

DRAFT
Water and Light Advisory Board
October 25, 2023

A meeting of the Water and Light Advisory Board Public Input Meeting was called to order on Wednesday, October, 25, 2023 located at 701 E Broadway.

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

Staff: David Sorrell, Utilities Director; Sarah Talbert, Assistant Utilities Director; Shawn Carrico, Engineering Supervisor; Brandon Renaud, Utility Services Manager; Todd McVicker, Utility Services Supervisor; Ben Edes, Utility Services Supervisor; Erin Keys, Assistant Sewer & Storm Water Director; Matthew Nestor, Public Information Specialist; Christina Stock, Administrative Technician II

Public: Mark Haim, Howard Fenster, McKenzie Ortiz, Jim Windsor, Mike Murphy, Betsy Peters, Jay Hasheider

CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

Mr. Gregg Coffin called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

INTRODUCTIONS

Mr. Gregg Coffin did a round robin for introductions.

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

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

WLAB OVERVIEW – PURPOSE and AUTHORITY

Mr. Gregg Coffin explains the role of the WLAB and that the purpose is to advise on utility operations. They are advisory only and don't make decisions on how utilities operate.

CITY'S COMMUNITY SOLAR PRESENTATION

Mr. Brandon Renaud provides a presentation with slides on the Community Solar program, which will make solar energy accessible to owner occupied and rental properties for residential electric customers. Customers will be able to sign up for 1 block of solar from a combination of solar from the Truman and Bernadette Fields beginning January 1, 2024. For more information, please visit ColumbiaPowerPartners.com or call (573)874-CITY(2489).

UTILITY RATE AFFORDABILITY METRICS

Mr. David Switzer discusses Utility Rate Affordability Metrics and is looking at different ways of measuring rate structures and what the best fits are for the community. He states that there will be a meeting in City Hall 1A & 1B tomorrow 10/26/2023 at 1:00 p.m. to discuss metrics and different ways of affordability further.

ENERGY EFFICIENCY and DEMAND REDUCTION OPPORTUNITIES

Mr. Thomas Jensen provides a presentation with slides on IRA (Inflation Reduction Act) tax credits that are available for home owners through 2032. Percentages vary for improvements ranging from heating & cooling to water heating and windows and door tax credits. These tax credits can be coupled with the City of Columbia's Energy Efficiency rebate programs. For information on federal income tax credits and incentives for energy efficiency home improvements, please visit energystar.gov.

Mr. Todd McVicker provides a presentation with slides on the City's residential energy conservation programs. These include the Home Performance program with rebates of up to \$1,200 and loans of up to \$15,000 with interest rates as low as 1% for installing energy conservation measures. Rebates of up to \$1,600 for qualifying air conditioner and heat pump replacements and rebates of up to \$500 for qualifying electric vehicle chargers are available. Free residential energy assessments and income eligible energy conservation programs are available as well.

Mr. Ben Edes provides a presentation with slides on the City's commercial and industrial energy conservation programs. The highest participation is in the Lighting Incentive program, where participants replace inefficient lighting with LED lighting. These rebates are based on demand (kW) reduction. Rebates for qualifying air conditioner and heat pump replacements, motors and drives, and custom rebate programs are also available.

Other rebate programs include both residential and commercial solar installations, and water conservations programs like WaterSense certified toilet replacements and irrigation controllers and rain sensors at homes and businesses. Utility staff are evaluating new energy conservation programs as well. For information on all available residential and commercial programs and rebates, please visit ColumbiaPowerPartners.com or call (573)874-CITY(2489).

PUBLIC INPUT OPPORTUNITIES

- Regular Meetings – 2nd Wednesday of the month at 8:00 a.m.
- Email at wlabpublic@CoMo.gov

GENERAL COMMENTS BY PUBLIC, MEMBERS, AND STAFF

Mr. Gregg Coffin asks that comments be kept to 3 minutes. Mark Haim, Director of Mid-Missouri Peaceworks, speaks on behalf of the organization, and says that he gets the sense that we're in a handbasket and no one knows where we're going with the climate emergency and that it's rarely talked about. There is a need to cut greenhouse emissions with urgency in this decade, and the easiest way to reduce it is to go to 100% renewable energy. He urges people to please take it seriously and make a difference together. Mr. Jim Windsor states that if you want to encourage efficiency and climate change you need to do something significant. He thinks that loans and rebates are not a good idea, and thinks interest rates should change so that they decline. He is also concerned about electric vehicle chargers without AMI (advanced metering infrastructure) in place. Mr. Jay Hasheider states that when he was on the board, he had proposed that the utility put how much carbon dioxide is emitted on its bills, and that the mayor brought up the same idea. It was supposed to be looked at and brought into focus how much is emitted and nudged to do something. Mr. Thomas Jensen mentions that we use different fuel sources and that makes it harder to track carbon, though he thought it was a great idea to push forward.

NEXT MEETING DATE

Regular Meetings – 2nd Wednesday of the month at 8:00 a.m.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 7:00 p.m on a motion by Mr. Thomas Jensen with a second by Mr. Philip Fracica. Motion passed unanimously.