

**Utility Commission Meeting**  
**Monday, April 5, 2021**  
**6:00 PM at Utility Office Building**

Members Present: Robert Affeld, Ross Canniff, Cheryl Braun, Dick Evans, Nick Gahlman, Tim Gassner, and Mayor Wegener

Members Absent: Bart Coons

Also, Present: Laurie Runyan, Peggy Schultz

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 PM and roll call was taken. Motion by Braun/Canniff to approve the agenda. Motion carried 4-0.

Motion by Canniff/Braun to approve the minutes from the previous meeting. Motion carried 4-0.

**Public Appearances/Comments:**

- A. Matt Costello of MSA opened with discussion of options for WWTP upgrade. Option 1: Keep existing infrastructure with some additions which is less expensive but only a temporary solution, or Option 2: Build an Oxidation Ditch which will be a permanent solution and will also handle future growth, storm sewer influx, etc. Commission approved moving forward with Option 2 and pursuing funding.
- B. Tom Unke of Baker Tilly discussed funding programs and suggested the Clean Water Fund which has a lower interest rate and possible grants available. Discussion re: Sensient usage, rates and surcharges; Tom will meet with Tim G and Peggy S to discuss usage numbers and rate charges in more detail for new contract; New contract to incorporate capacity use and sewer use into one contract. Commission approved Tom to present draft contract to Sensient. Mayor Wegener requested Tom act immediately on Sensient rate increases.

**Monthly Business:**

- A. Motion by Canniff/Braun to approve payment of WPPI invoice of \$218,167.03, and checks of \$67,944.25. Motion carried 4-0.
- B. Review Prior Month Income Statement.
- C. Council Acts Affecting Utility. Resolution 82-2020 – Approved MSA agreement
- D. Consumption and Loss.
- E. Review Totals of Delinquent Customers. Moratorium has been lifted. Disconnects will begin week of April 19<sup>th</sup>.

**Reports of Officials:**

- A. Utility Accountant. Audit is complete. Alice is retired.
- B. Electric Superintendent.
  - 1. Discuss and possibly approve the S Hyland project.  
Continuing conflict with AT&T not converting service to underground; attorney is reviewing our agreement to see who is responsible for costs of moving service. If City upgrades the poles, AT&T will have to go underground or remove communications. New curbs will possibly touch poles, requiring the poles to be moved.
  - 2. Discuss and possibly approve Meter Socket Upgrades for Customers. If we decide to go underground, Utility is responsible for costs.
  - 3. Projects Update. Fault on Jewel St lighting fixed. There is a fault in a city park light, waiting for ground to firm up to use bucket truck. Assisted Water Utility with meter testing at jail and residential high water usage issues. Repaired transformer connection at Duh Farms; they also asked for cost to go underground. Tree trimming at Sensient. Working with electrician for Auto Pet

Products expansion on size of transformer needed. Summer help position being posted, budgeted for 640 hours, can begin May 1<sup>st</sup>.

C. Water/Wastewater Superintendent.

1. Discuss and take action on Lift #2 Upgrade. Pump quotes and electrical estimates \$75,000.
2. Discuss and take possible action on Well #2. Well #2 is back online, passed radium tests, being used as backup. Will continually test for radium and will take offline if necessary; Following DNR requirements.
3. Discuss and take action on Sensient Contract. Will meet with Tom to discuss usages, rates, and surcharges for new contract.
4. Discuss and take action on Iron Ridge letter requesting consolidating with our WWTP. Mayor Wegener stated it is on record previously to reserve our WWTP capacity for tax paying citizens within our city limits. Motion to reject request by Canniff/Affeld. Motion carried 4-0. We will notify them by letter of the rejection.
5. Discuss and possibly approve hiring summer help. Electric Utility agreed to have their summer help work 1 day/wk minimum with Water Utility to survey residential homes for lead laterals; employee's time to be paid by Water Utility.
6. Projects Update. Haase farm had a lateral leak which caused a sink hole in the road. New analyzer installed and appears to be more accurate. DNR environmental report was filed. Testing water meters at residences. Notifying residents of high water consumptions, possible leaks. Dodge County will be having parking lots repaved, checking condition of storm sewers prior to being paved, manholes are in good condition. Have concerns with new splash pad that Recreation Dept is having installed and its impact on WWTP. Lab has been painted. DNR conducted its 3 yr audit and we passed.

**Utility President:** Discussed Wastewater losses from last year. Some reasons are high chemical costs, try to limit phosphorus allowed from Sensient to reduce our chemical needs; Not charging Sensient enough, new contract should resolve that. May need to raise sewer rates, it would take \$12.80/mo per meter to make up loss. Requested commissioners to bring ideas to next meeting to resolve loss issue.

**Mayoral Comments:** Sensient needs to pay immediately for shortfall of proper billing due to outdated pricing in contract; need to find ways to "stop the bleeding" of Wastewater dept. Discussed and suggested reopening Utility office to the public.

**Old Business:** NONE

**New Business:** NONE

Motion by Braun/Evans to adjourn meeting at 9:02 PM. Motion carried 4-0.

Minutes recorded by:  
Laurie Runyan