

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE RICHLAND CENTER
MUNICIPAL UTILITY COMMISSION
Wednesday, July 12, 2023 4p.m., 450 S. Main Street
This Meeting was held in person and via WebEx Due to the Covid-19 Pandemic

Members present: Sawle, Nice, Schaub, Heiar (via phone), Collins, Melby, and Downs

Members absent: None

Others present: Mueller, Fischer, Gald, Krueger, and Mike Peters and Jim Schwingle (WPPI)

President Sawle called the meeting to order at 4p.m. The meeting had been properly posted.

Motion by Collins, second by Schaub to approve the minutes of the last meeting as printed. All voting aye upon voice vote, motion carried.

Treasurer's report was received and filed.

Motion by Schaub, second by Nice to approve the Electric Bills for July totaling \$825,691.00. Also acknowledges the balance for June, thus totaling \$825,691.00. All voting aye on roll call, motion carried.

Motion by Schaub, second by Collins to approve the Water Bills for July totaling \$240,531.48. Also acknowledges the balance for June, thus totaling \$137,854.40. All voting aye on roll call, motion carried.

Motion by Schaub, second by Melby to approve the Sewer bills for July totaling \$265,405.73. Also acknowledges the balance for June, thus totaling \$249,057.62. All voting aye on roll call, motion carried.

Mike Peters and Jim Schwingle from WPPI attended this month's commission meeting to give updates for WPPI Energy Member Governing Bodies. Mike explained what WPPI is all about. He discussed their member focused business plan and explained how their power costs have remained competitive. WPPI is focused on delivering reliable wholesale power, while keeping CO2 emissions down.

Vanessa explained to the commission that the interest rate on the CDARs account is not the best. The state investment fund has the highest rate and she has access to the funds if she needs them with no penalties. A motion by Sawle, second by Schaub to move the funds from the CDARs accounts at Community First Bank when they come due, to the state investment fund to earn a higher rate of interest. All but Melby voted aye on roll call, motion carried. Melby abstained from voting.

At the February meeting a motion was made to keep the Rate Stabilization Fund for the WWTP at one million dollars. Vanessa is finding that at the end of the month, the wastewater still is not having enough money to cover their bills. She just received new bill for the wastewater portion of the street project and there is not enough to pay it. She could take it out of the rate stabilization fund, but that would take it below the required amount. A motion by Collins, second by Schaub to allow the Rate Stabilization Fund balance to maintain \$750,000.00. All voting aye on roll call, motion carried.

Sawle resigned from the personnel and finance committee due to issues of having a quorum if he would like to have a conversation with any other committee members. President Sawle appointed the following Commissioners to the committee: Schaub, Nice and Heiar. A motion was made by Sawle, second by Downs to approve the new members of the personnel and finance committee. All voting aye on roll call, motion carried.

Motion made by Sawle, second by Melby to sponsor the RCCFAC 2023 National Night Out for \$200.00. All voting aye on roll call, motion carried.

Motion made by Heiar, second by Melby to sponsor the Richland County Fair for \$500.00. All voting aye on roll call, motion carried.

Motion made by Sawle, second by Collins to donate a salvage fire hydrant to the Walk with GRACE Live Auction. All voting aye on roll call, motion carried.

For safety, Scott Gald reported that he is on the board for MEUW and they were polling the state to see how utilities felt about the safety program. The results were pretty good. On Tuesday the wastewater and electric new hires met with Steve Elhers for a 2 hour safety orientation. Scott feels that it is working great with all the departments in the same safety program.

Electric Superintendent Gald reported that his new hire Rowin started on Monday. Scott would like to apologize for all the blinks. There have been a ton. There is tree and wildlife guard on all the poles but the squirrels still get in. He completed his performance reviews for his crew. They are continuing to work on underground conversion. The substation cameras are in. On August 12th, Scott Industries in Muscoda has a private primary and Muscoda Utility will bring them into a private cabinet. There are 600 amped elbows and that utility doesn't work with them. They have asked to contract our electric department. WPPI was here today with the inferred light to check the lines and will be back tomorrow to finish up. There is a demo for the digger truck that we will get to try out. There has been some billing errors found with multipliers. Most were on some city accounts for over \$30,000.00

Water Superintendent Krueger reported that as of last Friday evening at 6p.m. all underground work of Phase 1 of the street project is complete. They started bull dozing on Eighth Street, working up the hill. The preliminary curb and gutter work is on the 20th and pouring on the 24th. They did start milling off the blacktop for phase 2. There was a small issue with the foreman leaving but Steve feels pretty confident that the replacement is capable to keep the job moving. There are also some issues with run off from the rain today. Travis has been valve exercising. They both went out with the vac trailer to remove some sand from some of the valve boxes. Steve has been working with the water model from MSA for developing water service for the new hospital build. The temp issue that was causing the system to fail seems to be fixed with the fan. The water department new hire Terry Thielmann starts on July 30th. He will ride the route with Travis and then his first 8 hour day will be the 31st. On Wednesday, Steve received a phone call from Fillback Ford. There was some property that came up missing and asked if they could view the footage from the camera at well 7. They were able to see a SUV with a trailer parked at the well and 10 minutes later it left with rims and tires on it. The police were called and the person was caught. Todd and Steve have warned Andy about budgeting for phase 3 of the street project now.

Wastewater Superintendent Fischer reported that his new hire, Brad started on Monday. He had safety training on Tuesday. Todd is looking into getting him in the classes he needs. There was a meeting for the hospital new build. Todd is hoping he can run lines all the way to Lakes Gas. The mayor in the department head meeting on Monday said there is also interest in the property behind Wal-Mart and across the road from the hospital site. Todd feels that there will be an extra charge for the street project due to all the rock that the construction crew has ran into.

Office Manager Mueller reported she is working on switching the bank account and it is going well. Civic has still been a nightmare for support, especially with this new update they rolled out. We have had some upset customers due to the blinks in the electric service.

There was nothing for correspondence.

President Sawle commented that the performance reviews for the department heads needs to be done by the end of July. The personnel and finance committee set a date of July 21st at 11a.m. to discuss evaluations.

Motion by Collins, second by Melby to move closed session pursuant to Wis. Stat sec 19.85(1)(c) to consider employment, promotion, compensation of performance evaluation data of any public employee over which the governmental body has jurisdiction or exercises responsibility. The purpose of closed session is to discuss an email sent to the commission from an alderperson related to the WWTP personnel. All voting aye on roll call, motion carried.

Closed session

Motion by Collins, second by Heiar to reconvene to open session to vote on matters discussed in closed session. All voting aye upon voice vote, motion carried.

Schaub made a motion to have Superintendent Fischer give a verbal reprimand to an employee. Downs second it. All voting aye upon voice vote, motion carried.

A motion by Collins, second by Nice to adjourn. All voting aye upon voice vote, motion carried without dissent at 6:30p.m. Meeting adjourned.

Minutes submitted by:

Vanessa Mueller