



Minutes of June 7, 2016

A meeting of the Wausau Water Works Commission was called to order at 1:30 p.m. in City Hall on June 7, 2016. In compliance with Wisconsin Statutes, this meeting was posted and receipted for by the Wausau Daily Herald on May 25, 2016.

1) **Roll Call**

Members present: President Mielke, Commissioners Abitz, Force, Rebman, and Gehin (arrived at 1:40).

Others present: Eric Lindman, Scott Boers, Dave Erickson, Deb Geier, Jim Tipple, Gary Gisselman, Tonia Speener, Clark Dietz; Marjijean Hoppe, Becher Hoppe; Joe Kasczynski, Becher Hoppe.

2) **Approve Minutes of the May 3, 2016 meeting**

Motion by Rebman to approve the minutes of the May 3, 2016 meeting. Seconded by Force. Motion carried unanimously 4-0.

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

Lindman recognized Tipple and Gisselman for their service on the Wausau Water Works Commission. Tipple served as President for 12 years and Gisselman as Secretary for 1 year.

Congratulations were extended to Rickie Dorn and Floyd Smith. Dorn received his DNR Municipal Waterworks Operator Exam Certification in Groundwater. Smith received his certification in Distribution and Groundwater.

The annual hydrant flushing procedure has been completed with minimal issues.

Geier explained that samples have to be taken from 30 homes for lead and copper compliance testing. Results should be available at the next meeting. Force questioned why the number was cut so dramatically. Geier replied last year two sets of 60 samples were required. Because we passed, the number of samples required was reduced to 30.

Boers and Geier attended the Regulatory Affairs Seminar and MEG-Water meetings. Geier stated with the incident in Flint, Michigan, the EPA is proposing changes to their code. One change may be replacement of lead service lines all the way to the home. Additionally, the standard may change from 15 parts per billion to 5. This will make it difficult for several communities to pass sampling. She noted this is speculation at this point but very probable to change. Geier guessed that there are probably 10,000 lead service lines on the private side. The PSC has indicated that rates cannot be used to replace lines on the private side. The DNR has some funding, which potentially could be around \$300,000. She estimated private lateral replacement to cost approximately \$3,000 each; therefore, about 100 lead service lines could be replaced with the potential DNR funding. We would need to apply for the funding and the earliest to receive the funding if approved would most likely be 2017. Force questioned if the new regulations would be in place by 2017. Geier replied the speculation is that by 2017 there will be changes. Force asked if this would be protracted over a period of time. Geier believes the EPA will have to allow time otherwise it will bankrupt some communities. Abitz asked if Legislators should be contacted

regarding the proposed changes. Geier feels that MEG-Water will do their part to fight it and noted that AWWA has work groups working on it, but it may not hurt to contact our representatives. Abitz asked if the City's parts per billion would change when 100 lead service lines are replaced using DNR funding as there would still be a number of homes with lead lines. Geier stated the more lead removed the lower the number would possibly be. She added that our average last year was 5.8 parts per billion. Force stated the Utility can try to get Legislators to have political influence, but this is not going to go away. As a Board, there is a need to be aware of the impact on our rate payers. Geier again stated that the PSC does not want funds used that all the rate payers have paid for just a certain percentage of people. Force believes Madison had a similar situation. Geier explained that Madison used antenna rental fees and Wastewater contributed to pay for the project. Lindman stated we could possibly provide costs up to a certain amount, \$1,000 for example, through the DNR grant funding along with a loan program to assist homeowners. Abitz asked how many new laterals have been installed during road construction projects. Geier stated we would know the number on the public side, but not necessarily how many on the private side. Boers stated that less than 1% replace their private lateral during road projects. Geier noted that Kent Street is under construction this year. There are 84 services and she has spoken with about 10 owners regarding private replacement. Gehin added that lead is not only present in services lines. There could be lead piping and lead fixtures in the home. Mayor Mielke said we need to be proactive and asked for suggestions on how to pay for this and what the Utility can do to meet the requirements without bankrupting the City. Geier said a lot will depend upon what the PSC decides, which probably will not be known for at least a year. Abitz feels a good approach would be public education. Additionally, she believes the public should be educated that this is coming from the EPA and not the City. Geier will have an article in the next newsletter. Force cautioned the Commission not to overreact as every community will be affected and there are a lot of unknowns at this point. He suggested starting to build a data base by looking at other communities, such as Madison and Lansing, for ways to handle this issue in a cost effective manner. He noted that Lansing uses a technique to drive the new line into the house without tearing up the lawn. At this point Geier will move forward with awareness training for the public that the practical thing to do is to replace private laterals during street construction projects.

The Brown Street Water tower is being recoated and is anticipated to be completed this week. Another week will be needed to fill the tower, disinfect it and get it back online.

The Water Plant PLC project is almost complete. There were a few programming issues but overall the project went well.

The AWWA Conference will be held in Chicago beginning June 19. Geier will be presenting at the conference and Neptune will be highlighting Wausau as a featured City. An article highlighting Wausau was recently published in the Water World magazine.

Lindman has been working with staff and HR to rewrite job descriptions for reclassification and to update the organizational chart. This is being done to provide more structure for the supervisory roles and to make the organization more efficient. Information was provided to HR regarding market rate wages in the state. He is working with HR to set a base rate for both Distribution and Sewer Maintainers. HR will be looking at completing a city-wide survey this year and into next year.

Wastewater is on track to meet effluent limits. We came close on phosphorus levels, but passed for the month of May.

The DNR conducted a compliance inspection in March. Overall the inspection was positive. Erickson said a list of items was noted, of which most are just a matter of pointing out what has been done. Gehin questioned the item regarding separation and if there is an estimate on what that would cost. Erickson will verify but he believes this item is referring to work that was recently completed on the manhole at 1st and McClellan.

The north secondary digester was found to have a number of holes that allowed sludge to enter the attic space. The holes have been repaired. A smoke test may be completed prior to putting the digester back into service.

Mark Hilgendorf successfully completed the Basic General Wastewater exam, which is the first in a series for certification. Pat VanOuse has completed the Nutrient Removal exam and has now completed all 5 of the subclass exams required for the plant.

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

4) Discussion and possible action regarding the Compliance Maintenance Annual Report.

Lindman explained the Compliance Maintenance Annual Report (CMAR) needs to be filed by the end of June. Staff anticipates sending a resolution to the next Council meeting for consideration. Erickson stated one item to note is biosolids. In 2015 we were high on arsenic in April tests. He explained there is a high quality limit and a ceiling limit. We have not gone over the ceiling limit so we can still apply sludge on farm fields, but when we are over the high quality limit we have to track the amount of metals applied to fields. Mayor Mielke asked why the limit was high. Erickson replied that it has randomly hit high. The DNR has suggested testing on the influent. Erickson has done this, but the solids are 600 times more concentrated than what is coming in. Therefore, even if we are below the detection limit on what is coming in, the number has to be multiplied by 600. This makes it hard to find the source by testing. The industries in the pretreatment program have been reviewed and staff will continue to try to find the source.

Erickson stated it is required to maintain a minimum of \$1,492,000 in the replacement fund. The balance at the end of the year was \$1,578,000, which is above the required minimum amount. He noted that this amount will change as money is spent on projects and slowly rebounds.

Gehin questioned if the final affluent flow monitoring is used for data. Erickson explained the affluent meter is an electronic device that uses a Doppler to look at particles in the water as they flow by. Keeping the channel clean helps, but this is difficult in the summer while the UV system is running.

Motion by Rebman to accept the Compliance Maintenance Annual Report and forward to Council for consideration. Seconded by Gehin. Motion carried unanimously 5-0

5) Discussion and possible action on request for donation of Northwoods Mist – Festival of Arts.

Motion by Force to approve donating 15 cases of Northwoods Mist to the Festival of Arts. Seconded by Gehin. Motion carried unanimously 5-0.

Force questioned if Wausau is identified on the bottle as being a product of the Wausau water system. Gehin confirmed. Force asked who bottles the water to which Geier replied Twigs in Shawano. Tipple stated depending upon the number of labels that are on hand, the Utility may want to think about designing a new label which is more apparent that the water is from Wausau.

6) Monthly Financial Reports and ongoing tracking of the budget.

Lindman noted that the Water Utility is looking favorable as revenues are up compared to last year and to date the labor and benefits are below budget. Gehin questioned if reconciliation caused the water revenue from December 2015 to be high. Lindman believes reconciliation is the cause, but he has not confirmed that. Force noticed that revenue is up through the first quarter and questioned if usage is up. Geier stated that Swanborg would know as that could be determined from the billing summary. However, Geier does not believe usage is up much as it has been a wet year. Typically on a dry year there may a difference of \$100,000 in revenues. A lot of the increase in the first quarter is most likely due to the rate increase. Lindman noted that leaks have also been corrected. Lindman added that Swanborg did look into a small rate increase with the PSC. After a full rate study, there has to be a full calendar year before another rate increase can be applied for.

7) **Adjourn**

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

Lori Wunsch, Recording Secretary

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