

Public Utilities Committee Meeting Minutes May 18, 2021

1. CALL TO ORDER, ROLL CALL. Meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m. via Zoom by Village Trustee Carrie Nelson. Roll call: Nelson, Paula Boness, Chris Fredrick, Marc Nielsen, Christopher Reynolds.

Staff present: Jim Hessling, Public Works Director; Lee Igl, Streets and Utilities Superintendent; and Phil McDade, public works staff. Also, Brian Berquist of Town & Country Engineering; Steve Dauster of Midwest Meter; Jody Dobson of Baker Tilly.

2. PUBLIC APPEARANCES. None.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES.

a. Discussion and action regarding the minutes from the Public Utilities meeting held on March 16, 2021. Nelson moved, Reynolds seconded, to approve the minutes of the March 16, 2021 Public Utilities meeting. Motion passed 4-0-1 with Nelson abstaining.

b. Discussion and action regarding the minutes from the joint Public Works and Public Utilities meeting held on April 13, 2021. Nelson moved, Boness seconded, to approve the minutes of the April 13, 2021 joint meeting of the Public Works and Public Utilities meeting. Motion passed 3-0-2 with Nelson and Reynolds abstaining.

4. BUSINESS.

a. Discussion and action to make a recommendation to the Village Board regarding the 2020 Audit and Financial Statements for McFarland Utilities. Dobson discussed the utility audit and financial statements with the committee. The sewer utility experienced an operating loss of \$251,000 in 2020, compared to a loss of \$133,000 in 2019, due to increased maintenance costs, as well as treatment cost increases passed on to the village from Madison Metropolitan Sewerage District. The water utility experienced an operating surplus of \$278,271, compared to \$236,831 in 2019. A water rate increase is anticipated sometime in 2021 pending Wisconsin Public Service Commission review. Stormwater utility costs also increased in 2020 due to increased maintenance and equipment costs related to stormwater services now being charged to the utility, Hessling said. Fredrick motioned, Boness seconded, to make a recommendation to the Village Board to accept the 2020 Audit and Financial Statements for McFarland Utilities. Motion passed 5-0-0.

b. Discussion regarding meter reading process and future options. The committee discussed with Dauster options for meter reading and replacing meters. The village has 1,737 meters with 50W ERTS, or endpoints, that provide electronic readings of meters for more than half of the village's water meters and will soon need to be replaced. The committee discussed three options for replacing meter reading systems, with several committee members expressing support for the third option outlined in the meeting packet – which would incorporate a fixed network and possible reduction or elimination of the current practice of drive-by meter reading. The committee took no action on the agenda item.

c. Discussion and action regarding Request for Proposal for Forcemain locating services. Bids for the project were limited, with only one company bidding on it, and it came in well over the estimated \$25,000 expense allocated for the service. Berquist said the service involves unique locating work, and

thus has limited companies offering to bid on it. Fredrick motioned, Reynolds seconded, to recommend to the Village Board rejection of the Request for Proposal (RFP) for the locating services. Motion approved 5-0-0.

d. Discussion and action to make a recommendation to the Village Board regarding the annual CMAR application for 2020. The Compliance Maintenance Annual Report is required each year by the state Department of Natural Resources to measure the health of the sewer utility in the area of maintenance and its equipment replacement fund. The utility received a grade of A – the highest possible grade – in both the financial and collection system sections. Nelson motioned, Fredrick seconded, to recommend to the village board acceptance of the 2020 CMAR report. Motion passed 5-0-0.

e. Presentation of the Public Works monthly report. The monthly report was made available in the meeting packet.

5. SCHEDULE NEXT MEETING DATE.

a. Tuesday, June 15, 2021 at 6:30 p.m.

6. ADJOURNMENT. Fredrick motioned, Boness seconded, to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried 5-0-0. Meeting adjourned at 7:23 p.m.