

MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF PUBLIC WORKS
Tuesday, January 14, 2020

The Regular Meeting of the Board of Public Works was held on Tuesday, January 14, 2020 at 7:30 a.m. in the City Council Chambers located at 405 Jefferson Street, Washington, Missouri. The following were present/absent:

MEMBERS:

Chairman	John Vietmeier	Present
Member	Brad Mitchell	Absent
Member	Mike Radetic	Present
Member	Steve Richardson	Absent
Ex-officio Member	Steve Strubberg	Present
Ex-officio Member	Vacant	--

OTHERS:

Council Representative	Steve Sullentrup	Absent
Council Representative	Mark Wessels	Present
Mayor	Sandy Lucy	Absent
City Administrator	Daren Lamb	Present
Water/Wastewater Superintendent	Kevin Quaethem	Present
Water/Wastewater Secretary	Beverly Hoyt	Present
Public Works Director	John Nilges	Present
Assistant City Engineer	Andrea Lueken	Absent
Emergency Management Director	Mark Skornia	Absent
Fire Chief	Tim Frankenberg	Absent

Originals and/or copies of agenda items of the meeting, including recorded votes are available on record in the office of the Public Works Department for one year. Video/DVD and audio tapes are kept only until the minutes have been approved for the meeting. DVD copies of this meeting are distributed to Board Members if requested.

Minutes

There was no quorum to approve the minutes so we will hold the approval over until next month.

Wastewater

Extensive rainfall fell Friday and Saturday this past week. Then new pumps were installed at Walnut Street. We tested it as best we could, but with a pump that pumps roughly 2800 gallons per minutes (gpm) it's hard to test with no heavy flow. We ran the pump, it ran good, everything was fine. We got that heavy rain and the pump started running and then it lost efficiency and started making a lot of racket. It did cause a bunch of backups on Front Street, manholes started to overflow again. We had two guys that worked too many hours last night to make sure everything was okay. The company that installed the equipment came out, they pulled the pump and found a piece of 6" stainless steel ring jammed into the pump. The pump was trying to chew it up. It was doing what it was supposed to do, trying to remove it but just couldn't work its way through.

We now have an issue that we have to address which is to clean out the wet well. We have a plan in place as soon as the river drops. We will use the vacuum truck and clean it up so we won't have the problem happen so often. Not sure where this came from, we have had various things anywhere from beach balls, bowling balls, and rags in our lift stations. The investment in the pump is fine, we did not lose anything and nothing was damaged. These are good strong pumps.

Wastewater is doing pretty good we have our air scrubber mounted in the position it's supposed to be in, we have material on its way here once the material is here we will get it install. All should be up and running by March of this year.

West End Lift Station is located at Tiemann and Front Street. Construction is going on and the control panel should be here by the 27th which is the box that will be installed above flood stage area. We are already bypass pumping because the pump went out last Wednesday. There is no sense in us investing \$12,000.00 for another pump when we have the other ones in place. So we will be bypass pumping down there until the panel arrives.

The sewer line at 3rd and Jefferson, an easement was created there between the two properties. When the property owner went to replace his driveway an eight (8) city shared lateral was found. There were multiple holes in it and no gaskets on the joints. The City took a look at it and found that it collected from four (4) properties. We provided the material, labor and we also made it a public main. We will be coming to the City Council with this to create an easement to take over as a public main. Shared laterals always cause problems. We also saw that there were two (2) abandoned service lines that are disconnected. With Third Street getting paved now was a good time to do it. It's just a process getting this in the City's name.

Water

As time changes, building codes change and we need to stay up on our codes. As it stands right now with our new code we set up to allow HDPE service lines pipe the building code was still requiring copper in the homes. So we required a PVC to stop 5' of the property and having copper back up from there and then copper throughout the home. The code has since changed and the builders are allowed to use PEX inside the home which is a plastic PVC. So we are bringing plastic into pipe within five (5) feet of the building requiring a five (5) feet piece of copper put through the wall and then PEX coming out. That to me is unnecessary, so we are going to remove the requirement of the five (5) feet of copper and they can now run HDPE all the way into home

and set the meter and go from there with PEX. Just removing something that doesn't need to be there anymore because water lines can now no longer be called a secondary ground which technically they shouldn't have even been a secondary ground. This is for any type residential and commercials. The highlighted sections on the enclosed sheet are being removed. This needs to get an approval of the Board so it will come back on next month's agenda.

If the work was done correctly when a house was built, meaning they backfilled it correctly, all was installed correctly. Anything that was put through the wall and has the possibility of the shift of dirt has the possibility of sheering off. Whether it is plastic, copper, cast iron, anything has that possibility of sheering at that point. The HDPE pipe is actually more flexible than copper so it would be more forgiving but eventually would wear a hole through it or something. Anything you put through a wall if everything is not done correctly has the possibility of sheering off.

Looking forward to doing the water towers in the spring. This will be a juggling match to make sure we got both of them done one right after the other. This should be a little cheaper since they will only have to mobilize in town once.

Looking into the water rate structure, so there are two different components to what you pay in a bill. The rate structure itself and the dollars that go with it. So we are structured with a three (3) tiered type situation where zero (0) to fifteen hundred is a dollar number, then up to 6,667 is a dollar number and up to 16,667 the next dollar number so it's a pretty convoluted rate structure. So as we were looking through this and the revenue generated. We need to generate approximately \$160,000.00 more a year which doesn't sound like a lot but it is a pretty substantial amount. We think it needs to be a combination of rate review on the dollars but actually the structure itself.

Our City Clerk provided some information. A study was done on water and sewer rates for communities within Missouri. It's broken out pretty nice where we fit into the 10,000 to 50,000 population, was our lower end. So in 2018 there were 66 communities that have a population of 10,000 to 50,000 and the top five (5) lowest water rates in the state of Missouri. The average percent of water rates as compared to the monthly household income, that is one way they summarize. The average for the 66 communities is .72 of your monthly household income for the state of Missouri in those 66 communities goes to water, Washington is .31, so 40 percent of the average. The City of Washington should be very proud of what has been done over the years. At some point that catches up and we cannot sustain or even improve the system based upon that percentage. That's when the numbers go a little goofy, the five (5) lowest in order of water rates is Town & Country but their household income is \$156,000 so they have more money to put pipe in the ground. The best way to look at this is, look at the household income for Washington, Republic and Troy. We are even less than those communities.

Monthly water bill in Washington is \$13.82, this is an average you will see we are the lowest substantially margin, and again those communities are different because they actually have a hard water bill number but we are running \$1.60 less than our next closest community. The point is we should all be proud of what we have done and how we have maintained the system.

We are looking at a new tower in the future, replacing pipes. We get hit on the streets on why we paved a street and now these water breaks. The funds just aren't there to fix the infrastructure underground. This is catching up pretty quickly. We just need to be aware, not sure if everyone

has had all that information to look at to see where we sit, where we need to be and how do we get there. The City of Washington has right at around 7,300 water users.

Darren Lamb: The water and the sewer funds need to be self-sustainable. We look at those as enterprise funds, they need to be standing on their own and John remembers this with the Capital Improvement Sales Committee when we sat there and looked at what's next in eight (8) years. I think there was a different philosophy in the past that should be there to augment.

Our argument is, this should go ahead and be self-sustainable on its own rather than wait 8 years and say yeah we are going to pay for another water tower out of the Capital Improvement Sales Tax Fund, that is not the way to go ahead and look out for the future. This water fund needs to stand on its own. The idea of putting in the Consumer Pricing Index (CPI) escalator. Why we don't have that at this time just befuddles me. I think Kevin has talked to his colleague around the state, just kind a crazy that we don't have that built in, so you don't have to go back and revisit every time with regards to once you set the rate it should work on its on, you shouldn't have to go back and revisit each time. In 2021 is when we will start operating in the red if we don't start doing something about the rates and I will also say that Jim Briggs recognized this before he retired and said this is what needs to be done in order to move forward with the water system.

We aren't talking about a huge increase. However, we do have about a half dozen high water users in town and even at that we have looked at the rates and we are talking about a 7% possible increase at this time and that is subject to change as we bring more numbers to the Board and you make a recommendation and City Council goes ahead and reviews. It is well within our means to go forward.

We are looking at this as a self-sustaining fund and stand on its own and not rely on Capital Improvement Sales Tax to help build a water tower. When we say operating in the red next year even if we get to a break-even that's not bad. This does not mean there are dollars to improve the system it just has dollars to maintain and operate. Break-even is good but there needs to be dollars for improving the system, to repair and replace hydrants, paint hydrants. The things the public sees that we can't do with the funding we have available.

The increase would be a 3-tier to 2 with a potential service charge, which would be a minimum charge similar to Ameren. If you have a meter there is a service charge for x amount of dollars. That provides us with another tool in the future. This is consistent with what other communities are doing with water rates. Since this is a user base, this would be strictly up to the Council to approve. Trash rates are different, those are imposed whether you use it or not, so that's why it has to get voter approval.

Old Business

Cochran is doing a really good job working on the violation. They are working with Department of Natural Resources (DNR) right now this is just an information gathering and we are working with them to get all the information. We have a 180 days to get this corrected and it will be done within those 180 days. It may take a little longer than anticipated with contractor, but will still be done within the 180 days. This will stay on the agenda till it's complete.

Other

Mr. Wessels has concerns he would like to discuss. Someone in his neighborhood was getting a water softener and was told by the company the chlorine in the system was high, so everyone got a little concerned. Kevin has assured Mr. Wessels that our levels are at normal levels. Most people don't know that when your testing chlorine it's because your smelling a gas. When chlorine drops it kicks off a chlorine gas that makes you think you have more chlorine than you do. You actually have less, which is good for us to know that area is having problems. The residuals are not where they need to be so we need to address the situation. There are 21 sampling sites that we test randomly and 15 a month we check for bacterial samples to make sure the system is safe and also to check the residuals at those site. We are well within our range of .5 at the well houses and .2 at part per million in the system. This is DNR's requirement with no less than .5 an up to .2 ppm. This is all recorded each month and we have for the past two (2) years for DNR. We take this disinfection very serious, we know its inconvenient.

EPA who governs us though the Clean Drinking Water Act, their stance on safe drinking water is the only safe drinking water is disinfected water. Eventually every community will be doing the disinfection. We do the liquid chlorination the gas chlorination we just feel is unsafe for the neighborhood. We try to provide the best water quality we can to the residents of Washington.

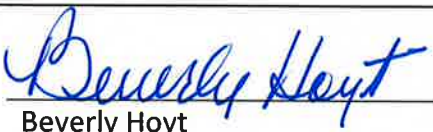
There are a few small communities that don't chlorinate. We just happened to fit into that range they have been working on for years it just took that bad hiccup we had back in 2012 to finally get us as a part of their ones required to disinfect. The bacterial side is a non-existent anymore.

Next Scheduled Meeting Date

The next scheduled meeting date is February 11, 2020.

Adjourn

There being no further business the meeting adjourned.

Prepared by: 
Beverly Hoyt
Water/Wastewater Secretary

Adopted and Approved by the Board of Public Works:

Date: Feb 11, 2020 Signature: 
Secretary