

NEW RICHMOND UTILITY COMMISSION MINUTES

June 7, 2017

The regular meeting of the New Richmond Utility Commission was held on June 7, 2017 at 3:30 p.m. at the Civic Center.

Pat Becker called the meeting to order at 3:30 p.m.

Members Present: Jerry Frey, Bob Mullen, Dan Casey, and Pat Becker.

A motion was made by Dan Casey to approve the agenda, seconded by Jerry Frey, and carried.

A motion was made by Bob Mullen to approve the minutes of the April 19, 2017 and May 10, 2017 meeting, seconded by Dan Casey, and carried.

A motion was made by Dan Casey to approve bills and disbursements from April 2017 and May 2017, seconded by Jerry Frey, and carried.

Public Comment: None

Election of Officers:

Bob Mullen moved to keep the current officers for another term, seconded by Jerry Frey, motion carried.

Approval of CMAR Report and Resolution:

Jeremiah reviewed the annual CMAR report for the Wastewater Treatment Plant. Steve Skinner received a 4.0 rating – the highest score possible. If rating is under 2.5 the DNR starts requiring corrective action. Bob Mullen moved to approve Resolution 06072017 and report as presented, seconded by Dan Casey, motion carried.

Department Reports

Bob Meyer, Water Superintendent:

The Water Department installed a water tap for the new splash pad at the New Richmond Area Center. A water main break occurred over the weekend, and was repaired on Monday. Dave Pufall is busy with project inspections. Bergerson Caswell is working on Well #6 to install air lines and transducers. When work is completed the well will be flushed, and a water sample taken before Well #6 is put back online. Flushing of hydrants continues. A hydrant on West 2nd Street was damaged and will be repaired. Meter change outs and cross connections are ongoing.

Steve Skinner, Lead Wastewater Treatment Plant Operator:

The CMAR has been completed. State lab audits will take place on June 19th. Paperwork and documentation will be reviewed to verify compliance. The underground wires that were damaged over the winter and early spring have been repaired, and affected equipment is back online. There is a business out at the airport that has been painting planes. The DNR was contacted, and will no longer allow the wastewater to be discharged into the septic system. Conversation took place with the City to determine if the WWTP would accept the wastewater. Steve completed testing of the wastewater and the business was informed the WWTP would accept the wastewater at a higher rate.

Tom Rickard, Electric Superintendent:

Staff is currently working on West Alley, which is where the old creamery building is located. This involves the rebuilding of the transformer, and installation of a new line and pole. The North 4th Street project is ongoing and on schedule. Work will begin on the new street lighting soon. Some additional work was needed on the North 3rd Street project when a ped discovered in the sidewalk

required relocation. Installation of new services is ongoing. LWT would like to have a new high voltage service installed, but is currently researching to determine if it would be cost effective. Annual inspections have been completed on all trucks. Some minor repairs are needed.

Jeremiah Wendt, Director of Public Works:

Staff is looking into agreements for some businesses on what wastewater will be accepted at the treatment plant. Jeremiah stated additional monitoring is being done at the sewer plant in conjunction with the facility planning process. Additional monitoring is also occurring in the Industrial Park. Staff have been reworking the gravel bed, and the trees should be ready to plant in October. Dave Pufall has been doing all the inspections on the North 4th Street project. Underground utilities west of Nevada is approximately 95% complete. Once complete, grading will begin West of Nevada so Lakeside Foods can start production in early July. Final completion on North 4th Street is expected to occur in October.

Rae Ann Ailts, Finance Director:

Rae Ann Ailts passed out and reviewed first quarter financial statements and recording metrics. An overview was given on electric, water, and sewer consumption, revenue, and operating expenses. The first quarter saw an increase of 14 new electric, 11 new water, and eight new sewer customers. After fourteen years of service with the Utility Office, Jill Albert gave her notice in mid May. Her last day was Friday, June 2nd. Jill was thanked for her years of service. Twenty-one applications to fill the vacant position have been received. The interview process will begin tomorrow. The utility office is also searching for temporary summer help to absorb some of the front end office duties. A bonding call took place yesterday, and went well. The rating report should be back on Friday. Assuming all goes well the Bond Sale results will be available on Monday. In May, Diane Thielke attended MEUW roundtable training in Cornell, where cyber security was highlighted. In May, an incident was reported where someone representing the Utility was attempting to defraud a resident.

Weston Arndt, WPPI Energy Services Rep:

Wholesale Rate Impacts

WPPI Energy's shift to seasonal rates that were approved at the December Board of Directors meeting will begin with the wholesale power bill for June's usage. The change will be seen on New Richmond Utilities' peak demand rates. This will be passed through to retail customers via the PCAC. The second bill insert has been going out with the May bills. Large customers were informed personally.

We expect 2017 to be close to budget projections. Looking at 2018 and 2019, WPPI Energy is expecting 1.5-2.5% increases in wholesale power costs. The key drivers will be transmission costs, natural gas costs, and market energy prices. A large PPA with Wisconsin Power & Light was terminated effective May 31, which should partially offset the increases. Current average power cost projection is flat for 2020 and 2021.

Customer Work

Worked with Grace Place to pursue energy efficiency incentives for new windows. Engineered Propulsion Systems is nearing a test of their dynamometer that will feed power back onto the grid – working through the process on this measure. Performed temporary power monitoring at Wisconsin Lighting. Assisted Lakeside Foods in submitting VFD and lighting incentives. St Croix Press incentives for cogged drive belts.

High School Scholarship

Gavin Brown was the \$1,000 Public Power Scholarship Award winner. He is the son of Donald and Louise Brown and plans to attend St Thomas this fall.

Noah Wiedenfeld, Management Analyst:

Noah Wiedenfeld shared that we received a \$10,000 grant from the Wisconsin Office of Energy Innovation to complete an energy audit of City-owned facilities (Police Station, Fire Hall, Library, Civic Center, Wastewater Treatment Plant, and shops). After we receive the signed contract from the Public Service Commission, we expect to begin walk-throughs of each building in late June or July. The final report will be completed by late summer or early fall. Noah also passed around copies of the June quarterly e-newsletter that includes highlights from each department.

Mike Darrow, Utility Manager:

Mike Darrow congratulated Tom Rickard and the electric department for being the recipient of the National Award of Excellence For Safety. Mike also stated the Bond Call went well, and extended a thank you to all those who helped in that process. Mike again noted how busy the City has been this past year. Last year there was approximately 9 million in residential construction. By the end of March 2017, residential construction was already near 7.5 million, with expectations of breaking the City record for residential construction in a single year. In addition, several million dollars is expected in commercial and industrial projects. The Best Western is scheduled to break ground on Monday. We are about to start the 2018 budget process. In that process, long and short term staffing needs will be looked at across the board. A follow-up meeting for the Northside project is tentatively scheduled for June 26th at 4:30 p.m. There is a grant to be used for quiet zones that is being looked into. The Comprehensive Plan has been rebooted. The City is looking for residents to give input on this planning process. Dan Casey asked about the old school site property. Mike stated there has been some debris from years ago that still needs to be removed. Once the debris is removed, the City can acquire the land. The land will remain vacant for approximately two years. This site can only be used for a library.

There being no further business, a motion was made by Bob Mullen to adjourn, seconded by Dan Casey, and carried. The meeting adjourned at 4:28 p.m.

Pat Becker, President

Gerry Warner, Secretary