

**NEW RICHMOND UTILITY COMMISSION MINUTES  
NOVEMBER 7, 2018**

The regular meeting of the New Richmond Utility Commission was held on November 7, 2018 at 8:00 a.m. at the Civic Center.

Pat Becker called the meeting to order at 8:00 a.m.

Members Present: Gerry Warner, Bob Mullen, Mike Kastens, and Pat Becker. Dan Casey was present via telephone conference call.

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

A motion was made by Gerry Warner to approve the minutes of the October 10, 2018 meeting, seconded by Mike Kastens, and carried.

A motion was made by Bob Mullen to approve October 2018 bills and disbursements, seconded by Gerry Warner, and carried.

**Public Comment:**

None

**2019 Utility Meeting Schedule:**

Rae Ann Ailts reviewed the proposed meeting schedule for 2019 as follows:

January 9, February- No Meeting , March 6, April 3, May 1, June 5- Breakfast Meeting at Public Works Shop, July- No Meeting, August 7, September 11, October 2, November 13 (UC Dinner), and December- No Meeting. These meetings would start at 8:00 a.m. with the exception of the November meeting starting at 3:30 p.m. Gerry Warner moved to approve the Utility Commission meeting as presented , seconded by Bob Mullen, motion carried.

**Civic Center Transition:**

Rae Ann Ailts provided an update on the 2019 Civic Center Customer Service plan which will begin over the next several months. Once complete, all customer service representatives which include utilities, bill pay, taxes, permits and general information, will occur at the eastern portion of the building. Cedar Corporation has been working on plans to accommodate this change. For security, public access will be Arch Street and 1<sup>st</sup> Street. More information will be brought forward in the next couple of months.

**ALERT New Richmond:**

Joel Enders updated the commission on Alert New Richmond, an emergency alert and notification service available to anyone who lives, works, travels through, or visits New Richmond. The system will be used to send alerts to the public during emergencies, utility disruptions, road closures, major traffic incidents, etc., as well as provide important community updates. After signing up online, individuals can choose to receive alerts via text message, email, and/or voice message (landline or mobile phone). Alert New Richmond is fully integrated into the Smart911 system, allowing residents the option of providing additional information emergency responders will see if 9-1-1 is called, such as needed medications or household pets. Please go to [www.newrichmondwi.gov](http://www.newrichmondwi.gov) and sign up! Currently there are 205 people signed up for the program.

**2019 Budget:**

Rae Ann Ailts reviewed the proposed FY2019 operating budgets for the Electric, Water and Sewer Utility, which have a combined budget of \$13,089,310.

**Revenue**

- Projected increase of 0.8-2.0% based upon specific Utility.

**General Operating Expenses**

- Health, dental & vision insurance premium costs reflect an overall reduction of 8% with employer and employee cost share being 84/16 in 2019 compared to 2018 cost share of 85/16.
- Wage increase of 3%: occurring with the following splits 1.5% at 1/1/19 and 1.5% at 7/1/19.
- Seasonal positions include GIS, field and office assistance.
- Ice pigging, leak detection, televising, lining and pole testing are increasing in the 2019 budget as part of the maintenance schedule.
- Marketing and sponsorships have been increased to promote and brand New Richmond Utilities.

**Debt**

- Debt coverage exceeds bond resolution requirements for FY2018 for all utilities.

### **Rate Analysis**

- A water and sewer rate case is currently in process, as such, revenues are based upon current rates.
- Electric rate of return is projected to decrease from prior year due to increase in operating costs associated with delivery of service.
- A rate review of the Electric Utility is proposed for FY2019 to ensure rates continue to be adequate to recover additions to plant in service.

Gerry Warner moved to adopt the 2019 Electric, Water and Sewer operating budgets as proposed, seconded by Mike Kastens, and carried.

### **Capital Improvement Plan:**

Over the last few months, City staff and commission members have prioritized projects in the 2019 Capital Improvement Plan. The prioritization included three categories: critical, very important and important. The 2019 Capital Improvement Plan includes \$3,355,100 in project costs with the understanding that the specific mix of proposed funding mechanisms for some projects may change depending on the final recommendations of the ongoing water and sewer rate study. Bob Mullen moved to adopt the 2019 Capital Improvement Plan as outlined, seconded by Gerry Warner, and carried.

### **Department Reports**

#### **Jeremiah Wendt, Director of Public Works:**

- 125<sup>th</sup> Street is paved and restoration work is complete.
- E 4<sup>th</sup> Street is nearing completion.
- Frontier needs to move several fiber optic lines along a segment of County Road A Trail. Once completed, grading will continue. Pavement may need to wait until spring.
- Knowles Avenue corridor study is underway. Good feedback was received from the public meeting.

#### **Steve Skinner, Lead Wastewater Treatment Plant Operator – Jeremiah Wendt gave report:**

- Steve Skinner and Greg Hermansen are doing testing today for DNR certifications.
- Steve attended the WWOA Conference, and was part of the panel on Energy Efficiency projects for wastewater treatment plants.
- Biosolids annual meeting will be held November 15<sup>th</sup> in Ellsworth, WI.
- Treatment plant operations are going well.

#### **Bob Meyer, Water Superintendent – Jeremiah Wendt gave report:**

- Bob Meyer will be back next week on light duty
- Staff is getting ready for the onset of winter
- Staff is monitoring a small leak at the intersection of N. Knowles Ave and North 4<sup>th</sup> St.

#### **Weston Arndt, Electric Superintendent:**

- Reschedule of Senator Schachtner meeting – WPPI Energy
- WPPI Energy Orientation – Reschedule
- 125<sup>th</sup> Street Lighting complete
- RRFB (Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacon) for trail – directional drill, set pole bases.
- 140<sup>th</sup> St Lighting – GG South by end of the week.
- Rustic Ridge wire pulling and structure setting is complete. Still some restoration work as well as terminating and cutting over from the old to new underground.
- The new transformer, sectionalizer and conductor for the Federal Foam Warehouse facility is in place. Temporary outage last Friday.
- We had a planned outage Saturday for Bosch. This was a requested outage so they could perform preventative maintenance on their electric switchgear. We installed new cutouts on the overhead riser serving their south service.
- Working with Tjader & Highstrom to install primary electric extension for Beaver Way in Fox Run.
- Discussed with Chris Chartier at WPPI Energy about extending fiber to the White Pine Sub. He agreed that it would be mutually beneficial and a sharing of costs would be appropriate.
- We have 15 of the danger poles addressed. 4 of the remaining will be part of a system redesign in the E 7<sup>th</sup> / Oak area. That is likely to be done in December. We're working on the prep for the 3 phase alley work that will be contracted. I feel we are in good shape to get all of the danger poles replaced by the end of the year.
- Dave Krause – Developing substation plan
- Workload – analyzing part time/contract/apprentice help in the future.

#### **Stacie Running, ESR:**

- WPPI
  - Residential Customer Survey
    - 3 year rotation
  - MyMeter
    - Exploring options or improving customer experience and bill payment process; MyMeter would replace current eCare system
  - BCC @ WPPI
    - Training - enhancing customer experience
  - Taking advantage of Local Energy Efficiency dollars to upgrade lighting at Civic Center & WWTF
- Customer Contacts
  - NRSD
    - PedalPower, PowerTOWN & Water/WasteWater education
    - Reached out to Patrick Olson and Bob Parent
  - New Construction Design Assistance
    - Westfields Hospital
    - Johnson Ford
    - Bakken Young
    - Auto Mall
  - VFD incentives
    - Lakeside foods
    - Bosch
    - Federal Foam
    - Phillips-Medisize
- Focus on Energy
  - Customer Mailer
    - Furnace Tune-Up & Smart Thermostat
  - Incentives paid YTD
    - Estimated contribution < \$40,000/year
    - Incentive paid YTD >\$149,000
    - 2242 customers received incentives

**Rae Ann Ailts, Finance Director:**

- Water and sewer rate study is underway.
- Lien processing will be finalized on November 15, 2018.
- Move in – move outs are averaging between 100-200 per month.
- Staff is looking into software called Online Utility Exchange to help streamline applications for service. The software would create a portal for customers to fill out the application for service. Customer proof of identity would be done through Online Utility Exchange, instead of the customer having to come into the office. This program has been used by other WPPI members. Cost is \$1.90 per application.

**Mike Darrow, Utility Manager:**

- Council will review the capital improvements Utility Commission approved
- Council will be reviewing the Civic Center redesign
- Staff looking into improved security – gate system at the compost site
- Emerald Ash tree removal process will begin
- \$611,000 parks and trail improvements in 2019
- Improvement and updates on vehicles for police and fire, as well as a hybrid vehicle for city/utility use
- Integrate staff on the east side of the building – customer service training to occur next week
- Kwik Trip discussions took place with the community

There being no further business, a motion made by Gerry Warner to adjourn, seconded by Bob Mullen, and carried. The meeting adjourned at 8:48 a.m.

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Pat Becker, President

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Gerry Warner, Secretary