



City of Columbia, Missouri

Meeting Minutes

Water and Light Advisory Board

Monday, November 11, 2019
6:00 PM

Special

701 E Broadway
Council Chambers

I. CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Hasheider called the meeting to order at 6:01 p.m.

Staff: Tad Johnsen, City Utilities Director; Ryan Williams, Assistant City Utilities Director of Water & Light; Christian Johanningmeier, Power Production Superintendent; Dave Storvick, Engineering Manager; Kevin Wiggins, Water Production Brandon Renaud, Utility Services Manager; Herman Black, Commercial Energy Services Supervisor; Stephanie Brown, Community Relations Assistant Director; Ricki Jones, Customer Service Supervisor; Courtney Murphy, Customer Service Supervisor; Chris Kisch, Sr. Administrative Support Assistan

Present: 5 - Robert Hasheider, Kim Fallis, Scott Fines, Robin Wenneker and Thomas Jensen

II. INTRODUCTIONS

Introductions of the board members were made for the public.

III. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Ms. Kim Fallis made a motion to approve the agenda as submitted with a second by Mr. Scott Fines. Motion passed unanimously.

IV. STAFF PRESENTATION

a) Utility Bill Customer Portal (Stephanie Brown)

Ms. Brown introduced herself and Ms. Jones, then provided a quick video on the utility bill customer portal. Ms. Brown advised the soft launch for this feature was back in June, 2019. She said this offered a quick access to customer bills and could be accessed from any computer, smart phone or smart devise. Ms. Brown stated the customer could make payments, payment arrangements, etc. through the portal. She added the feature also supported the Climate Action and Adaptation Plan (CAAP). Mr. Brown noted 70 percent of customers were currently enrolled in the City's paperless program. Mr. Jones went online to the Utility Bill Customer Portal and showed the registration page. She noted the customer would receive a confirmation when the registration was complete. She then explained the customer number and account number. Ms. Jones noted the account overview included usage, adding this was quick access to all bill information. She said the "View My Bill" would open a PDF that would show the customer bill just like the one received in the mail. Ms.

Jones stated it would show all past information, transaction history, payment information, etc. She advised the “Manage Account” page allowed for the set up for auto payments. The “Pay Bills” page allowed for the option to choose from different accounts. Ms. Jones noted there was an option to Opt Out on E-Billing as well, explaining this was the paperless program. Ms. Brown stated there was an area to post things such as reporting power outages along with a map to see if a particular area had already been reported. Mr. Fines asked if the username or email address was used for any purpose. Ms. Jones replied the customer could use an email address specifically for this purpose, adding this was used for notices only, no solicitations.

b) Utility Rebate Programs (Brandon Renaud)

Mr. Renaud introduced himself and Mr. Herman Black, noting they were on the commercial side of Utility Services. Mr. Black began by thanking the Veterans, then advised the focus would be on the rebate programs available. He noted the service offerings as:

- Building Efficiency Audits
- Custom Rebate Programs
- Infrared Thermography (IR) Audits
- Compressed Air Leak Detection Surveys
- Commercial Lighting Incentive Program (C.L.I.P.) - Lighting Upgrades

Mr. Black noted C.L.I.P.’s was a significant rebate program for commercial customers. He explained the building efficiency audits as evaluations of commercial or industrial buildings and systems. Mr. Black said there were mechanical HVAC evaluations and this would determine the age of the equipment. He advised manufacturing production expansions accompanied by retrofits of existing equipment were eligible for rebates. Mr. Black explained the IR audits reduced costly unscheduled shutdowns and prevented damage by detecting equipment failures in its early stages. He noted IR could also enhance productivity and save money by locating areas of poor thermal performance. Mr. Black noted the IR device looked for hot spots. He noted the lighting retrofits, stating many have taken advantage of this program. Mr. Black said commercial lighting represented 10 to 25 percent of facility electric costs. Mr. Fines asked about the number of commercial customers that had taken advantage of the rebate programs. Mr. Black noted it was mostly with the lighting rebate program but was close to 20, and CWL would verify the work had been completed. Mr. Renaud stated there had been hundreds of retrofits with 2019 being the largest year. Mr. Jensen asked if CWL had a list of approved contractors. Mr. Renaud replied CWL did not have a list of *approved* contractors but did have a list of contractor’s names. Mr. Renaud explained the residential side of the programs had been in the works for the last 30 years. He stated the program offerings as:

- Home Performance with Energy Star
- Air Conditioner (AC)/Heat Pump Rebates
- Home Evaluations

- Educational Services

Mr. Renaud said the market was still evolving with the AC/Heat Pump rebates. He said solar was now being looked into as well. Mr. Renaud noted the rebate amount was up to \$1200.00 per customer for insulation, air sealing, and sealing and insulating HVAC ductwork. He advised the home evaluations were extensive as this involved health safety also. Mr. Renaud said with the Enhanced Home Performance program, rebates were doubled for low-to-moderate income customers. Mr. Renaud noted CWL partnered with the Columbia Housing division and HUD financing was available for larger projects. Ms. Wenneker asked what the number one question was from customers. Mr. Renaud replied it was “My home is uncomfortable, what can I do?” He said customers were engaged and wanted to know what was available. Mr. Wenneker asked what rebate program was missing. Mr. Renaud replied there was a push for heat pump water heaters. Mr. Rigdon said he had worked with Mr. Renaud as a contractor and heat pump water heaters were more efficient and would peak at different times. He stated one in ten homes had heat pump water heaters. Mr. Rigdon said heat pump water heaters were more expensive on the front end but was more efficient than electric water heaters. Mr. Hasheider asked what the cost was. Mr. Rigdon said a 50 gallon heat pump water heater cost approximately \$1200.00 and an electric water heater cost between \$600.00 and \$800.00. Mr. Renaud replied technology was catching up and this could be something to consider. Mr. O’Connor stated he enjoyed the benefits of the programs, adding he felt the programs sent a good message to the citizens. He said as an engineer he had done installations for Boone and Callaway counties. Mr. O’Connor advised if CWL was interested in coordinating, consolidating, or streamlining the process, he was available to help with that.

c) Water Bond Projects Update (Ryan Williams)

Mr. Williams noted this was an update only. He said there were seven projects in three categories. The categories with projects were listed as:

- System Modernization
 1. Water Treatment Plant (WTP) Upgrade Phase I
 2. West Ash Upgrades
 3. Well Platforms
- System Reliability
 1. Elevated Storage - Southwest
 2. Pump Station - Southeast
- Replacement of Existing Infrastructure
 1. Main Relocation Program for Streets and Highways
 2. Water Main Replacement

Mr. Williams noted the WTP was the original from the early 1970’s. He said there was currently 18 wells with 15 being the older design with open well heads. Mr. Williams advised the newer wells had closed well heads. He provided a list of significant dates in the timeline beginning with the Ballot Issue on August 7, 2018 and

ending with the Request for Proposal (RFP). Mr. Williams advised the RFP should be released near the end of November, 2019. Mr. Hasheider asked when the bond sale was for 2019. Mr. Williams answered it was May 2, 2019 with funds appropriated in July, 2019. Mr. Storvick advised the first sale was for the West Ash Pump Station and it was fully funded. The second sale was to fund the WTP and improvements. He added the WTP was close to a two year project. Mr. Jensen asked if the “Notice to Proceed” meant the building commencement or the building design. Mr. Storvick answered it was the solicitation of bids for construction of the project. Mr. Jensen asked if it would be 2021 before construction began. Mr. Storvick replied yes. Mr. Fines asked about the completion date for the Southwest Pump Station. Mr. Williams replied that would be a 12 to 18 month project. Mr. Fines asked from when. Mr. Williams replied from 2022.

V. ELECTRIC RESOURCE PLAN UPDATE (Rachel Hassani)

Mr. Williams provided a short staff summary saying this has been in process for 18 months now to develop three sources of documents:

- Integrated Resource Plan (IRP)
- Master Plan
- Cost of Service (COS) Study

Mr. Williams explained there was an RFP and a decision had been made on two consultants, Siemens Industry and Horizon/Prime Group. He noted the Integrated Electric Resource and Master Plan (IERMP) task force had met with the consultants and will meet again. Mr. Williams advised all data requests to date had been issued. Mr. Hasheider asked what was to be expected from the IERMP and when studies would be available for the public. Mr. Williams stated Siemens Industry had a 48 week contract so it looked to be maybe September, 2020. Mr. Williams ended encouraging the public to attend all public meetings.

VI. GENERAL COMMENTS BY PUBLIC, MEMBERS AND STAFF

Mr. Conway stated there were a number of items he had and would give an overview of them. He asked that Ms. Kisch provide copies for the WLAB. First was the Cash Reserve, he said the available cash reserve needed to be expanded to meet the cash reserve target. He stated this would minimize the need for rate increases. Second was the computation of the Debt Service coverage. He said CWL used a Pilot for computation and used it to justify water rate increases. Mr. Conway said the industry standard did not follow this practice, Financial Advisors do not follow this practice, nor does Moody’s rating agency. He said it could be recommended that CWL do an annual Debt Service Coverage computation that included the off-balance sheet “debt” that reflected the fixed cost of the purchase power agreements. Third was the issuance of Water and Light funds. He said the City Charter, Article XII Section 103 stated “The powers of the board shall be solely advisory.” Mr. Conway stated upon further reading of Section 103, it said “It shall be empowered to visit and inspect the operation of the water and light system, to have access to all financial and other records pertaining to said system, and to require from any city department or

officer any information available concerning the same.” He advised the Finance department needed to let the WLAB know what was happening. Mr. Conway noted the WLAB should be questioning how things were spent, how much on water, how much on electric, etc. Fourth was the Water COS Study, saying storage should be included. Fifth was the Water Rate Increase. Mr. Conway provided the WLAB with documents including the following:

- Water & Light (W&L) Department Cash Reserve Policy
- Giving back to the community (water)
- Fire protection “Cost Functionalization” in the 2018 Water Cost of Service (COS) Study
- Water COS study (water storage)
- Irrigation demands not designed into water distribution system
- Water system Capital Improvement Program for FY20
- Commentary regarding the issuance of \$78,125,000 of water and electric system revenue refunding bonds, 2019 Series B
- Computation of the Debt Service Coverage

Mr. Windsor stated he had concerns on the Master Plan side. He said it seemed to be a concept that load was not growing in Columbia but the reality was the temperatures had not been that hot. Mr. Windsor advised the last system peak was in 2011 and that was when the night time temperatures did not fall below 81 degrees. He said in 2012, the temperatures had gotten up to 102 degrees and the peak had not been that high since. Mr. Windsor said demand was growing when the sun went down and the system should be one with resilience.

Ms. Read said she felt staff was being sidelined and should be more pro-active in these issues. She mentioned the Transmission line, saying Council had stopped what the citizens voted for. Ms. Read stated there were several substations that were overloaded due to that decision and it has been very costly. She said all operations, traditional and non-traditional, should be in front of the public. Ms. Read noted the WLAB chair needed to speak up and defend staff. Ms. Fallis responded to the transmission comment, saying the WLAB did have discussion on the cost lost if the transmission line was abandoned and they also looked at the accounting side.

Mr. Haim said utilities' move to renewables was good for sustainability. Advancing renewables should include climate action topics. We should be getting to high renewable penetration, including electrification. Incentivising low end electricity consumptions would be a good start.

Mr. Shultz stated he felt it was immoral charging those who could not pay. He said that was an aggressive tax.

Mr. Windsor brought up meters, saying meter changes were standard. He noted the

utility needed to install smart meters.

VII. BOARD DISCUSSION

None

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

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.