



City of Columbia, Missouri

Meeting Minutes

Water and Light Advisory Board

Wednesday, February 14, 2024
8:00 AM

Regular

701 E Broadway
Conference Room
1A/1B

I. CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Coffin called the meeting to order at 8:00 a.m.

Staff: Sarah Talbert, Assistant Director Utilities- Rates and Fiscal Planning; David Sorrell, Utilities Director; Erin Keys, Acting Assistant Director- Electric; Todd McVicker, Acting Utility Services Manager; Matt Nestor, Public Information Specialist; David Storvick, Engineering Manager; Steve Hunt, Assistant Director- Water; Ron Wyble, Power Production Superintendent; Shawn Carrico, Engineering Supervisor; Madison Jones-Smith, Administration Technician I

Council Members: Betsy Peters

Public: Jim Windsor, Mike Murphy, Mark Haim, Carolyn Amparan, Dick Parker

Present: 5 - Thomas Jensen, David Switzer, Gregg Coffin, Philip Fracica and Amanda Jacobs

II. INTRODUCTIONS

A round robin was done for introductions.

III. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Ms. Amanda Jacobs made a motion to approve the agenda as submitted with a second by Mr. David Switzer. Motion passed unanimously.

IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The January 10, 2024 meeting minutes were approved with changes with a motion by Mr. Tom Jensen and a second by Mr. Phillip Fracica. Motion passed unanimously.

Attachments: [Meeting Minutes Draft 01 10 24](#)

V. FINANCIAL REPORTS as available

a) Monthly Financial Reports

Ms. Talbert discussed the month-to-date electric and water operating revenues. She stated the operating revenues for electric and water were higher in December of 2023 compared to 2022. She mentioned that this was due to the base charge increase that was put into effect. The month to date operating expenses for electric and water were

also higher due to staff raises that had been granted. She also stated that the water expenses increased in the winter due to multiple water main breaks. She stated as well that the year-to-date revenues and expenses for each utility were also up compared to December 2022. Ms. Talbert discussed the water and electric budgets compared to actuals. She stated the operating revenues for water were about 25 percent of the forecasted amount and the operating expenses were 20 percent. The electric operating revenues were 2 percent of the forecasted amount whereas the operating expenses were 18 percent. She stated billed usage for water was up compared to years prior and electric billed usage was slightly lower.

Attachments: [Electric Statements-December 2023](#)
[Water Statements-December 2023](#)
[Summary Change in Billed usage for Water and Electric](#)

VI. DIRECTOR'S REPORTS

a) FY 2025 Board Budget Request

Ms. Talbert provided the budgets for the Water and Light Advisory Board (WLAB) for food and travel/training planning. Ms. Talbert asked if the board felt these were useful and if the amounts were sufficient. Both Mr. Switzer and Mr. Coffin said the amounts were good and these budgets were good to have.

Attachments: [WLAB Budget Request](#)

b) Quarterly Utility Disconnections

Ms. Talbert shared the number of delinquent utility accounts. She stated the amount of active accounts with the City of Columbia was sixty-seven thousand two hundred and seventy (67,270). The amount of delinquent accounts as of January 31st, both residential and commercial, was three thousand one hundred and seventy-two (3,172) which accounts for 4.72 percent. She stated the amount of accounts pending disconnect as of January 31st, both residential and commercial, was one thousand two hundred and twenty-three (1,223) which accounts for 1.82 percent. Ms. Talbert also discussed the amount of money came from the different pledging organizations for utility assistance. She mentioned the Health Department's contributions towards utility assistance.

Attachments: [Pending disconnects for WLAB](#)

c) Quarterly Power Cost Adjustment Report

Ms. Talbert discussed the Power Cost Adjustment (PCA) Report. She stated that the actual expenses were higher than the forecasted values. She also stated that the energy sold was lower than what was forecasted. Ms. Talbert also discussed the PCA Customer Impact and what that might look like on a customer's bill.

Attachments: [PCA Board Report -December 2023](#)

d) 4th Quarter Renewable Energy Report

Ms. Talbert provided the 4th quarter renewable energy report. She stated that the

values were fiscal year Two Thousand Twenty-Three (2023) and they were compared to fiscal year Two Thousand Twenty-Two (2022.) She noted the different percentages as well as the different categories within the report. She then opened the floor for questions of which there were none.

Attachments: [4th quarter renewable energy report](#)

e) 1st Quarter CIP Progress Report

Ms. Talbert provided and discussed the CIP progress reports. She briefly explained the breakdown of all of the funds provided for each of the different projects within the city. She then opened the floor up for questions about the different projects of which there were none.

Attachments: [1st Quarter Electric CIP Report](#)
[1st Quarter Water CIP Report](#)
[Water and Electric CIP balances 12-31-23](#)

f) Quarterly FY 2018 Water Ballot Project Update

Ms. Talbert stated that multiple projects within the water ballot were approved and currently out for bids. Those projects being: a water treatment plant, the southeast pump, and the West Ash pumping station. She stated that the construction bids for all three projects were due on February 23rd. She also stated that the Southwest Water Tower project was actively looking for property for the water tower and once that was acquired, the project could move forward with the design. She also discussed that the well platforms project had a design contract that was in negotiations.

Attachments: [WaterBondProjStatus 20240202](#)

g) Council Item Updates

Ms. Talbert discussed the council items updates. She stated Council Bill 322-23 Amending the FY 2024 Annual Budget for the first quarter appropriation of funds was approved. She stated Council Bill 10-24 authorizing a deed of water utility easement and related agreements with the Eugenia B. Rogers Trust, the Rogers Family Trust, and the Rogers Joint Revocable Trust was also approved. Ms. Talbert said the WLAB Fiscal Year 2023 Annual Report was also presented to Council. She stated Resolution R22-24 authorizing an agreement for professional engineering services with Crockett Engineering Consultants for water meter survey and investigation to comply with the U.S. Environmental Protection Act Lead and Copper Rule Revision was discussed.

Attachments: [Council Item Updates - January 2024](#)

h) Water Quality Update

Ms. Talbert briefly discussed the water quality update. She mentioned they had received a lot of compliments on the water quality. She also mentioned the multiple pumping stations and how she believed they were working well.

VII. CHAIRMAN'S REPORTS

a) Review Renewable Ordinance

At the last meeting, the renewable energy ordinance was presented and ideas were discussed on how to rework the ordinance based on a request from Council. Mr. Switzer stated there was other utilities around the country that had similar goals, but their wording was zero emissions for Carbon Free as opposed to 100 percent renewable. He mentioned most places had a date of when they wanted to reach those goals with most being 2045 or further. He stated the WLAB should look into potentially changing the goal deadline of the ordinance. He also stated that the wording should account for annual goals like 45 percent renewable by a certain year. Mr. Jensen expressed concerns over the costs for this project and brought up Georgetown, Texas and the financial struggles they dealt with because of a similar goal. He also stated that he believed there should be a way for the WLAB to listen to the citizens input on the subject and go from there. Mr. Coffin stated he believed the WLAB should only come up with a list of suggestions and not rewrite the ordinance entirely. Some of the suggestions that were discussed involved changing the wording to make the ordinance go by fiscal year instead of calendar year which would make it less confusing. There was also a suggestion about having a way to factor in circumstances out of the Board's control that could push back the deadlines.

Attachments: [2023 Renewable Energy Plan FINAL](#)
[City Renewable Energy Ordinance](#)
[Staff Challenges & Recommendation with Renewable Ordinance](#)
[WLAB - Renewable Ordinance Review](#)

b) Rolling Calendar

Ms. Talbert discussed the rolling calendar and asked for any recommendations. She mentioned that at the meeting in March, Mr. Manny Teodoro would be joining the WLAB meeting via Zoom to give the rate affordability metrics presentation. Mr. Switzer also stated he would like to continue the renewable energy conversation and Ms. Talbert stated she could add it to the agenda. Mr. Coffin asked Ms. Carolyn Amparan if she would like to come and speak on behalf of the Sierra Club at a future meeting regarding the renewable energy topic and she accepted. Ms. Talbert also stated the tour of the Water Treatment Plant was scheduled for May 9th.

Attachments: [WL Rolling Agenda February](#)

VIII. PUBLIC EMAIL COMMENTS

Ms. Talbert provided some emails from Mr. Dick Parker as well as Ms. Carolyn Amparan. Mr. Parker discussed some potential changes to the renewable energy ordinance that were discussed within the 100 percent Renewable by 2030 group. He stated that he wanted the ordinance to be aligned with the Fiscal Year rather than the Calendar year. He felt that the WLAB should be aware of these changes produced by the 100 percent by 2030 group and added that Ms. Amparan could also speak on their behalf. Ms. Amparan sent in an email on behalf of the Sierra Club. She brought to the WLAB the Sierra Club's revisions to the renewable energy ordinance. She

stated that the Sierra Club supported moving the reporting timeline to the fiscal year as opposed to the calendar year making the report available annually after December 1st. She also stated that the definition of renewable energy needed to align with what the National Sierra Club defined it as. Ms. Amparan stated that the Sierra Club was also in favor of pushing back the target date for 100 percent renewables. She stated the Club recommended that the target date for 100 percent be pushed back to 2035 due to grid congestion and other issues that were currently affecting the price of renewables. She also stated that the Club and herself were worried about the sense of urgency from the WLAB and felt the process needed to be sped up.

Attachments: [WLABPublic Water And Light Advisory Board - Parker 1-29-24](#)
[WLABPublic Water And Light Advisory Board - Parker 2-7-24](#)

IX. GENERAL COMMENTS BY PUBLIC, MEMBERS AND STAFF

Mr. Mark Haim addressed the WLAB regarding the renewables conversation. He stated he was concerned by the lack of urgency from the WLAB regarding this matter and that there was no acknowledgement of the existential crisis that has been caused by climate change. He asked the WLAB what it would take to get some sense of urgency. He also stated that Columbia needed to be a leader for other Municipalities in regards to the renewable plan.

Mr. Jim Windsor discussed the well issue and if the lead detection had something to do with the wetlands. He also discussed the fact that the current renewable energy plan and how the estimated usage by customers was recognized as far of the lost revenue was still not counted in the cost. Mr. Windsor noted the Transmission Line and how it has been a year since Council had directed action on the interconnection with Ameren. He said to his knowledge, nothing had yet been brought back to Council.

X. NEXT MEETING DATE

March 13, 2024

XI. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 10:45 A.M. on a motion by Mr. Tom Jensen with a second by Mr. David Switzer. Motion passed unanimously.

To submit questions or comments to the Water & Light Advisory Board, please email wlabpublic@como.gov.
All media inquiries should be submitted to Matt Nestor at Matthew.Nestor@como.gov.

Members of the public may attend any open meeting. For requests for accommodations related to disability, please call 573-874-CITY (573-874-2489) or email CITY@CoMo.gov. In order to assist staff in making the appropriate arrangements for your accommodation, please make your request as far in advance of the posted meeting date as possible.

USB DRIVES PROHIBITED: Due to cybersecurity concerns, flash drives and other media devices are no longer permitted for delivering files or presentation materials. A speaker who desires to display a presentation must upload the presentation, in advance, to the city network using an upload portal. To upload your files and learn more, visit CoMo.gov/upload. (Effective Jan. 1, 2023)