



Minutes of June 7th, 2022

A meeting of the Wausau Water Works Commission was called to order at 1:30 p.m. in City Hall on Tuesday, June 7th, 2022. In compliance with Wisconsin Statutes, this meeting was posted and receipted for by the Wausau Daily Herald on June 3, 2022.

Members Present: President Rosenberg, Commissioners Force, Robinson

Others Present: Scott Boers, Ben Brooks, Valerie Swanborg, Stephen Opatik/ Becher-Hoppe, Susan Wojtkiewicz/Donohue, Evan Thomas/Wood

Via WebEx: Eric Lindman, Andrew Dow/Donohue, Eric Broce/Wood, Jack De Klerk/Wood, Hannah Albertus-Benham/Wood, Matthew Patterson/Becher-Hoppe,

1) Approve Minutes of May 3rd 2022 Meeting.

Robinson motioned to approve minutes from May 3rd 2022 Commission Meeting.

Seconded by Force.

Motion carried 3-0.

2) Director's Report on Utility Operations.

Robinson questioned if age was factored in the map for Lead Service Line Replacements and if we utilized GIS or any back database.

Boers replied our GIS map depicts older parts of town with criteria listed and in the next week we have a meeting to set up a plan regarding the Lead Service Line Replacement Program to identify gaps.

Force questioned if the critical sites were individual homes or neighbors and if we checked the schools and childcare centers.

Boers replied they were individual homes, the school district had no lead lines. We reached out to all registered daycares and were able to replace the ones that allowed us entry but some daycares didn't want to replace their services; these were replaced with 100% grant funding

Director's Report Placed on File.

3) Presentation, Discussion and Update on the Pilot Study Results (Donohue).

Wojtkiewicz started with the update on the Pilot study results with slides presented by Dow regarding short/long term strategies. (See Packet on City's Website Calendar- page 27).

Robinson questioned the annualized basis of eligibility and reimbursement with the Utility if we move ahead with funds through the State.

Wojtkiewicz replied that the DNR has an "Intended use plan" that should open gates with intent to apply for funds that are available through bipartisan infrastructure law and that there would be various pots of money available through emerging contaminants allocation and additional funding through the safe drinking water loan program.

Robinson questioned if the water rates/costs were going to go up based upon commitments already made and the staging of those sequencing of those rate increases.

Swanborg stated we have all the stepped rate increases approved and implemented for the drinking water. There is one additional rate increase for wastewater only which will go into affect October 1, 2022. The utility will complete one final rate study as we go into the operation stage.

Robinson questioned if the EPA came out with a lower number instead of being 20ppt what if it were 5ppt or 2 ppt, what would that do to our costs?

Dow replied with the hypothetical goals below 20, the lead lag set up would be more significant. The operating cost would be in the upper portion of the range presented in the presentation, but we can't predict the bed life so it's hard to quantify, we use ranges instead of a standing number.

Robinson stated it's imperative that we get a financial analysis in place and what's eligible and what's not eligible for reimbursement, different scenarios and the (intent to apply) ITA process is not conducive if we miss the deadline. I think a special meeting is worthwhile to include the utility staff.

Rosenberg questioned if that financial analysis seemed feasible.

Lindman replied we borrowed money upfront, we do need a communication on finances. Will try to put as much information together to bring forth and may get Ehler's involved as they have been preparing for our rate cases.

Wojtkiewicz stated that with the financial planning, we can preserve the eligibility for the loan and can use the interim financing and build that into the planning. We can preserve the eligibility with permission and will work with staff and bring numbers back.

Robinson stated we need to do a scenario with or without interim financing. The ITA is a lengthy state process or do we fund all or part of the project on our own. Do we know what the market is with different resins and costs as technology expands and generally we could see competitive prices. Future proofing to best we can with issues that may come through in the future and permanency.

Rosenberg caps that Gina will be sending out a note if looking in about 2 weeks for a special meeting.

Director's Report Placed on File.

4) Discussion and Possible Action Action on the Approval of the 2021 Compliance Maintenance Annual Report (CMAR)- Wastewater.

Robinson moved to authorize the 2021 CMAR report. Seconded by Force.

Motion carried 3-0.

5) Discussion on Employee Staffing, Recruitment/Retention and Wages.

Lindman began that the Utility wages were below averages compared to our midpoint wages categorized as market.

Robinson stated the County is also doing a wage study and requested Rosenberg to bring back a report recommendation from administration to our next steps.

Rosenberg stated that the HR department are having big changes, it may not be at the next meeting but will work on that to make sure we are compensating appropriately.

6) Adjourn.

Motion to adjourn by Force. Seconded by Robinson.

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

Gina Vang, Recording Secretary

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