



Minutes of May 3rd, 2022

A meeting of the Wausau Water Works Commission was called to order at 1:37 p.m. in City Hall on Tuesday, May 3rd, 2022. In compliance with Wisconsin Statutes, this meeting was posted and receipted for by the Wausau Daily Herald on April 28, 2022.

Members Present: Commissioners Herbst, Gehin, Force, Robinson

Others Present: Becky McElhaney, Eric Lindman, Scott Boers, Ben Brooks, Anne Jacobson, Toni Vanderboom, Stephen Opatik/ Becher-Hoppe, Susan Wojtkiewicz/Donohue, Evan Thomas/Wood, Via WebEx: Andrew Dow/Donohue, Eric Broce/Wood, Bill Malyk/Wood,

1) Approve Minutes of April 6th and 14th 2022 Meeting.

Robinson motioned to approve minutes from April 6th & 14th Commission Meeting.

Seconded by Herbst.

Motion carried 4-0.

2) Director's Report on Utility Operations.

Gehin questioned changes in the pump run time after cleaning the Industrial Park force main, if the launching equipment was purchased (Wastewater side) and if we could reach out to the previous poll workers to assist with the summer aide positions that remain unfilled?

Brooks replied the pressures have gone down, launching equipment was purchased.

Lindman replied we could reach out to Toni for those individuals but we have to keep in mind that there is labor involved.

Director's Report Placed on File.

3) Discussion and Possible Action Related to Staffing Shortages and Hiring Challenges.

Lindman began that it has been challenging- nationally everything has been going up and paychecks have been going down. City itself is not keeping up with wages and rising costs. The City's most important asset is its employees and second are the water and sewer facilities. Not properly maintaining or having the staff to maintain these facilities puts significant liabilities on the city and puts the facilities in jeopardy. We may become fully staffed this year, but we have a lot of training to do, we've brought requirements down to get people through the door but anyone we hire needs to get the proper training. New employees cannot be on call right away and those who require a CDL still need the training.

Gehin commented on creating a task force because it would be sad if we had no employees.

Brooks commented on the supporting staff in the audience today on what they could be making elsewhere, they are dedicated, show up to work daily, and love what they do and we are their voice and Gehin's idea of task force is great, I would second that.

Boers commented that our staff are experienced, and they are the reason we could lower our standards to bring people through that door to train them to do the work that we do without having the high cost of wages. We have to bring our wages up because if we are backed into a

corner where a lot of these key people leave, we will not have anyone here to train. The gentlemen in the back can both make \$15/hour more just by walking out. Most people are going through schooling for electrical/mechanical or engineering degrees and would not want to come work for the City for \$22/hour. We can't buy our way out of the hole, as Robinson quoted, but we need to at least bring up our wages to be competitive.

No Action Taken.

4) Presentation and Update on the Progress and Information to Date Regarding the PFAS Pilot Study.

Wojtkiewicz began the progress update from the report in the packet. Equipment is operating as anticipated and are seeing reduction in PFAS numbers, but Dow would be presenting in detail.

Dow presented with slides that can be found in the packet under Wausau Water Works Commission calendar under See Packet starting at page 62.

No Action Taken.

5) Discussion and Possible Action on a Scope of Services and Necessary Budget Modification for Hiring Wood Environmental & Infrastructure, Inc.

Robinson moved to authorize the budget not to exceed \$83,343 for Wood and be appraised on a regular basis of where we are in the status to the tasks. Seconded by Gehin.

Motion carried 4-0.

6) Discussion and Possible Action on a Reimbursement Resolution for Expenditure of Funds Related to PFAS Engineering and Investigation Through the WDNR Safe Drinking Water Loan Program.

Gehin moved to approve the resolution for expenditures of Funds related to PFAS Engineering and Investigation through the WDNR safe drinking water loan program. Seconded by Robinson.

Motion carried 4-0.

7) Discussion and Possible Action on a Resolution Designating an Authorized Representative to File for Financial Assistance from the State of WI Environmental Improvement Fund.

Robinson moved to designate an authorized representative (City's Mayor) to file for financial assistance from the State of Wisconsin Environmental Improvement Fund. Seconded by Herbst.

Motion carried 4-0.

8) Discussion and Possible Action on a Budget Modification and Setting a Budget Amount for Communication Services from Mueller Communications.

Force moved to cap the amount at \$20,000 for communication services from Mueller communications. Seconded by Gehin.

Motion carried 4-0.

9) Adjourn.

Motion to adjourn by Robinson. Seconded by Herbst.

Link to view meeting in its entirety: <https://tinyurl.com/wausaucitycouncil>

Gina Vang, Recording Secretary

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