

**July 8, 2015**

The regular meeting of the New Richmond Utility Commission was held on July 8, 2015 at 3:30 p.m. at the Civic Center.

Jerry Frey called the meeting to order at 3:30 p.m.

Members Present: Jerry Frey, Gerry Warner, Bob Mullen, Dan Casey, and Pat Becker.

A motion was made by Pat Becker to approve the agenda, seconded by Gerry Warner, and carried.

A motion was made by Bob Mullen to approve the minutes of the June 3, 2015 meeting, approve bills, and disbursements, seconded by Pat Becker, and carried.

**Public Comment** – None

**South Water Tower Application for Payment #1** – An application for Payment No. 1 from Champion Coatings in the amount of \$189,900.00 was presented. The application is for work items completed as of May 31, 2015 on the South Water Tower Reconditioning project. Work performed on the project to date for which the contractor is requesting payment is in conformance with project plans and specifications. A motion was made by Gerry Warner to approve Payment No. 1 on the South Water Tower Reconditioning project in the amount of \$189,900.00, seconded by Dan Casey, and carried.

**Well #3 VFD** – Bergerson-Caswell, Inc has supplied a quote for replacing the Well #3 motor starter with a Variable Frequency Drive (VFD), for a total project cost not to exceed \$12,625.00. The electrical work for this project will be done locally so total cost should not exceed \$9,500.00. This replacement would alleviate maintenance issues as the existing starter is beginning to fail, and would also provide an opportunity for energy savings. Upon completion of the project, New Richmond Utilities will apply for incentives to reimburse up to 60% of the project through WPPI and Focus on Energy. A motion was made by Bob Mullen to approve the replacement of the Well #3 motor starter with a Variable Frequency Drive, for a project cost not to exceed \$9,500.00, and for incentives to be applied for upon completion of the project, seconded by Pat Becker, and carried.

**Department Reports:**

Bob Meyer, Water Superintendent: No report given.

Steve Skinner, Lead Wastewater Treatment Plant Operator, gave the following report:

Steve Skinner introduced the new Wastewater Operator, Dave Pufall. Dave took the lead role on the installation of the new ramp at the Willow River Dam. Dave also worked with an electrician to determine why the VFD's were not functioning properly at the main lift station. It was determined the VFD's were full of dust causing the VFD's to overheat. To prevent this from happening in the future, it is recommended the VFD's be scheduled for semi-annual or annual cleaning. The cement saw cutting has been completed at the Main Lift Station. This was to create a safe access entry for service personnel to the Huber fine screens. Currently working on getting the grate completed to cover the access hole. We had some issues with a pipe blowing out of a fitting in the digester. Believe this was caused by internal pressure build up in the pipe. The vent will be left partially open to prevent this from happening in the future. The DNR did an inspection of the WWTP and are happy with the way things continue to operate.

Tom Rickard, Electric Superintendent, gave the following report:

The electric extension to Phillips Plastics is approximately 80% complete. The groundwork is in for the Madison Ave Lighting Project. Just waiting for the poles to be delivered. The lighting conversion is on schedule to be completed this year. There was a major relay failure at the North Substation. Wisconsin Rapids and Escanaba, MI were instrumental in getting the substation up and running. We were able to get necessary parts from these two cities that would have taken months to receive otherwise. Without this aid and the efficiency of Energis, our substation contractor, the North Substation would have been down until the first

of the year. Repairs were done before any outage occurred. Xcel approved the agreement with New Richmond Utilities to complete the necessary repairs to get the North Substation back online.

Jeremiah Wendt, Director of Public Works, gave the following report:

Jeremiah gave a brief report for Bob Meyers. The Water Department is still working on changing out meters and doing numerous locates. To increase efficiency, the Water Department is doing both water and storm water locates. The taking of water samples from the South Water Tower continues. Hoping to have the tower online within a few days. The older part of town is experiencing a large root problem in the sewer system. Looking into having a group treat the roots with a foam to take care of the issue for a few years. Jeremiah is working with Steve Skinner to increase the efficiency of the chemical feed system at the WWTP. They are working with some vendors to get a new chemical feed pump that would pace the flow of the chemicals. This would give more control and efficiency resulting in a substantial cost savings.

Nancy Petersen, Finance Director, gave the following report:

**2014 Financials** – We have received the 2014 financials from the auditors. A representative from Baker Tilly will present the results at a future Utility Commission meeting. We had hoped they could present at the August meeting, however, they are unavailable during this time and we are waiting to hear if they could present at the September meeting.

**Act 274 – Tariff Changes to Deferred Payment Agreements (DPA's)** – A reminder that the public hearing date is set for July 21, 2015 at 10:30 a.m. in the City Administrator/Utility Manager's conference room.

**Wisconsin Environmental Improvement Fund Loan** – On June 19 I received a letter confirming the pay-off of the West Central Wisconsin Biosolids Facility Clean Water Fund Loan as of May 1, 2015. The cancelled bond will be retained until such time as our auditor and/or financial advisor states we no longer need to keep it.

**Part Time Temporary Summer Office Help** – To assist office staff during the busy times and for coverage during vacations, we hired a temporary Customer Service Rep through a temp agency called Express Pros. This position will be working an average of 20 hours per week through September 30, 2015.

**Utility Office** – All Sensus radio read meters have been converted to ITRON. I have contacted Sensus to cancel support and have requested a refund of the unused support we had paid for. Bill Struck, Water Superintendent, Village of Frederic Water Department, is interested in purchasing our handheld. I will keep you posted as to the progress with these items.

A combined Customer Appreciation Picnic and Solar Garden flyer was included with the June 30th bills, and will also be included with the July 15<sup>th</sup> bills.

With summer help we have been able to work a little on the Billing Procedures Manual again and catch up on some other work we have been behind on.

June marked the sixth straight month in a row of having only 1% of A/R greater than 60 days old!

Weston Arndt, WPPI Energy Services Rep: No report given.

Mike Darrow, Utility Manager, gave the following report:

The application for the Solar Garden Project was submitted to the Plan Commission. The Solar Garden Project is currently on hold due to questions about it being located in TIF 6. Once the location is approved the project can move forward. The 2016 Budget process will begin in August. The New Richmond Utility Picnic and National Night Out are scheduled for August 4, 2015. There are several development projects currently in process. The Big Trucks Campaign at the library went well.

**Communications and miscellaneous correspondence** – None

There being no further business, a motion was made by Dan Casey to adjourn, seconded by Gerry Warner, and carried. The meeting adjourned at 4:22 p.m.

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Jerry Frey, President

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Bob Mullen, Secretary