

REGULAR MEETING OF THE JEFFERSON UTILITIES COMMISSION, HELD APRIL 10, 2023

On call of the roll, commissioners present were: Ganser, Pieters, Neils, Oppermann, Bristol and Schroeder. Members Excused: Adams. Also present were: City Attorney Rogers, Office Manager Hinze, Billing Clerk, Emily Hein; Customer Account Clerk Kara Mroz, Meter Technician Jackie Tucker, Line Forman Nick Baumann. The meeting began at 5:30 p.m.

Public Participation: None

Minutes

Motion by Comm. Pieters and seconded by Comm. Bristol to approve the open session minutes of the February 20, 2023 meeting. On call of the roll, motion carried. (Oppermann – Aye; Pieters – Aye, Bristol – Aye; Ganser – Aye; Schroeder – Aye; Neils-Abstained).

Motion by Comm. Pieters and seconded by Comm. Bristol to approve the open session and closed session minutes of the March 20, 2023 meeting. On call of the roll, motion carried. (Oppermann – Aye; Pieters – Aye, Bristol – Aye; Ganser – Aye; Schroeder – Aye; Neils - Aye).

Approval of March 2023 Expenditures

Motion by Comm. Neils and seconded by Comm. Ganser to approve the March 2023 expenditures as presented. On call of the roll, motion carried. (Oppermann – Aye; Pieters – Aye, Bristol – Aye; Ganser – Aye; Schroeder – Aye; Neils - Aye).

Discussion and Possible Action – Approval to Re-Fill Two (2) Full-Time Customer Accounts Clerk

Hinze explained that within a two-week time frame the Utility will experience turnover of both full time Customer Accounts Clerk positions. Comm. Oppermann indicated that he was not in favor of the recently approved second full time Customer Accounts Clerk and stated that the City is considering doing the billing for the City services that Jefferson Utilities is currently doing. Hinze stated that she learned of this last week, however in her evaluation this would not have much effect on the duties required of these positions. She stated that the Utility would still be maintaining customer accounts, billing and collecting for the same number of electric customers. Comm. Ganser asked about the timeframe of filling these positions. Hinze stated that ideally the thought would be to stagger the start dates for each individual. Motion by Comm. Pieters to approve the re-filling of both positions. Seconded by Comm. Ganser. On call of the roll, motion carried. (Oppermann – Nay; Pieters – Aye, Bristol – Aye; Ganser – Aye; Schroeder – Aye; Neils - Aye).

The Commission thanked Kara Mroz for her years of service to the Utility.

Discussion and Possible Action – Approval to Hire Customer Accounts Clerk(s)

Hinze indicated that she conducted interviews and has two qualified candidates that she would like to make a conditional offer to pending approval. Hinze stated that the top candidate is Kari Hutson and that she would like to offer her \$20.24 per hour. Motion by Comm. Bristol to approve the hiring of this candidate. Seconded by Comm. Pieters. On call of the roll, motion carried. (Oppermann – Aye; Pieters – Aye; Bristol – Aye; Ganser – Aye; Neils – Aye; Schroeder – Aye).

Comm. Oppermann suggested that Hinze talk with Tim Freitag, City Administrator, regarding the timeline the City is looking at for doing billing before moving forward with the second position. It was the consensus of the Commission to take no action at this time. Hinze stated she would set up a meeting with Freitag and report back to the Commission at the next meeting.

Discussion and Possible Action – 2022 Joint Metering Invoices (Paid in 2023)

Hinze stated that this agenda item was postponed to allow Todd Clark, Water and Wastewater Treatment Director time to review the invoices. Hinze stated that Tanya Stewart, Finance Director, inquired about the status of the invoices. Hinze stated that she completed the invoices and forwarded them to the city. The City has since approved and paid the invoices. Motion by Comm. Pieters to approve as presented. Seconded by Comm. Neils.

On call of the roll, motion carried. (Oppermann – Aye; Pieters – Aye; Bristol – Aye; Ganser – Aye; Neils – Aye; Schroeder – Aye).

Discussion – Regarding Joint Boilers and Chiller with the Police Department

Hinze stated that both she and Nick Baumann looked into this issue. Hinze stated that the history between the Utility and Police Department was to split all matters concerning the boilers and chillers 50%/50%. Baumann explained a map he outlined to show the areas of the building that were solely the Utility's, solely the Police Departments and then the shared spaces. The one concern was the space that the City Courts occupy. Comm. Oppermann suggested that further information be gathered regarding how the Courts pay for their utilities. Hinze and Baumann will look into this and report back at a later meeting.

Discussion – Regarding Pole Attachment Cost Calculations

Hinze stated she reached out to Attorney Anita Gallucci with Boardman and Clark. Hinze stated that Gallucci gave an explanation of the history of pole attachment agreements and how things have evolved to present day. Gallucci explained that her firm developed a pole attachment agreement template that is currently in use by Utilities. The charges for attachments are solely negotiated by each Utility. Gallucci also explained that there is a standard formula which was derived from the formula used by the FDC however, not may public Utilities use this formula. She stated that most will start with a market rate. A market rate comparison is typically what the other connectors are paying in that particular Utility. At the end of the day a good agreement is one where both the Utility and connector agree and approve the agreement.

Update – 2022 Audit

Hinze informed the Commission that the Auditor were on sight March 22, 23 and 24. She stated that things went smoothly and there are a few follow up items she is working on to send the auditors. Hinze will keep the Commission informed as the process goes forward.

Discussion and Approval of Community Contribution Requests

Hinze presented a request from the Ready for Kids for School program for \$600 for the 2023 program year. Motion by Comm. Oppermann and seconded by Comm. Ganser to approve the request of \$600 to the Ready for Kids for School. On call of the roll, motion carried. (Oppermann – Aye; Pieters – Aye, Bristol – Aye; Ganser – Aye; Schroeder – Aye; Neils - Aye).

Future Agenda Items

1. Report back regarding the joint utilities with the Courts.
2. Billing status of the City.
3. Rate case update.

It was moved by Comm. Pieters and seconded by Comm. Bristol to adjourn. Motion carried on a voice vote. The meeting adjourned at 6:17 pm.