



Minutes of March 2, 2021

A meeting of the Wausau Water Works Commission was called to order at 1:35 p.m. in City Hall on Tuesday, March 2, 2021. In compliance with Wisconsin Statutes, this meeting was posted and receipted for by the Wausau Daily Herald on February 25, 2021.

Members Present: President Rosenberg, Commissioners Robinson-via Webex, Herbst, Force, Gehin.
Others Present: Eric Lindman, Dave Erickson, Scott Boers, Valerie Swanborg, MaryAnne Groat, Steve Opatik/Becher Hoppe, Ryan Yentz/Strand & Associates, Andrew Craven/Strand & Associates, Patrick Peckham/Alderman

1) Approve Minutes of February 2, 2021 Meeting.

Herbst moved to approve the minutes of the February 2, 2021 meeting. Seconded by Gehin.

Force questioned the lead service line issue as he does not see it on the agenda; will we be discussing that? Lindman advised he didn't have anything prepared for today. Gehin under item 2 last line, he thinks he asked the question about an update on well 3 and a pending letter from EPA. He certainly didn't offer that a pending letter was coming through as he wouldn't have had knowledge of that. It's just an administrative thing.

Motion to approve the minutes carried 5-0.

2) Director's Report on Utility Operations.

Lindman welcomed two new hires. Force asked for status at the wastewater plant and if we are completely cleaned up? Erickson advised they made great progress the first week getting the water and sludge pushed out. There are still corners and back rooms that need to be cleaned. We had issues with the insurance company and questions on whether or not the contractor was responsible for their equipment. It is my understanding now that they are and are now removing that equipment out. Force asked; they were responsible for what? Erickson stated we flooded our basements when a seal failed, 770 basement floor is lower than the other building and connected by a tunnel, we filled that to a height of 4 feet. The contractor had 6 scissor lifts, all flooded in sludge and everyone was waiting for their insurance company to approve removal. Gehin asked; so they weren't responsible for the leak? Erickson stated no, they were not responsible for the leak. Force asked if there were any odor problems in the neighborhood associated with that. Erickson responded no but there was some odor at the wastewater plant. We were more concerned about safety, gases and potential electrical issues but there weren't any other issues.

Gehin asked if we were able to get the screening conveyor auger fixed. Erickson stated we did, Brad drove to Minnesota and picked up a replacements auger. It had to be configured and we aren't guaranteeing it for a certain number of years but it is back in operation.

Force asked about the status of our request for funding for lateral line replacements. Lindman advised they're working through some last documents for the environmental review. Boers responded that no date has been set. The last email from the DNR stated they had more issues than what they had considered initially with rolling out the funds and implementing the program.

They did indicate we would be receiving the \$450,000 that we had requested, but didn't know when and what was all required to receive the funds. Force stated at least we know what the number is.

Force had one more question, in lieu of what happened in Texas with the water plants, how prepared are we for complete electrical washout like they had there as far as our water plant is concerned? Boers responded that we are a lot better situated than what they were. There are a couple items we are still working on and will be addressing with the new facility. There are a couple short falls that are budgeted beyond that. We should be sitting well with not much reliance on the grid and probably no reliance within 3 years. Force stated today we would still have some reliance. Boers explained we would have issues as far as taking temporary portable generators to sites to sustain operations. Force asked if those were on hand. Boers confirmed they are. Erickson explained that the wastewater plant could be challenged if we have no electricity across the whole city, especially if trees are down and roads are icy etc. We've got two larger backup generators with the wastewater plant upgrade, we have a plan but in my experience if we lose a number of lift stations it would be a challenge. Force asked if that has ever happened. Erickson advised we had an incident 8-10 years ago. The northeast side of town lost several lift stations. Keeping up with those was a challenge with crew we had available on hand. Since then we've acquired a second portable generator and we have also added some staff. Force asked how much portable generators cost? Erickson responded that we have a big one that can basically run anything and a small that can run 75% of the lift stations. The smaller one was in the \$30k-\$35k range. Force asked if we've ever done any type of risk analysis on what we would do if certain events took place. Erickson explained that we may have done that to some extent with our facilities plan but does think we could spend more time on that. Lindman advised we started working with the county this year. The mayor initiated an emergency response plan that incorporates water and wastewater and it is being looked at. Boers advised on the water side we are working with Clark Dietz updating the EPA mandated risk and resilience plan. We are three quarters of the way through that. Robinson asked if we participate in any table top exercises for emergency planning. Rosenberg stated that is part of the planning of the emergency contract/agreement that we had with the county, expect that to happen at some point

Director's report placed on file.

3) Presentation and Project Update for the Inflow/Infiltration Study by Strand & Associates

Please refer to attached documents in the packet of the presentation by Strand & Associates.

Craven presented the conclusions and results of the I&I study this past year and half. This explains the infiltration and inflow analysis of the City's baseline for dry and wet weather sanitary sewer flows. A few specific investigations that result in opportunities for I&I removal was the 1st Street access hatch assessment, this sanitary sewer is located inside the storm sewer. The city hired an outside contractor to enter the sewer and observe access hatches to see the condition of them.

Gehin asked if the sanitary sewer on 1st street had been inspected previously. Erickson responded they did some inspections and made sure some of the covers were secured on the storm sewers that were on top of the sanitary sewers. Yentz advised there were six, they were able to open four but the other two were grouted shut by either city staff or a contractor in the past. We talked with Erickson and Dwelly whether to seal the rest of them or not, it appeared having access to that sewer was critical. Gehin advised we rarely go in them. Sherman St. has a similar situation, was that inspected too? Yentz responded that one was not inspected. Gehin stated that is the one district we're concerned about. Yentz advised that is correct

Force asked Erickson what kind of flows we get during wet weather from a volume standpoint compared to the average daily flow. Erickson responded that the average flow is 5 mgd and that has decreased a bit as it used to be approximately 5½ mgd, peak flows can go up to 20mgd range. Force asked Yentz about the desirable range being 2 ½ -4, we have 2 basins that are way over that. I can recall diverting my roof drain, do we still have a lot of that where roof drains are connected to the sewer system? Yentz advised it is possible. Smoke testing is where you'd be able to pinpoint those. Force suspects there are still a lot out there

Force stated that it seems like for new construction we're requiring storm water capture, is this true? Lindman responded that is correct. Force asked if this would have any impact on this or is that strictly a storm water issue.

Lindman advised it is true and the practices we are doing now prevents run off from getting into sanitary. With reconstruction on 2nd street in front of the church, we found drains going into the sanitary and so those were disconnected but when we redo streets and old areas of the city we will find more that we don't know about. If we can control the run off, the better we'll be as far as preventing that from getting into the sanitary. Robinson asked how do we tell or address issue of infiltration through contact with groundwater. Yentz responded that the city currently does annual televising and pipe rehabilitation program. They would recommend on the manhole side of things to work in conjunction with this program. The inflow sources of the roof drains, vented manhole covers is the lesser expensive of the two sources of I&I to remove.

Robinson asked how this might drive the capital planning and replacement schedules. Will we be paying a little more attention to that going forward? Will we be trying to accelerate some activities to avoid I&I? Lindman explained the first step would be smoke testing and identify those locations, identify what those costs will be, and then arrange that as a project in our capital plan and it may come as a higher priority.

4) Discussion on PFAS/PFOS Related Activities and Regulations.

Agenda item tabled until April.

5) Discussion and Possible Action on the Implementation of a Rain Barrel Program City Wide.

Force advised that he, Lindman and Robinson met in person and went over options. They also held a zoom call with the village trustee and public works director in Cottage Grove, Wisconsin outside of Madison. They are in the process of installing a rain barrel program. He thought he'd summarize their findings and seek direction as to what they should do between now and the next meeting. It's quite feasible that we could implement a program by summer. They have identified a couple vendors that are capable of handling most of the program, including marketing, payment, collections, the provision of barrels as well as the connecting devices. Most of the communities they've looked at offer some type of financial incentive to those who choose to install a rain barrel. Incentives such as a rebate on the individuals water bill on an annual basis of approximately \$25 and \$50 knocked off the water bill. City's responsibility is to manage the distribution if we go ahead and provide the barrels, citizens would pick up usually on a Saturday morning between 9-12 that we can distribute at a city park or a city facility where we can be at a safe distance or Covid friendly manner with minimal contact. We haven't selected any vendor or adopted any particular program yet. We are not quite ready to recommend a program.

Robinson asked if there is support for advancing the program. If there is, would this be an annual rebate on the water bill or a one-time subsidy. How much money would we have to apply toward subsidizing the purchase of the barrel? I think the easier approach is to subsidize the purchase going into it and it would be much easier to administer. Force added the scenario, if a barrel costs approximately \$75 and we had 100 customers participate. The utility provides a \$25 subsidy, bringing the cost to the homeowner to \$50. The cost to the utility would be \$2,500. I would doubt the first round would amount to a lot of money, it would be rather modest agree? Robinson agreed. Rosenberg stated she is in favor of moving in this direction and in favor of letting local foundations know this is the direction we are going and see if they'd like to participate. She is in favor of the one-time subsidy instead of having people walk around to see if these barrels are being hooked up. Force asked if the board was in favor of pursuing one of these vendors that would handle everything and the only thing we would have to handle is the distribution of the barrels. Rosenberg entertained a motion to have this one time purchase subsidy and work with vendor to get this done.

Motion by Herbst, Seconded by Gehin. Motion passed 5-0.

Robinson asked Groat about any purchasing restrictions we would have in pursuing a vendor, so we

follow the city's purchasing protocol, we can follow up with you. Groat stated yes that sounds good. Rosenberg stated we will follow all procurement policies.

6) Discussion and Possible Action on the Purchase of 1010 Bugbee Ave for the Purpose of Constructing a Solar Array.

Lindman advised that the purchase agreement had a couple of edits. The environmental phase assessment came back clear with no further action, so that contingency has been met. We would like to get out there and test that soil to make sure it's compatible with what we want to do. That would be the last contingency that we have with Mathy Construction. The cost of the property would be \$125,000. Once we get through the last contingency, we'd like to set up the purchase of that property.

Robinson posed a question relative to Phase I as there was no interview done with previous ownership which would be the standard protocol of phase I. They referenced the berms. Were those berms created from the movement of soil on the property or associated with fill? Boers responded that the berms remaining on site was top soil moved off site for sand recovery underneath. Robinson asked if you're comfortable that all material on site is from this site historically. Boers confirmed that we believe the berms are material from the site historically. We have a staff member who worked for the previous owner and that is his thought as well, the material was topsoil that was moved for excavation of sand underneath.

Force asked if we do not pursue the solar array, what we will do with the property. Lindman advised we would retain it or we could sell it. The utility would manage it however they want to manage that. Force asked if that is on tax roll. Lindman advised it is. Water dept. pays a pilot determined by the PSC on annual basis to city, based on the property it owns.

Motion by Robinson to approve the purchase, Seconded by Gehin.

Alderman Peckham asked if the additional property was needed to build an array of a certain size or why are we buying it. What is it going to allow the utility to do? Lindman responded that we've hired Clark Dietz to review the property we own to the north. The space we need is on the very north side of that property. We had a lot of additional construction costs to get the conductor's and additional equipment back to the treatment facility. While we were doing that, Mathy Construction approached us as they were getting ready to put this property up on market. We had Clark Dietz do an analysis to see what we could do. This is much closer to the treatment facility as far as conductor's and bringing the power to the facility. This is also a property that I think will help with the well protection plan as well. This is a 7 acre piece of property and we may need a little bit more property to the north to get it to the size we want. We will look at the varying sizes to provide enough power for the treatment facility once it's up and running. We are planning to bring Clark Dietz back to look at alternatives, paybacks, size and space. If we're looking at a 40% power generation or 60% or 90% of what the plant is using to offset power usage.

Motion passed 5-0

Adjourn.

There being no further business to discuss, the meeting is adjourned.