

NEW RICHMOND UTILITY COMMISSION MINUTES

March 1, 2017

The regular meeting of the New Richmond Utility Commission was held on March 1, 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, Gerry Warner, Dan Casey, and Pat Becker.

A motion was made by Gerry Warner to approve the amended agenda, seconded by Dan Casey, and carried.

A motion was made by Dan Casey to approve the minutes of the February 8, 2017 meeting, and approve February 2017 bills and disbursements, seconded by Bob Mullen, and carried.

Public Comment: None

Lead Service Lines:

Jeremiah Wendt recapped the state of lead lines in New Richmond. A map showing parcels serviced by lead goosenecks was presented. Approximately 5% of service connections are lead. Staff noted that the cost to replace all of the lead service lines is estimated at \$500,000.00, and presented options for replacing all of them in one year, or over a five-year period. The replacement of all lead service lines does not eliminate the possibility of lead in the drinking water in homes, as historical internal plumbing will often contain some lead. The City is due for another round of lead testing in 2017. The Commission directed staff to bring back the results of the testing before additional action is taken. Rae Ann Ailts will research funding options as well, and this item will be brought back to the Commission in the fall. No formal action was taken at this time.

Request for Sewer Credit – Margaret Bower & Larry DuBois:

Rae Ann Ailts gave background information on the water leak at the home of Margaret Bower. Discussion took place on the information presented, along with the current sewer adjustment policy. It was the consensus of the Commissioners to table the request, and get more information from the homeowner to determine if the homeowner's insurance covers sewer charges resulting from the water leak. It was recommended the current sewer adjustment policy also be reviewed. A motion was made by Dan Casey to table both sewer credit requests, seconded by Bob Mullen, and carried.

Utility Website Update:

Rae Ann Ailts updated the Utility Commission on the changes that will occur on the Utility Website. Andrew Lamers presented three template options for the new website layout, to obtain Commissioners preference. Option 2, with color choice of red and blue, was the top choice for both Staff and Utility Commission. Option 2 also had better quick link capability.

Community Commons Distribution Facilities Relocation:

In October 2016, the School District of New Richmond contacted Tom Rickard, Electrical Superintendent, to relocate the electric service serving the Community commons building, in preparation of the razing of the building.

Electric service to the School District campus was installed in 1987, which at that time included the current Commons Building parcel and the Ambulance Service parcel. The original placement of the transformer was placed in central vicinity to allow for service to all School District buildings which included the Commons building and other buildings where the Ambulance service now resides. When the parcel was divided and the Ambulance Service was built, the electric service for the ambulance was fed from the transformer which resided on the Community Commons parcel.

Due to the razing of the Commons building, the electric service needed to be removed and relocated so service would continue to be provided to the Ambulance Service. Under the Utility's current authorized tariff 111.1(1) and in accordance with PSC 113.1008(1) where responsibility can be determined by the utility, the customer responsible for relocation, rebuilding, or other modification of existing distribution facilities shall pay a contribution based upon the cost of new facilities, less accumulated depreciation of facilities to be removed and any salvage value of those facilities being removed.

Tom Rickard explained how this transformer was a main feeder line. Under the tariff the total charges which could be billed are \$5,735.33. The cost to remove the line extending to the Commons building would have been approximately \$1500.00. Discussion occurred. A motion was made by Dan Casey to invoice the School District of New Richmond for \$1500.00, the cost for the removal of the transformer, seconded by Bob Mullen, and carried.

2017/2018 Street & Utility Projects:

Jeremiah Wendt gave an update on the 2017/2018 Street and Utility projects. This included sources of funding for these projects, public engagement process, and timeline.

125th Street project: There are no utility components with this project yet. Richmond Township will be contributing \$125,000.00 towards the project. The projected cost is \$500,000.00. The project will be designed in 2017 and built in 2018. The west side of the street will remain Richmond Township. Plans are to place a trail on the City side of the street. Public meetings will be held for public feedback.

Harrison Street project: There is consideration to not construct Harrison Street in 2017. Staff is doing additional analysis. Results of the analysis will be brought back to the March Council meeting.

North 4th Street project: Water and sewer lines on North 4th Street will be completely replaced. Water line dead ends will be looped. Parking on North 4th will have parking bays, with locations alternating on the North and South side of the street. Bids will be accepted in March, and opened in April. This project is set to take place in 2017. Rae Ann gave an overview of the costs for the North 4th Street project. The project will be funded through bonding or bridge financing. A motion was made by Gerry Warner to bring a recommendation to the Council to bid the North 4th Street Project, seconded by Dan Casey, and carried.

Department Reports

Bob Meyer, Water Superintendent:

Meter change out is ongoing, as well as cross connection and old meter testing. Water Withdrawal and Cross Connection Reports are complete, and have been submitted to the DNR. Bob Meyer is meeting with a well driller to pull and inspect the pump at Well #6. Disconnects are ongoing. St. Croix County hired a company with a crane to install some microwaves on Tower #2. Staff is working on completing the PSC report. A pump located at Noble's Tire has a chip in the propeller. Staff is attempting to repair the damage.

Steve Skinner, Lead Wastewater Treatment Plant Operator:

The WWTP touch panels are being built and programmed. No timeline was given for completion. Issues occurred with VFD #2 at the main lift station. Before replacing the VFD, Steve verified the motor was not the cause of the issue. The motor was tested and is operating properly. Steve is looking into the cost of replacing the VFD. The repair and replacement of the digester valves is complete. Steve extended a thank you to Bob Meyer for bringing the jet truck to clean out a structure pit before the valve project could be done. MSA is requesting different Bio-P testing. These test samples are sent to a special lab for analysis.

Tom Rickard, Electric Superintendent:

Tom stated everything is going well. Tree trimming is almost complete. The Electric Department, along with Parks and Streets, will be renting an arm mower from Alden Township to mow down brush. Meter conversions are complete. Staff is working on equipment maintenance. System inspections have begun. These inspections involve the entire city, and take place in a five year rotation. Each utility box is inspected and documented. Bidding, prepping and inventorying for projects is currently taking place.

Jeremiah Wendt, Director of Public Works:

Work on the North 4th Street Project continues.

Rae Ann Ailts, Finance Director:

Rae Ann Ailts and staff are working on 2016 year end reporting requirements for the audit, scheduled the week of March 13th, and the PSC report filings. Rae Ann extended a thank you to Tom Rickard and Bob Meyer for their assistance with the PSC report. Westconsin Credit Union has purchased 4 solar panels, with the intent of donating the panels to organizations within town. Effective January 1, 2017, Payment Service Network credit card and eCheck convenience fees were passed on to the customer. There has been minimal negative feedback with the switch from the Utility absorbing these fees to the customer paying the fees.

Weston Arndt, WPPI Energy Services Rep:

Weston Arndt was unable to attend. Tom Rickard gave the following update in his place.

Wholesale Rate Impacts

The first bill insert is scheduled to be sent with the March bills. Communication with large power customers continues.

Customer Work

Currently working with Grace Place to pursue energy efficiency incentives for new windows. Engineered Propulsion Systems has intentions to utilize a dynamometer that would potentially feed power back onto the grid – working through the process on this measure. Investigated high demands for the cart shed at the New Richmond Golf Club. WESTconsin Credit Union has purchased 4 shares of the community solar garden, and chose to donate them. We're working with them on promoting their donation.

As mentioned last month, staff is getting back into the schools for our annual outreach. This included National Theatre for Children and Pedal Power.

Noah Wiedenfeld, Management Analyst:

Noah Wiedenfeld thanked the Utility Commission members who attended the Annual Board & Commission Dinner, held on February 28 at the New Richmond Regional Airport. He also congratulated Gerry Warner for being named the Board and Commission Member of the Year. Gerry's photo was taken prior to the Utility Commission meeting accepting the award from Mayor Fred Horne.

Mike Darrow, Utility Manager:

Absent.

There being no further business, a motion was made by Gerry Warner to adjourn, seconded by Dan Casey, and carried. The meeting adjourned at 4:58 p.m.