on what type of testing and information that the community has to go through and then the DNR will provide a final determination. The way it looks right now, we will eventually get classified as having ground water under the direct influence of surface water. Force asked where that is taking place in our jurisdiction or what is the evidence for that classification? Lindman explained it would be based on the number of Bac T's that we get from the wells, the wells are shallow and close to the river, etc. There are a number of things that they look at. Boers added that we do get Bac T positives on some of our wells. Well 11 we occasionally get an E.coli positive so we take the well offline, treat it and it goes back in service. Our wells are all relatively shallow with sand and gravel aquifers. It isn't uncommon to have surface water bacteria occasionally migrate into that and that is what we will be protecting against with the new disinfection requirements. Force asked what technology will be used. Boers responded we will be using chemical oxidation and filtration. Treatment using membranes would be at a risk of clogging up due to the amount of iron and manganese in our water. Force asked what the cost is. Boers responded that it will depend on the bidding environment.

Miller brought attention to the last line in the first paragraph in the letter from the DNR. It says "Wausau must begin providing", so it doesn't sound like we have a choice. Do we or don't we have a choice? Boers responded we will not have a choice. Miller continued with the mention of giardia and cryptosporidium, is there more than that or is it that well defined? Boers explained that those are typically the items of concern but if you're treating for those, it typically takes care of everything else.

Force asked if we were to remain in the current plant would we have these requirements as well. Boers confirmed we would.

5) Discussion and Possible Action on Amendment #5 to the Industrial Park LS Pump Addition and Industrial Park FM Access Points.

Lindman advised this is an amendment from Clark Dietz. They are working on the industrial park lift station projects. We added a third pump and there's some operation and maintenance manuals at the close of the project that remains to be done. There's also some

additional work that they've had to do with the railroad for the force main access points. This total amendment is for \$12,800.00 which brings the total contract up to \$301,900.00.

Motion by Force to approve the amendment. Seconded by Miller. Motion carried 4-0.

6) Discussion and Possible Action on a Proposal from Donohue to Complete the Programming/Integration at the DWTF and WWTF.

Lindman brought attention to an email in the packet from Gerbitz/Donohue and the proposal for the programming and integration at both the water and wastewater treatment plants. We had discussed this at the last meeting and pushed it forward to this meeting until the proposal came forward with the costs. Force requested feedback from Erickson and Boers, would this make sense to them?

Erickson responded that he is convinced this would be the way to go for the wastewater plant. Donohue has a good understanding of what they need and how to set up the system for the operators. They've done this other places and it would be difficult to spec this out for other people to bid on the project. It makes sense to have Donohue do it.

Boers agreed with Erickson. We've spent a considerable amount of time with Donohue. They're designing the plant and the protocol on how the plant runs. It just makes sense that they design the programming to make the equipment do what's been talked about. This will put a standard to our programming so we don't have things jumping back and forth and things being missed. It will also streamline the wastewater plant and water plant.

Force asked if the purchase of the hardware is included this package. Gerbitz responded that underneath the general contractor will be what they call the systems integrator and they will be providing the hardware. This is for the software that runs the facility and all the programming to run the facility. The advantage to having Donohue do this is that there is a redundancy between water and wastewater and they will share a platform. It would be very difficult to put together a conventional bidding package that has a programmer to do that for both sites. Also, if they weren't able to do it they would have to pull that out of the water and wastewater projects and bid them out separately. Gerbitz added that these are not added costs, this was already in the project budgets and it is just a matter of who is doing the work. The number they had for these services in the last cost opinion were slightly above the number for wastewater. These are not surprise costs.

Motion by Miller to approve. Seconded by Herbst. Motion carried 4-0.

7) Discussion and Possible Action on Approving a Bid for the Launder Covers at the WWTF.

Lindman advised that the launder covers were a specialty order item and have a long lead time. We wanted to purchase that material ahead of time so they're available and the contractor that gets the bid would have them here to install this year. It's pretty specialized equipment so Donohue submitted an invitation to bid on our behalf. There were only 2 in the region that were able to do that and only NEFCO provided a cost. He would recommend that we move forward with the contract and get these on order. Force asked what the cost is and some clarification on what these are for. Erickson responded these are the covers for the troughs around the clarifiers. Lindman responded it will be \$110,000 and an alternate for \$45,000 if we build a 4th clarifier. The request would be approval for the base and the alternate if we're able to build that.

Motion by Force to approve the contract from NEFCO. Seconded by Miller.

Motion carried 4-0.

8) Discussion and Possible Action Regarding Accepting Leachate from the Marathon County Landfill at the Wastewater Treatment Plant.

Erickson advised we don't really have any information yet. We've talked about this the last couple of meetings. We're working with the Marathon County landfill to accept their leachate. One of the things that's developed is in reviewing permit applications from the DNR to construct another phase on their landfill asked for their wastewater people to review whether it's reasonable to treat leachate. They have asked Donohue to comment on how much leachate we could treat. There are potential issues and risks such as passing our toxicity test or interfering with our UV system. We think we can address those problems but have to be careful about committing to something if we can't continue under our permit. Gerbitz explained that it's good to establish that when they were developing the facility plan, the facility was not accepting leachate and there were no plans to accept it in the future. Things changed with the PFOS issue so the landfill is in the situation that it's in. Capacity was not built in to take all the leachate from the landfill. It could take approximately 20-35% but not all of it. It makes sense to try but manage it carefully. Force asked where the rest would go. Erickson responded Stevens Point, Portage and possibly Green Bay. Force asked if we would pilot test. Erickson said we did this past fall and didn't see any issues with it. However, there are tests done at different times where it could prove to be an issue. Force asked about PFOS and if that would go in our effluent. Erickson advised whatever comes in either goes in our effluent or biosolids. Force asked if we know if more PFOS would be coming in with the leachate compared to normal. Erickson responded that we don't, we're waiting for testing procedures and sampling protocols. Force advised being a good neighbor is one thing but taking additional PFOS is another. Erickson responded that it's important to talk about this but in reality we're sharing the same customers. The solid waste from the homes in Wausau go to the landfill so it would affect us either way. Force asked what the cost would be for treating their leachate. Erickson explained that they owe us some test results. Our municipal code has a unit cost per pound for BOD, TSS, phosphorous, aluminum, etc. They haven't given representative numbers on those yet. Depending on those numbers we could negotiate a higher price if that's what made sense. They may also decide to treat it right at the land fill because they would have to pay us the fees and also truck it to the plant.

Force asked what type of action is required on this item. Miller asked if this would generate revenue, break even or is there a potential to lose money. Erickson responded that we would be generating revenue but if there were problems we'd have to work with them to get them resolved. Lindman advised the action would be to move this forward and prepare a letter to Marathon County to discuss the acceptance of leachate. Erickson advised he wouldn't say we are committing, it would be to continue working with Marathon County and taking the leachate on a trial basis as we review test results. Mielke added that if the determination is made that we are getting too much or we're not able to treat it that we can back track and they're on their own. Erickson agreed that would need to be outlined in the agreement.

Lindman said we can prepare something and wait for the testing to come back so we can see all of the parameters of concentrate that we're accepting.

Force asked how urgent this is because they have nothing to look at and would like to table this until there is more information to review.

Motion by Force to table this until more information is available. Seconded by Miller. Motion carried 4-0.

Force brought up the household hazardous waste that he had asked about a couple of meetings ago. Has anything come of that or have we discussed any of that with the hazardous waste people at the county. Mielke responded that he has not spoken with them about it. Lindman advised that he had passed that on to Ric Mohelnitzky since he arranges the large item drop off events. Force asked if that could be on the agenda for the next meeting.

Lindman agreed we'll bring it back next month.

9) Adjourn.

There being no further business to discuss, motion was made by Miller to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Herbst. Motion carried 4-0.