

**NEW RICHMOND UTILITY COMMISSION MINUTES  
OCTOBER 10, 2018**

The regular meeting of the New Richmond Utility Commission was held on October 10, 2018 at 3:30 p.m. at the Civic Center.

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

Members Present: Bob Mullen, Dan Casey, Mike Kastens, and Pat Becker.

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

A motion was made by Bob Mullen to approve the minutes of the September 5, 2018 meeting, seconded by Dan Casey, and carried.

A motion was made by Mike Kastens to approve September 2018 bills and disbursements, seconded by Bob Mullen, and carried.

**Public Comment:**

None

**2019 Utilities Draft Budget Review:**

Rae Ann Ailts reviewed the Utilities budgets focusing on projected revenues and expenditures. Stated Staff and Commission are dedicated to ensuring a transparent and collaborative budget process as the community continues to grow and evolve. Formal budget approval is to take place during the November commission meeting.

**Capital Improvement Plan:**

Over the course of the last several months, \$12.7M in capital improvement projects were identified and prioritized into three categories: critical, very important and important. Project priority is based upon the direct impact the project has on safety and/or health of residents, staff and others.

Additionally, an overview of 2019 and 2020 plan year projects, including potential sources of funding, was presented to the Commission. The Commission was then given the next thirty days to review the projects and prioritization.

Staff provided a brief overview of the projects, stating that formalization of projects does not guarantee funding of the project; instead, it indicates the level of support a specific project has in order to achieve the strategic goals and objectives of the Commission. Rae Ann Ailts asked if there were any concerns or questions concerning the Capital Improvement Plan. Questions and discussion took place concerning the electrical expansion.

Staff also provided an update on funding options and scenarios with Trilogy Consulting as part of the ongoing Water and Sewer Rate Study.

**Timeline**

Timeline for completion of the CIP project:

October meeting –	Formalization of project priority, discussion on preliminary financial plan and impacts
November meeting –	Formalization of financial plan
December meeting -	Adoption of Capital Improvement Plan 2018-2022

**Wood Pole Testing Results and Replacement Plan:**

Weston Arndt presented background information on wood pole testing. Karcz Utility Services performed testing on roughly 400 wood poles, about one-third of our system, the week of September 10, 2018. Karcz utilizes a partial excavate, sound and bore process to check the integrity of the poles slightly below ground level.

The results of the pole testing produced an 18% reject rate. This is higher than the 5-10% average rate. However, this was somewhat expected considering this was the first time testing, and the area of the system that was tested. Karcz assessed the poles with the following ratings:

- 24 Danger – Recommended replacement as soon as possible.
  - 49 Rejects – Recommended replacement over 1-2 year plan.
  - 56 Probable reject in 10 years - Replace if adding or changing pole use/facilities.
  - 259 Pass
- 388 Total number of poles tested

To prioritize the danger poles, we felt addressing freestanding light poles would be the most critical,

quickest, and easiest poles to address. As of September 26, four of these were replaced, and the remaining eight are scheduled for completion the week of October 1. The remaining 12 danger poles are a mix of secondary, single phase and three phase poles. The goal is to have these completed by the end of the year. To accomplish this, some of the work will need to be contracted. The secondary and single phase replacements will be addressed internally, while the three phase replacements will be contracted out. Hourly cost proposals were requested from Higher Power, LLC, Tjader & Highstrom, and Push, Inc.

A motion was made by Dan Casey to proceed with Tjader & Highstrom to complete 5 of the danger & rejected three phase poles through the end of 2018, seconded by Bob Mullen, motion carried.

### **Department Reports**

#### **Jeremiah Wendt, Water Department:**

- Josh Buhr started as new hire for the Water Department
- Dave Pufall promoted to Operations Manager for the City
- Developments continue, involving new services, meters and locates

#### **Steve Skinner, Lead Wastewater Treatment Plant Operator:**

- Disinfection system has been taken out of service and stored for the winter.
- Greg Hermansen attended schooling in preparation for wastewater certification testing.
- Tree planting has begun. It was delayed due to rain.
- The blower, which currently has been in place for 3 years, was serviced. During servicing of the unit, oil was discovered leaking from some seals. Staff will be looking into this further to determine what repairs need to be done.
- Steve Skinner will be attending the waste water conference in southern Wisconsin.

#### **Weston Arndt, Electric Superintendent:**

- Week of October 8th is Public Power Week. Refreshments will be served.
- Rustic Ridge - changing old underground to new facilities
- Involved with MEUW for training in October along with River Falls. Additional safety training to occur in December.
- WPPI has orientation on programs and services on October 30<sup>th</sup> from 9 a.m. to noon.
- On October 18<sup>th</sup> we will be hosting an informational meeting with State Senator Patty Schactner.
- Street light poles are installed on 140<sup>th</sup> St. Fixtures will be installed at a later date.
- Installation of street light poles on 125<sup>th</sup> Street is nearing completion. Fixtures will be installed at a later date.
- Lighting on County Road A trail is scheduled for installation when DOT grant funds come through.

#### **Rae Ann Ailts, Finance Director:**

- Water & sewer rate case is progressing
- Rae Ann thanked office staff for hosting Public Power week refreshments for the week
- Lien processing will be finalized within the next few weeks
- Issue RFP for investment financial advisors

#### **Jeremiah Wendt, Director of Public Works:**

- Street and Utility projects are still in progress.
- Phase 1 of the Trail on County Rd A is under construction this fall. The City received a Transportation Alternatives Program grant for \$780,000. The estimated cost to the City is about \$200,000 above the grant funding. Construction of that phase will occur in 2020 or 2021.
- 125<sup>th</sup> Street curb & gutter are complete. Some soil corrections are needed. Paving should be done within the next two weeks.
- E 4<sup>th</sup> Street utility work is complete. Staff currently working on storm sewer, curb and gutter.

#### **Mike Darrow, Utility Manager:**

- A lot of meetings on housing and the Lowery Hotel
- Proposed meeting regarding Kwik Trip on the north end of town
- Extended a thank you to Staff and Commissioners for being transparent

Motion was made by Dan Casey to move into Closed Session per Wis. Stat. 19.85(1)(c), Employee Compensation and Benefits, seconded by Bob Mullen, roll call motion carried.

There being no further business, a motion made by Bob Mullen to adjourn, seconded by Mike Kastens, and carried. The meeting adjourned at 5:15 p.m.

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Pat Becker, President

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Gerry Warner, Secretary