

**UTILITY ADVISORY BOARD
MEETING
SEPTEMBER 27, 2021**

MEMBERS PRESENT: George Ruchti, Chairman
David Abderhalden, Mike Dougherty,
Scott Howells, Derek Rooney,
Bil Tucker

MEMBERS ABSENT: Dennis Cafaro

OTHERS PRESENT: Chuck Pavlos, Utilities Director
Kristin Simeone, Finance Director
Steven Leonard, Senior Utilities Project Manager

CALL TO ORDER/ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Mr. Ruchti called the meeting to order at 9:02 a.m.
- A. Roll Call
- B. Next Scheduled Meeting
- 1. October 25, 2021

CITIZENS COMMENTS ON AGENDA ITEMS ONLY

- None.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- A. Review and Approval of Minutes from July 26, 2021
- Mr. Rooney MOVED, Mr. Dougherty SECONDED approval of the July 26, 2021, minutes.
MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

REPORTS

- A. Utilities Operational Data: Review of Water and Wastewater Flows from August 2021
- Mr. Chuck Pavlos, Utilities Director, drew attention to the Operational Data report for August 2021, denoted in the agenda material, noting Water to Town Average was 4.4 million gallons per day (MGD).
- B. City Council Action on Utilities Agenda: Utilities Agenda Items Presented to City Council in September 2021
- Mr. Pavlos reported the proposed rate increases were discussed and approved by City Council at their September 2021 meetings along with the Utility Fund budget.
- C. Utilities Financial Report for June 2021, July 2021 and August 2021
- Ms. Kristin Simeone, Finance Director, pointed out the financial reports from June 2021 and July 2021 were available in the agenda material. She then reviewed the August 2021 reports, noting year-to-date (YTD) revenues were 107.3% for water billing and 105.3% for sewer billing. She indicated rate increases took effect as of January 1, 2021,

concluding YTD operating expenses compared to the original YTD budget projections were 93.1%.

- Mr. Dougherty recalled the Board agreed the rate increases should be reviewed annually, inquiring as to when same would be revisited.
- Ms. Simeone replied with an explanation of the budget process, verifying the budget was typically presented to the Board by April or May each year and the next rate increase of 2% was scheduled for October 1, 2022. She then reviewed revenues compared to expenditures, pointing out expenses were slightly over the original projections in August 2021; however, revenues were satisfactory with YTD FY 2020/2021 Actual at \$10.4 million.
- Mr. Rooney questioned whether the amount of usage could be determined by unit.
- Ms. Simeone responded same was difficult to evaluate as there was a large seasonal base of residents and usage could fluctuate year to year.
- A brief discussion ensued regarding varying factors which caused fluctuations in utility usage.
- Ms. Simone then continued reviewing the August 2021 reports, confirming the revised projection for YTD FY 2020/2021 was 100.3% and the original projection was 106.5%. She indicated the YTD budget was approximately \$17 million and the YTD actual was \$18.3 million, concluding with an explanation of impact fees.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

- Mr. Ruchti recalled discussions from the July 26, 2021, meeting, verifying a pre-proposal meeting for the draft request for quote (RFQ) had not yet taken place for the Wastewater Treatment Plant Expansion project and the contract was completed for the Reverse Osmosis (RO) Mechanical Integrity Test at the Water Treatment Plant RO Deep Injection Well.
- Mr. Rooney inquired whether an update was provided regarding limiting withdrawals from the Shell Creek Reservoir.
- Mr. Pavlos responded staff met with the Southwest Florida Water Management District and accepted their proposal as same met the requirements for minimum flows. He indicated a small amount of water would be needed from the Peace River Manasota Regional Water Supply Authority in October 2021 and should not require a cost, adding the information would be presented to City Council at their second meeting in October 2021.
- Mr. Rooney questioned the water main replacement on Taylor Road.

- Mr. Steven Leonard, Senior Utilities Project Manager, replied staff was waiting on plans for the multi-use recreational trail at Taylor Road, noting the installation might be limited to the location of the existing water line due to the congestion of the right-of-way.
- Mr. Daugherty inquired if preventive measures were taken to ensure the new water line would not require relocation once the expansion of Taylor Road occurred.
- Mr. Leonard replied affirmatively; however, roadway plans were not available at this time.
- Mr. Ruchti then received an update regarding the extension of the water distribution system within the Tee and Green community and the force main replacement on Henry Street, with Mr. Leonard verifying Mr. Steve Adams, Utilities Engineering Manager, could provide more information regarding same. He then verified Giffels-Webster Engineers, Inc. was selected as the consultant for the Septic to Sewer project, then inquiring whether Mr. Adams met with Banks Engineering regarding the lines buried near Riverside Drive.
- Mr. Leonard responded Banks Engineering was still working on the plans for same with the developer.

NEW BUSINESS

A. Utility Advisory Board Bylaws

- Deputy City Clerk Sara Welch drew attention to the Board's proposed Bylaws, denoted in the agenda material, inquiring if members agreed to the proposed change which indicated customers of the utilities service area would qualify as a Board member.
- Mr. Ruchti confirmed members had no objections to same.
- Ms. Welch then requested member's input regarding the length and number of terms.
- Discussion ensued regarding same as well as the language relating to unexpired terms according to the current Bylaws, with Messrs. Rooney and Dougherty opining the current length and number of terms was sufficient for members of the Board.
- Ms. Welch continued reviewing the proposed changes, requesting whether members desired any revisions to the Board's duties.
- Mr. Tucker received clarification of the City's procedures for alleged utility billing discrepancies and disputes.
- Mr. Abderhalden suggested relocating Item 4. G. to the bottom of the duties list, noting same summarized the purpose of the Board.
- Mr. Ruchti questioned whether Item 4. H. was appropriate since utility drawings and specifications were typically reviewed by engineers, opining it would be more appropriate for the Board to be involved with the request for proposal (RFP) and RFQ process.
- Discussion continued regarding the responsibilities of the Board as opposed to engineers when reviewing design plans for utilities projects, with Mr. Pavlos verifying he

would contact the Procurement Division to notify members of pre-bid meetings relating to RFPs and RFQs.

- Mr. Rooney recommended the Chair attend or assign a member to attend those meetings due to the Sunshine Laws, noting the individual could then return to the Board with the information received. He then opined Item 4. H. could be removed, reiterating Item 4. G. incorporated the overall duties of the Board.
- Mr. Dougherty pointed out the duties did not include review of and recommendations for the budget, opining the responsibility was essential enough to outline separately.
- Mr. Rooney suggested same be added to Item 4. B.
- Ms. Welch agreed to same. She then verified there was consensus to remove Item 4. H.
- Mr. Dougherty drew attention back to the conditions of members, suggesting the language require Board members who were customers of the utilities service area be in good standing.
- Mr. Rooney questioned if the City had a general statement regarding the status of members, opining same should be addressed with all members of City boards.
- Ms. Welch replied the rules indicated members served at the will of City Council, concluding concerns regarding member's standing could be included in the presentation to City Council.

STAFF COMMENTS

- None.

COMMITTEE/BOARD COMMENTS

- Mr. Ruchti inquired whether any updates were provided regarding Mr. Brandon Moody attending a meeting.
- Mr. Pavlos replied Mr. Adams had contacted Mr. Moody regarding same and could verify the date when he returned.

CITIZENS' COMMENTS

- None.

ADJOURNMENT

- Meeting Adjourned: 10:07 a.m.

George Ruchti, Chairman

Leah Pues, Recording Secretary