



Minutes of April 7, 2015

A meeting of the Wausau Water Works Commission was called to order at 1:30 p.m. in City Hall on April 7, 2015. In compliance with Wisconsin Statutes, this meeting was posted and receipted for by the Wausau Daily Herald on April 1, 2015.

1) **Roll Call**

Members present: President Tipple, Commissioners Force, Gehin, Rebman, Winters.

Others present: Eric Lindman, Anne Jacobson, Scott Boers, Dave Erickson, Deb Geier, Tonia Speener, Clark Dietz; Marijean Hoppe, Becher Hoppe.

2) **Approve Minutes of the March 3, 2015 meeting**

Motion by Mr. Rebman to approve the minutes of the March 3, 2015 meeting. Seconded by Mr. Force. Motion carried unanimously 5-0.

3) **Director's Report on Utility Operations**

Dick Boers retired as of April 2 after 39 years of service to the water utility. Dick oversaw many changes at the Water Treatment Plant during his tenure, including a plant expansion, treatment changes, well house, tower and reservoir additions. We wish Dick the very best in his retirement.

Scott Boers has been promoted to Water Superintendent. Scott has been employed by the City/utility for 10 years, recently holding the position of Senior Water Distribution Maintainer. We wish Scott the best with his new duties. Scott's promotion has now left an opening for a Senior Distribution Maintainer.

Staff met with Clark Dietz recently regarding the water quality report. They were planning to be on-site on April 1-2 to review plant operations and to perform the sampling; however, it was moved back to this week. This will not have an effect on the deadline date.

Well 7 is back online after having to repair the bearing in the motor.

Lead lateral testing is progressing well. We currently have taken 152 samples with 12 failures. Joe and Deb attended all the neighborhood meetings in March, along with getting publicity through social media and the newspaper has definitely helped the effort. We also have sent approximately 275 letters, and have a number that will be sent yet over the next month or so. We've been averaging approximately 12 tests per day. We still need to get a few compliance samples done, so the next push will be along that line to get those finalized. Geier explained that there is no threshold for lateral testing. The number of laterals that pass will reduce the number required to be replaced. Regarding the compliance samples, it has been difficult getting property owners to agree to have samples taken.

BOD test results remain high but we are on track to meet effluent limits for March.

The Board of Public Works awarded the CIPP (Cured In Place Pipelining) project to Visu-Sewer. The low bid was approximately \$255,000 and \$325,000 was budgeted. Therefore, additional work (up to 15%) can be added to the contract without rebidding.

The Board of Public Works awarded the Digester Mixing and Heating System Rehab to August Winter. Mr. Winters noted that there is not an S at the end of Winters as it was listed on the Director's Report and there is no relation to him.

We have been working with the DPW Electrical Department to upgrade our Wastewater Treatment plant MCC1 electrical panel in-house. They have investigated the existing wiring and equipment, and are getting prices for materials. The equipment costs were higher than anticipated and will have to be bid out. However, the electrical work will be done in-house, which will save money.

The force main from the Evergreen Lift Station is problematic as it often freezes and it broke with the spring thaw this year. The Water Division assisted with the repair. We will also attempt to insulate the portion accessible to us to try to correct the on-going problem. When it is not working the Sewer Department has to pump it out once to twice a week. This serves one home with another to be added in the future. Erickson indicated if it operated more it may not freeze as often.

Motion by Mr. Gehin to approve the Director's Report as presented and place on file. Seconded by Mr. Force. Motion carried unanimously 5-0.

4) Discussion and possible action on approval of contract agreement for Professional Services between Clark Dietz and City of Wausau and approval of Wausau General Work Order #1.

Jacobson indicated that this contract is in relation to the lead compliance issue and notice of violation. There was an enforcement conference with the DNR on December 19, 2014. At that meeting there were three engineers from three separate firms. After the meeting AECOM informed the Attorney's Office of the need to execute a contract. Additionally, Clark Dietz has submitted a professional services agreement and work order. Ken Ligman of Becher Hoppe was also present at the DNR meeting, but Jacobson is not aware of a contract. Under local ordinances the Commission has the right to enter into contracts in the name of the City; provided that such contracts are necessary or convenient to the management and operation of the utility. She does not know the necessity of three separate engineers being engaged in this issue and is not questioning it. However, she does feel their contracts should be approved by the Commission. She has reviewed the contract and work order from Clark Dietz and it is satisfactory as to form. Mr. Gehin believes that Ken Ligman attended the meeting but was not intending to be there under any contract.

Jacobson noted that per the Procurement Policy, contracts between \$5,000 and \$25,000 require written quotes and the Clark Dietz contract falls in that range. Jacobson recommends approval of the Clark Dietz contract and placement of the AECOM contract on a future agenda for ratification. Mr. Winters questioned the need for both contracts. Geier explained that Dick Boers contacted the engineering firms. Don Swailes with AECOM did provide a unique perspective as he was a former DNR Water Chief. Steve with Clark Dietz has worked with a number of communities on these types of issues and added a different type of expertise. Mr. Winters questioned if other engineers are qualified to do this. Mr. Gehin believes Dick Boers went ahead and contacted the firms because the meeting date was approaching. He believes Boers was intending to pay them. Mr. Gehin feels there is an obligation to pay the two firms. Mr. Winters stated that staff committed to a bill outside of proper procedure. Mr. Gehin believes that timing was the issue. Mr. Winters questioned how this will be avoided in the future. Jacobson stated by making new staff aware of the proper procedures. Lindman noted that he has a meeting scheduled with Groat to obtain a better understanding of the procurement policy and the levels of authority for entering into agreements. Mr. Winters asked that a memo be prepared for staff on the procurement

policy. Mr. Gehin thought the DNR meeting was originally scheduled for January and then in December a call was received indicating they would be here the following week. Geier noted that Clark Dietz was working with the City of Racine at the time and had been through hearings with the DNR. Mr. Force feels the Commission is finding out about these things too late. He understands there are issues with deadlines and timing, but the Commission is responsible to the public and needs to make sure the procurement policy is followed. Mr. Winters questioned if there are any alternatives, such as the Finance Committee, if needed. Jacobson believes the Commission could delegate that authority to the Finance Committee. Mr. Winters indicated a special Commission meeting could also be held.

Mr. Winters moved to approve the contract agreement for Professional Services between Clark Dietz and City of Wausau and approval of Wausau General Work Order #1 with costs not to exceed \$5,000. Seconded by Mr. Rebman. Motion carried unanimously 5-0.

5) Discussion and possible action on approval of contract agreement for the Mercury Reduction Program between Marathon County Health Department and Wausau Water Works, City of Wausau

Jacobson stated this intergovernmental contract is for \$2,500, which will also go to Finance and Council for approval. Erickson explained that this is a requirement as part of their permit. Staff has been working with Marathon County for 10 to 15 years on this program and the current permit expires at the end of December. Since the permit expires in December, the contract is for one year in case there are changes to the program. However, he anticipates this will be required again next year. He feels this has been a good working relationship with Marathon County and Rib Mountain. It has been an efficient and reasonably inexpensive way to meet our obligations.

Mr. Winters moved to approve the contract agreement for the Mercury Reduction Program between Marathon County Health Department and Wausau Water Works. Seconded by Mr. Force. Motion carried unanimously 5-0.

6) Approval of purchase of Correlator.

Boers explained that correlators are used to find water leaks. The last few years, severe frost has inhibited the practice of listening for leaks. This has actually been costing more than the cost of a correlator. To become more efficient and shorten service outage times, staff would like to purchase a correlator. He noted that five hours of overtime for digging costs \$2,575. At that cost, it would take nine digs to pay for the machine. Last year there was over 2,500 hours of overtime. Boers explained that a correlator measures the sound frequency on the pipe to pinpoint the leak. Over the last three years \$6,400 was paid to hire a contractor with a correlator. Mr. Force questioned if leaks would be tested for on a continuous basis. Boers feels it would be great to be able to do sweeps of the City for leak detection in the future. The plan at this time would be to use the correlator to locate leaks and to check for leaks before and after street projects. Boers spoke of a recent leak where because of the dense soil the leak was running alongside the pipe and making noise further away from the actual leak. This year there were a couple of holes that were over 60 feet long. Savings of blacktopping costs on two digs this year would have been \$8,432.

Mr. Force referenced the large leak near Fleet Farm and questioned how staff would become aware of a leak with using a correlator on a spot basis. Boers stated typically staff sweeps with sounders on hydrants. Mr. Gehin added that typically when a break happens, the water comes to the surface. Boers noted that the leak by Fleet was caused by acidic soil that was deteriorating the pipe slowly and there was not a drastic water increase to detect the leak.

Mr. Force questioned the cost of operating a correlator. Boers replied the cost would include batteries and a person to operate it. The quotes obtained were \$19,900, \$32,000 and \$22,500. Boers indicated the unit for \$19,900 is easy to use but it is made in Germany. If there are any issues with the electronics, it would have to be sent overseas. The Eco Logics unit for \$22,500 is made in Canada but there is a diagnostic and repair facility in the US. Mayor Tipple questioned

the value of the two days of training provided with the Eco Logics unit; however, staff is unsure.

Mr. Gehin moved to approve the purchase of the ECO Logics unit from HD Supply in the amount of \$22,500, primarily because of the turnaround for repairs. Seconded by Mr. Rebman. Motion carried unanimously 4-1 with Mr. Winters the opposing vote.

7) Authorize replacement of backhoe hydro-hammer.

Geier has been advised by staff that a hammer on one of the backhoes is nearing the end of its life. It has had a couple of tough winters with the amount of frost. The hammer is used to pound through frost and concrete every time the street needs to be opened. Three quotes were obtained. The unit with the lowest quote, Nortrax, is a Chinese import and is not recommended. This unit only has a one year warranty. The second lowest quote was from Miller Bradford in the amount of \$15,200. This unit has the best warranty and is the same unit used by the Department of Public Works. It does fit the current tractor and does not require the maintenance of some of the other units. Mr. Winters questioned if there was money in the budget for this purchase and Geier confirmed. Mr. Force questioned the requirement of a nitrogen charge for the other units and the associated expense. Geier assumes there would be a charge for the nitrogen plus labor. Mr. Force questioned if DPW was happy with their unit and Geier confirmed. Mr. Gehin and Lindman looked at the current hammer and was left with the impression that there is not much choice but to replace the unit.

Mr. Gehin moved to approve the purchase of the preferred unit from Miller Bradford in the amount of \$15,200. Mr. Force seconded and the motion carried unanimously 5-0.

8) Accept Rate Order and proceed with implementation.

Geier stated that a public hearing was held in March, which was attended by four to five people. Staff did not receive many comments regarding the rates and the PSC has approved the increase. The PSC set the rates and if accepted by the Commission, staff will need to go online and state when it is effective. Typically, it has been effective the first day of a meter reading cycle. Staff was hoping to have it effective as of April 1st. It would not have bearing upon this month's meter reading as it is phased in over the three quarters. The next monthly reading would have 1/3 of the new rate and 2/3 of the old rate, and is prorated until it reaches the full rate. For residential customers, the increase is approximately 14%. It varies upon the rate classes. Public Authority and industrial customers are affected more than residential, which is not uncommon. Residential customers will have a flat rate rather than a tiered rate. A decreasing tiered rate would be continued for non-residential customers. Out of approximately 15,500 customers, about 12,500 are residential customers. Mr. Winters stated there are charges to a public authority under Schedule 14 and questioned if the public authority was Brokaw. Geier replied the public authorities are school districts and city-owned buildings. The wholesale customer is Brokaw and they would have a 1% increase. Mr. Winters questioned the logic behind that increase. Geier believes it may be due to their financial issues. Mr. Winters questioned the cost per unit for Brokaw compared to others. Mr. Gehin believes that information could be obtained from the PSC. Mr. Force feels we underpay for water as it is the cheapest utility. With a 14% increase, staff needs to be prepared to answer questions. Mr. Gehin indicated the revenue stream from Brokaw is higher than they anticipated because they dump water to keep the system from freezing in the winter and due to lack of turnover creating water quality issues in the summer.

Geier indicated the last full rate increase was in 2006 and a 3% increase in 2010. Mr. Winters suggested generating a memo indicating that in total water has been raised 17% in nine years, which is close to inflation. He also suggested creating a press release. Mr. Gehin stated under the circumstances, this increase is needed. He recommends accepting the rate order effective April 1 and question the PSC regarding the increase for Brokaw. Discussion followed on Brokaw.

Mr. Gehin moved to approve PSC's recommended rate increase effective April 1. Seconded by Mr. Force.

Mr. Force encouraged the City to be transparent in its communications regarding the increase. Geier indicated information will be included in the next City newsletter. Additionally, the rates will be published and are online.

Mr. Winters questioned the number of irrigation customers. Geier believes there are approximately 200.

There being a motion and a second, motion to approve PSC's recommended rate increase effective April 1 carried unanimously 5-0.

9) Request for donation of Northwoods Mist – Bike Rodeo.

Mr. Winters moved to approve the donation of Northwoods Mist for the Bike Rodeo. Seconded by Mr. Force.

Mr. Force questioned the quantity. Geier replied 10 cases were requested.

There being a motion and a second, motion to approve the donation of Northwoods Mist for the Bike Rodeo passed unanimously 5-0.

Mr. Force hopes the City encourages recycling of the plastic bottles.

10) Adjourn

There being no further business to discuss, motion was made by Mr. Rebman to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Mr. Gehin. Motion carried unanimously 5-0.