



**Utility Commission
Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, January
15, 2020 at 8:00 AM
Civic Center ED Lab**



The Utility Commission of the City of New Richmond was called to order on Wednesday, January 15, 2020, at 8:00 AM, in the Civic Center ED Lab, with the following members present:

PRESENT: Gerry Warner, Bob Mullen, Mike Kastens and Pat Becker

ABSENT:

**OTHERS
PRESENT:** Mike Darrow, Rae Ann Ailts, Joel Enders, Stacie Running, Weston Arndt, Bob Meyers, Steve Skinner, and Debbie Powers

CALL TO ORDER

Mike Kastens called the meeting to order at 8:00 a.m.

ADOPTION OF AGENDA

Patrick Becker made a motion to approve the agenda as presented. Gerald Warner seconded the motion. Carried unanimously.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Robert Mullen made a motion to approve the minutes of December 19, 2019. Gerald Warner seconded the motion. Carried unanimously.

APPROVAL OF BILLS AND DISBURSEMENTS

Patrick Becker made a motion approve the December bills as presented. Robert Mullen seconded the motion. Carried unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

3Q19 FINANCIAL REPORT

Joel Enders gave an overview of the 3rd quarter 2019 financial report. The customer base has increased, but the volume decreased in the 3rd quarter.

POSTING OF BOARD POSITION AND PROCESS

Mike Darrow explained the process of posting for a position and then the interview process. Time will be designated at the February 5th meeting to interview the candidates.

CTH GG WATERMAIN PROJECT

Jeremiah Wendt reviewed the plans for the project. We will be installing water mains prior to the county starting their portion of the project. The cost of \$450,000 is included in the Capital improvements plan.

Gerald Warner made a motion to authorize to bid the County Road GG water main project. Patrick Becker seconded the motion. Carried unanimously.

130TH ANNIVERSARY OF ELECTRIC UTILITY

Stacie Running gave an update on the 130th Anniversary of Electric Utility. There will be a number of items in 2020 to promote New Richmond Utilities and the 130th Anniversary.

MYACCOUNT UPDATE

Rae Ann Ailts gave an overview of MyAccount portal. E-Care will no longer be supported by the end of 2020. MyAccount will provide customer with the following benefits:

- Ease of use - bills, usage and payment can be viewed and made through one access point.
- Customers will be able to view 13 months of data. Allowing customers to view year over year consumption.
- Improved security with single point account access.
- Modern look and feel.
- Advanced Metering ready.

MyAccount will go live on January 28, 2020.

DEPARTMENT REPORTS

Finance Director - Rae Ann Ailts

- Audit season, January 20 the auditors will be in doing field work
- Physical inventory conducted
- Water application has been accepted from the PSC
- Working on PSC Report

Utility Manager - Mike Darrow

- Mike reviewed the notice for the new Utility Commissioner, accepting applications through January 31
- Utility has moved to the City side, central customer service station

WPPI-ESR - Stacie Running

- Focus on Energy
 - Incentives paid 2019 Calendar Year = \$86,962
 - 2142 customer incentives
 - 1,399,102 first year kWh savings
 - MyAccount Transition
 - 01/28 go-live
 - Communications start 01/20
 - WPPI Updates
 - Choose Renewable Program Changes pending PSC approval
 - 300 kWh Block for \$2

- Bulk purchasing \$1 (20 or more blocks)
 - Renewable Energy Credit program available to help communities achieve renewable energy goals
 - Value of Public Power Funds update
 - Children's Book will be available to promote local utility
 - Large Customer Benchmarking Survey in 2020
- Upcoming Events
 - Distribution Services & Joint Purchasing Meeting (1/15)
 - February 24-26 – APPA Legislative Rally (deadline 12/20)
- Customer Connections
 - NRSD KEEP offer
 - NRSD Pedal Power & PowerTOWN events are being scheduled
 - Phillips-Medisize Intern Grant through WPPI
 - FNCB Award Presentation on 1/21

Water Department - Bob Meyer

- One of our staff has resigned and went back to Amery
- The water relay for the Oral Surgery building has been tested and is back on line
- Inventory is finished and working on PSC report
- Watermain break on Jeanne Court in December
- Working on DNR reports that are due in February
- Water disconnects continue

Sewer Department - Steve Skinner

- Aeration Blower seeping oil. Looking into repair options, remanufactured vs. rebuilt units.
- Scada computer upgrade is completed. Tested items that were noted as not alarming properly to computer. They were repaired as required.
- Noble lift station scada system needed repairing do to no communication from the site. Micro logic needed reprogramming. Communication is working now.
- Put together West Central District of WWOA meeting agenda. The meeting being hosted by New Richmond on February 11th.
- Biosolids hauling law amendment is final stages. The amendment is being reviewed and asking for support for the change before going to the house to be passed.

Electric Department - Weston Arndt

- **WPPI Energy** – 2020 implementation of additional super peak and super off-peak rates
 - 2020 budgeted rates 2.1% higher than 2019 actual (2019 3% below budget)
 - 2020 budget is 0.9% below 2019 budget.
 - 5 year projections flat
 - PSC approval of Point Beach Solar – Online 2021
 - Currently 33% carbon-free
 - Resource will lower revenue requirement.
 - Emergency Response Drill – December 18.
 - **Trail View** – Completed primary extension and energized the first service in this small, six home development for Haffner Construction.
 - **Willow River Bluffs** –Albrightson's Excavating dug a trench for electric and fiber facilities for the first part of the Willow River Bluffs 1st Addition. This is Derrick's

development off of CTY HWY A. Creative Homes has 5 lots sold in this new addition, with construction beginning soon.

- **Power quality monitoring** – In the fall of 2019, Isometric Tool & Design experienced some heat pump failures that they thought could be attributed to power quality issues. We've been monitoring power quality in this area after seeing a few voltage fluctuations. We've received no additional calls, but we continue to monitor to see if there are any equipment issues that would factor into the fluctuations.
- **Oevering Office Addition** – Five new electric services were installed for the Oevering Homes office addition. They are considering upsizing two of the five services for a potential tenant that requested larger electric services.
- **Tree Trimming** – We again have about 3 weeks of tree trimming planned for mid-winter. Postcards were mailed to about 60 residents, while phone calls were placed to about a dozen businesses. We are coordinating with the street fellas to work together on road right-of-way trimming and chipping our limbs and branches.
- **Knowles Substation** – Xcel Energy is performing maintenance on their side of the Knowles Substation. Their work includes changing out a recloser and replacing porcelain insulators. They are using a temporary, trailer-mounted substation, which required us to shift load and de-energize our side of the substation. This was performed on January 2 and 3. After their work is complete in about 2 weeks, we will shift load and de-energize again to allow for removal of the temporary transformer.
- **Crescent Landscaping** – Allan Olynick is requesting 3 phase electric service. We are working on design, etc. I have a call into Andrea Jorgenson, the Community Service Manager for our region with Xcel Energy. The goal is to schedule a meeting with her in the next few weeks to have a conversation and be a good neighbor regarding service territory.
- **2020 Project Estimates**
 - Large Power AMI
 - Digger Derrick
 - Highview Substation
 - LED Lighting

Public Works Director - Jeremiah Wendt

- Noted the 2020 projects
- Kwik Trip submitted final plans for stoplights

COMMUNICATION AND MISCELLANEOUS

February meeting will be held on the 5th.

ADJOURNMENT

Gerald Warner made a motion to adjourn at 8:58 a.m. Patrick Becker seconded the motion. Carried unanimously.