



Minutes of July 7, 2015

A meeting of the Wausau Water Works Commission was called to order at 1:30 p.m. in City Hall on July 7, 2015. In compliance with Wisconsin Statutes, this meeting was posted and receipted for by the Wausau Daily Herald on June 26, 2015.

1) **Roll Call**

Members present: President Tipple, Commissioners Gehin, Gisselman, Rebman.

Others present: Eric Lindman, Maryanne Groat, Scott Boers, Dave Erickson, Deb Geier, Valerie Swanborg, Tonia Speener, Clark Dietz; Ken Ligman, Becher Hoppe; Pat Peckham, City Pages.

2) **Approve Minutes of the June 2, 2015 meeting**

Motion by Mr. Rebman to approve the minutes of the June 2, 2015 meeting. Seconded by Mr. Gehin. Motion carried unanimously 4-0.

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

Lindman welcomed two new hires to the Water Department, Rich Wendlick & Floyd Smith.

There is a contract with Westrum for leak detection. The contract is for a period of six years. Three additional surveys will be completed. This second survey of the three was recently completed and 28 leaks were detected. Three were leaks on mains, eight hydrant leaks and the remainder service leaks. Mayor Tipple questioned if a case could be made to have the leak detection service done every year rather than every two based on lost water. Boers stated staff can look at the numbers but this year's survey will be elevated because the last two winters were extreme. Geier added that the report did state the annual loss was approximately \$59,000 and the cost of the survey was \$8,500. Mayor Tipple believes this should be put on radar for discussion at a future meeting. Mr. Gehin questioned the PSC percentage of loss for last year. Geier believes it was 13 and 6 the year before. Mayor Tipple questioned when the leak occurred under the creek. Geier thought it was 2012. A survey was done in 2011 where nothing major was found but the usage kept increasing. Another survey was then completed in 2012 where the leak was found.

Staff is currently working with Becher Hoppe on a hydraulic model for the water system within the City. Part of that is for unidirectional flushing. Becher Hoppe provided a preliminary model for what they have currently and set up test flushing in the field. They flushed at various rates and then reversed the flow to see if that would scour the pipe better. The water was more tinted when the flow was reversed. Staff is in the process of completing an extension for the contract dates so the model can be completed.

The Water Quality Report was sent out to homeowners. The report was thorough and read well.

Lateral testing has picked up some with 11 samples taken over the last two weeks. Approximately 60 more samples may be needed. The second round of compliance sampling has just begun.

Water treatment has been switched from the south to the north clarifier as minor maintenance is being completed.

A scam took place on Friday, June 19. Around 4:00 p.m. calls were placed to several businesses. The caller indicated they were from Wausau Water Works and if they did not pay their outstanding bill with a credit card within two hours, their water would be disconnected. Most of the calls were placed to businesses that are very dependent upon water, such as hotels and restaurants. A press release was sent to the media. Businesses in Schofield and Weston were also targeted. A Laundromat owner actually went out to Walmart to wire money when her husband called and told her not to as something did not sound right to him. At this time, Geier has not heard of anyone who did make a payment. Geier noted that a 10 day written notice must be provided before they can turn off water unless there is an emergency. However, the City does not turn off water for nonpayment.

The Sewer Department is on track to meet permit limits for June.

Testing of sludge from the digesters was completed, which was prompted by higher than normal arsenic levels. The test results were good so staff is unsure of where the spike in levels came from.

Staff has had a hard time hauling sludge due to the continuous rain in June. It is now getting late in the year for hauling as fields are planted. Staff may have to wait until hay or alpha is cut to continue to spread.

Erickson had hired a contractor to peel back the membrane of the roof to inspect the structure underneath. The section that was inspected looked good.

Ken Rye is working with Visu Sewer on the CIPP project. The project is expected to begin soon. Work on busy streets will be done at night. The contractor is responsible to notify the residents and business owners.

The WPDES was submitted along with the Mercury variance. There has been no response from the DNR at this point. A comment was made on the permit that although the City has a design influent of 8.2, the actual influent is less than 5. If the design influent is less than 5 the City would be in a different category for sampling.

Motion by Mr. Rebman to approve the Director's Report as presented and place on file. Seconded by Mr. Gehin. Motion carried unanimously 4-0.

4) Presentation and update on the Water Quality Investigation.

Steve Schultz with Clark Dietz explained a draft study has been completed. Any questions or comments will be incorporated into a final report. The project team consisted of Schultz, Tonia Speener and Abigail Cantor from Process Research Solutions. Schultz explained that in 2014 lead sample results exceeded the 90 percentile action level. The action level exceedance is not a violation as the DNR originally indicated. The actions required are this study, unidirectional flow, education, and re-sampling over two sample periods. One of the items the action level calls for is insuring that your treatment is optimized for corrosion control. An initial meeting was held to insure understanding of all the processes and data was collected. Following the data collection sampling was completed in the field. First sampling was done at various locations of the plant to see what the characteristics of the raw water are versus the finished water leaving the plant, and to see if the plant is working the way that it should. The second set of samples was in-system sampling at five established sites used for E.coli samples. The five sites had the historically lowest chlorine levels. Sampling protocol was designed to determine if there is increased microbial action in the mains or if nitrification is occurring. Schultz explained the list of items tested for. The data was analyzed for the treatment plant operation and efficiency, finished water quality, distribution system water quality, potential for microbial growth in the distribution system and nitrification in the distribution system. Schultz described the data analyzed and the labs that were

used. The plant operations were also examined as far as removal of iron and manganese at various entry points. It is suspected that because the iron rates are high in the raw water that there may be well corrosion contributing to the iron levels.

The pH levels leaving the plant are good and remain consistent in the distribution system. Calcium carbonate precipitation is low. Chlorides and sulfates are high enough that it appears they are going to contribute to form lead compounds. The ORP levels are alright but should be a higher number, which can be done by increasing the amount of chlorine in the water. Organic carbon levels are higher from the wells and the system, which can promote microbial growth. Total chlorine at the entry points is between 1.5 and 2 milligrams per liter, which should be at least 2 or over as microbial growth has a higher tendency to occur at lower levels. The chlorine levels in the system appear to be the lowest at areas distant from the plant and with older water, particularly at the reservoir that is not heavily used.

The preliminary recommendations are to investigate the wells as there could be casing corrosion and microbial growth. The second recommendation is to investigate the filter operation, which can be done by in-plant testing. Other recommendations include optimizing the total chlorine levels to above 2 milligrams per liter in the system, monitor disinfection byproducts, implement the UDF program, monitor turbidity during flushing, monitor total chlorine during flushing, and reduce the residence time in the system by adjusting storage use. Schultz also stated the importance of cleaning storage facilities regularly.

These recommendations will be reviewed with staff and then finalized. A plan and time frame will be developed for moving forward. A final report will be then be presented to the City and then the DNR. The next step will be for the City to implement the recommendations.

5) Discussion and possible action on hiring an outside consultant for administration of the Cross-Connection Program.

Lindman reminded the Commission that at the last meeting discussion was held regarding HydroCorp and hiring an outside consultant for the cross-connection program. The direction given was for staff to look for other firms that may offer this program. Boers stated that two contractors that would have been able to handle this for the City have gone out of business leaving two other contractors in the state, Kunkel Engineering and HydroCorp. Kunkel Engineering declined to look at the program. The next closest company is Aqua Backflow, which is located in Elgin, Illinois. Mr. Rebman questioned where HydroCorp is located. Boers responded it is just outside of Fond du Lac.

Lindman explained that in accordance with the DNR, the City has to come into compliance with the cross connection program. At this point we are not making enough progress to come into compliance. Lindman feels if there is a plan with a consultant, the DNR would extend the compliance deadline into 2016. Boers stated a contract with HydroCorp would be \$91,000 a year and Boers estimates it would cost approximately \$107,000 if the City would hire two employees to complete this work. Lindman stated the possibility of the City completing the cross connection inspections and charge a fee to help recoup some costs was also discussed. This would allow all the inspections to be consistent.

Mr. Rebman questioned the percentage of compliance to date. Boers believes it is less than 10% with commercial/industrial properties. Mayor Tipple questioned if this is an ongoing program and Boers confirmed. Mr. Gehin believes the original intent was to work with the City Plumbing Inspector to complete the process, but that did not work out. Lindman stated the idea is to complete the program for two years to come into compliance and obtain background information. Then a determination could be made if this could be done in-house. Mayor Tipple questioned if money was allocated for this program. Lindman explained it is not in the budget but is a DNR requirement. It would be requested in the 2016 budget but if he would like the opportunity to have discussions with HydroCorp and move forward with the program starting in 2016. Ideally staff

would like to start this year. Mr. Gehin feels that by the time it would be implemented about a third of the year would be remaining so the cost should be less for the remainder of 2015.

Motion by Mr. Rebman to approve moving forward with a sole source request and request funding for 2016. Seconded by Mr. Gisselman. Motion carried unanimously 4-0.

6) Discussion and possible action on a utility easement for the installation of 1,250 feet of watermain in the Business Campus.

Mr. Gehin stated this property was initially owned by Dean Prohaska. Mr. Gehin had an understanding with him that the Utility would provide the materials and he would install it. The intent was that the watermain would cross his property. PGA is willing to live up to the previous understanding. Lindman stated that Wausau Water Works is purchasing the material and PGA will install it. This will eliminate three dead ends on the line, which is a benefit for the Utility. The cost of materials is approximately \$32,000, which includes the hydrants, additional pipe and fittings. Mayor Tipple suggested executing a contract that states the City would provide the materials with the owner to install and outline liability. Mr. Gehin questioned if any issues may arise regarding bidding. Lindman will look into the procurement process.

Motion by Mr. Gehin to direct staff to pursue the procurement policies that this agreement may be subject to knowing the Utility will provide the material and the owner will install it, verify if a contract is needed, and approve the utility easement for the installation of 1,250 feet of watermain. Seconded by Mr. Gisselman. Motion carried unanimously 4-0.

7) Discussion and possible action on Wastewater Treatment Plant roof assessment, maintenance, and replacement.

Lindman stated the membrane on the roof is in need of repair or replacement. \$250,000 has been included in the budget for this project and staff would like approval to go out for bid.

Motion by Mr. Rebman to move forward with bidding of the roof maintenance. Seconded by Mr. Gehin. Motion carried unanimously 4-0.

8) Discussion and possible action on budget modifications for the 2015 Street Construction Projects.

Lindman explained that money was budgeted for the 2015 Street Construction Projects but it was not enough as the costs came in higher after the final scoping of the project was completed. A spreadsheet was provided by Finance indicating the needed borrowing not only for the street projects but for the entire 2015 budget, which is a total of \$3.9 million for both water and sewer. Swanborg stated approximately \$1 million is needed for water and approximately \$3 million for sewer. Groat added that the borrowing for 2015 will go before the Finance Committee next week for authorization. They will be looking to the State Trust Fund for the financing package.

The committee agreed to combine this item with Agenda Item 10, Discussion and possible action on the remainder of the 2015 budget.

Lindman explained that the spreadsheet shows which projects have been approved. Staff is looking for approval of the remaining items. The full 2015 budget was approved by Council but not formally approved by the Water Commission.

Motion by Mr. Gehin to approve the 2015 projects not previously approved. Seconded by Mr. Rebman. Motion carried unanimously 4-0

9) Monthly financial reports and ongoing tracking of the budget.

Swanborg pointed out that water revenue is slightly behind what was budgeted for the year. She anticipates that the benefit from the rate increase will be seen through the remainder of the year. Operating expenses for personnel and benefits are on par at this point of the year.

Supplies and expenses, such as toner and fuel, are slightly higher through May. There are some unanticipated repairs, mainly water tower maintenance. However, this was approved at a previous Commission meeting. The sewer utility is approximately where it should be for revenues. As far as expenses, a lot of the bills are not in yet.

10) Discussion and possible action on the remainder of the 2015 budget.

This item was discussed and approved in conjunction with Agenda Item 8.

11) Discussion and possible action on the 2016 Capital Improvements Projects and timeline for completion.

Lindman stated each utility has drafted a list of capital improvement projects for 2016 through 2020. Capital improvement projects for the remainder of the divisions will be considered by the Committee of the Whole. The drafted list will be finalized and brought back to the Commission.

For a future agenda item, Groat suggested that the Commission adopt a formal advance from the sewer utility to the water utility and develop an interest rate that the water utility will pay the sewer utility for borrowed funds.

Lindman explained the Water Treatment Plant has a draft set of plans for an expansion/rehabilitation. The dollar amount is approximately \$9 million. Lindman would like to start forecasting that project in the budget. He would like to start with a cost for engineering services to continue with the plans.

12) Discussion and possible action on requests for donation of Northwoods Mist – Festival of Arts and Wausau Kayak/Canoe Corporation.

Rebman feels the Festival of Arts should receive the same amount of Northwoods Mist as the Wausau Kayak/Canoe Corporation. Mayor Tipple stated in the past the Festival of Arts has used 15 to 16 cases. Rebman has seen a lot of the water taken home. He suggested donating 10 cases to each organization. Mayor Tipple suggested donating 15 cases to Festival of Arts rather than the 20 requested. He noted that one year the Festival ran out of Northwoods Mist.

Motion by Mr. Rebman to approve donating 15 cases of Northwoods Mist to the Festival of Arts and 10 cases to Wausau Kayak/Canoe Corporation. Seconded by Mr. Gehin. Motion carried unanimously 4-0.

13) Adjourn

There being no further business to discuss, motion was made by Mr. Gisselman to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Mr. Gehin. Motion carried unanimously 4-0.