

**REGULAR MEETING OF THE JEFFERSON UTILITIES COMMISSION, HELD DECEMBER 9, 2019**

On call of the roll, commissioners present were: Adams, Ganser, Bristol, Brandel, Horn, Pieters and Oppermann. Also present: Utility Manager Adler, Office Manager Statz and City Attorney Rogers. The meeting began at 5:56 p.m.

**PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

None

**MINUTES**

It was moved by Comm. Brandel and seconded by Comm. Ganser to approve the minutes from the November 12, 2019 meeting. Motion carried on a voice vote.

**EXPENDITURES**

It was moved by Comm. Horn and seconded by Comm. Pieters to approve the payment of November's bills totaling \$997,021.79. On call of the roll, motion carried. (Oppermann – Aye, Adams - Aye, Ganser – Aye, Pieters – Aye, Brandel – Aye, Horn – Aye, Bristol - Aye)

**DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION ON TAX ROLL DISPUTE**

This item will be discussed at next month's meeting. No action was taken.

**DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION ON CONTINUATION OF STATE DEBT COLLECTION PROGRAM**

This item will be discussed at next month's meeting. No action was taken.

**DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION ON SEWER COST ALLOCATION CHANGES AND REVIEW OF CROSS FUNCTION COST SHARING**

Utility Manager Adler and Office Manager Statz explained that the joint metering allocation with the sewer department is being reviewed for adjustments because of the change to fixed tier sewer rates for residential customers. Office Manager Statz explained that any adjustments would have an impact on water rates. She explained that as of now, she and Utility Manager Adler were open to adjustments to the allocation, as long as it is recoverable in the water rates. She explained that she has reached out to the Public Service Commission to ask if they could give a preapproval before our next full water rate case. At this point it is just in a discussion stage, but they wanted to make the Commission aware of what may be coming. Office Manager Statz stated the Finance Committee would be discussing this item at their December 17, 2019 meeting.

Comm. Oppermann stated that there is discussion going around town that because there is a customer going into the old Tyson facility, customers' bills should be decreasing with the added electric load.

Utility Manager Adler explained that the current customer is estimated to draw only about 16% of the load that Tyson had. He did not see this decreasing the electric rates for the rest of our customers.

Utility Manager Adler commended Wastewater Treatment Plant Superintendent Todd Clark for looking at the shared costs. He thought it would be a good idea for the electric and water utility to do the same thing. He thought there may be costs the electric and water utility are absorbing because "it has always been done that way." He explained it may be a good time to revisit some of these items on our end as well.

Comm. Horn stated that may be a two-way street with the city departments picking up costs that should be paid for in electric and water rates.

Comm. Oppermann stated it was a good idea to review some of these costs.

Comm. Ganser questioned if the city made a contribution back to the utility for utility staff putting up holiday decorations around the city.

Utility Manager Adler stated there is not a contribution made from the city for this expense.

Comm. Ganser suggested looking into that and asking for support from the city to do this. He wondered if there was something they could do on their end for the utility that would match those expenses.

Utility Manager Adler stated he has learned that the banners that go over Main Street are charged a fee. He explained that the utility does not receive any portion of that fee and our staff installs and takes down the banners.

Comm. Bristol wondered if the time spent tracking the expenses would wipe out any savings.

Comm. Pieters stated that it all comes down to the size and scope of the projects. If there is a large cost we are absorbing then it should be discussed.

### **DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION ON COMPENSATION PLAN STEP CHANGE**

Office Manager Statz explained her interpretation of the resolution passed by the Common Council regarding 2020 wages was that if an employee is in step six and would normally be advancing out of the steps, they would be receiving a 2.5% wage increase in 2020. However, the motion passed by the commission at last month's meeting states that everyone in the steps, including step six, would receive a 3% wage increase.

Comm. Ganser and Comm. Brandel stated Office Manager Statz's interpretation was not correct. The resolution states that everyone in the steps is remaining at that step, so step six would receive a 3% wage increase.

Comm. Pieters stated he also read it to say that step six is receiving a 3% increase, but noted the language "will advance out" is confusing.

Office Manager Statz asked for the commission members on the common council to clarify what was actually passed.

Comm. Horn stated his interpretation is that the employees in step six would receive a 3% increase.

Comm. Oppermann asked Office Manager Statz to contact City Administrator Freitag for clarification.

Office Manager Statz asked for a motion to follow the direction of City Administrator Freitag for employees in step six, as the new wage rates will go into effect before our next commission meeting.

It was moved by Comm. Oppermann and seconded by Comm. Pieters to direct Office Manager Statz to refer to City Administrator Freitag on how to pay employees in step six on the pay matrix for 2020. On call of the roll, motion carried. (Oppermann – Aye, Adams - Aye, Ganser – Aye, Pieters – Aye, Brandel – Aye, Bristol – Aye, Horn - Aye)

### **DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION ON TOWN AND COUNTRY ENGINEERING FOR WATER MAIN REPLACEMENT DESIGN IN 2020 – S MARSHALL AVE, N ELIZABETH FOR \$41,700**

City Attorney Rogers asked Utility Manager Adler if the utility would be doing a request for proposal (RFP) on the project.

Utility Manager Adler stated there would be no RFP for the engineering services, but there would be one for the construction work.

City Attorney Rogers asked Comm. Oppermann if he was comfortable using Town & Country Engineering and not going through the RFP process.

Comm. Oppermann stated he was.

Comm. Horn explained to City Attorney Rogers that the commission had discussed this and agreed that the water utility should use the same engineering firm as the city, to keep things consistent. Since the city uses Town & Country Engineering, he was comfortable with the water utility also using them without doing an RFP.

It was moved by Comm. Pieters and seconded by Comm. Brandel to approve Town & Country Engineering to perform engineering services for the water main replacement project on S Marshall Ave and N Elizabeth Ave in 2020 in the amount of \$41,700. On call of the roll, motion carried. (Oppermann – Aye, Adams - Aye, Ganser – Aye, Pieters – Aye, Brandel – Aye, Bristol – Aye, Horn - Aye)

**DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION ON BOILER REPAIRS FOR TRANE CO. IN THE AMOUNT OF \$7,412.43**

Utility Manager Adler explained that since October one of our two boilers has been broken. If the one boiler that is operating now goes down, there will be no heat in the building. The quote from Trane to fix the broken boiler is for \$14,824.86. This is to be split 50/50 with the Police Department.

Comm. Horn asked if Trane did an analysis of the boiler when the renovations took place.

Utility Manager Adler stated they did.

It was moved by Comm. Horn and seconded by Comm. Bristol to approve Trane to make repairs to the boiler for an amount owed by the electric and water utility of \$7,412.43. On call of the roll, motion carried. (Oppermann – Aye, Adams - Aye, Ganser – Aye, Pieters – Aye, Brandel – Aye, Bristol – Aye, Horn - Aye)

**DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION ON EMPLOYEE HOLIDAY CHAMBER GIFT CERTIFICATES**

Comm. Oppermann stated he would like to see the utility give each full-time employee a \$50.00 chamber of commerce gift certificate as a holiday present. He stated the city staff would also be receiving the same token of appreciation.

Comm. Brandel asked how the part-time employees would be handled.

Comm. Oppermann stated he would like to see all full-time staff and our regular part-time meter readers receive the gift certificate.

Office Manager Statz clarified that the COOP students would not be included in this.

Comm. Oppermann stated that was correct, they would not, as the seasonal and aquatic center staff at the city were also not receiving the gift certificate.

It was moved by Comm. Horn and seconded by Comm. Ganser to approve a gift certificate for each full-time and regular part-time meter reader to receive a \$50.00 chamber of commerce gift certificate. On call of the roll, motion carried. (Oppermann – Aye, Adams - Aye, Ganser – Aye, Pieters – Aye, Brandel – Aye, Bristol – Aye, Horn - Aye)

Comm. Horn left the meeting at 6:23 p.m.

It was moved by Comm. Brandel and seconded by Comm. Ganser to adjourn to closed session pursuant to Section 19.85(1)(f) Considering financial, medical, social or personal histories or disciplinary data of specific persons, preliminary consideration of specific personnel problems or the investigation of charges against specific persons except where par. (b) applies which, if discussed in public, would be likely to have a substantial adverse effect upon the reputation of any person referred to in such histories or data, or involved in such problems or investigations. On call of the roll, motion carried. (Oppermann – Aye, Adams - Aye, Ganser – Aye, Pieters – Aye, Brandel – Aye, Bristol – Aye)

It was moved by Comm. Bristol and seconded by Comm. Oppermann to reconvene to open session. On call of the roll, motion carried on a voice vote.

It was moved by Comm. Oppermann and seconded by Comm. Bristol to adjourn. Motion carried on a voice vote. The meeting adjourned at 7:03 p.m.