



City of Columbia, Missouri

Meeting Minutes

Water and Light Advisory Board

Wednesday, October 8, 2025

8:00 AM

Regular

701 E Broadway

Columbia, MO

Conference Room

1A/1B

I. CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Ryan Westwood called the meeting to order at 8:02 a.m.

Staff: Erin Keys, Utilities Director; Sarah Talbert, Assistant Director Utilities-Rates and Fiscal Planning; Maggie Jones, Engineering Supervisor-Water; Ron Wyble, Power Production Manager; Todd McVicker, Utility Services Manager; Ben Edes, Utility Services Supervisor; Matt Nestor, Public Information Specialist; Aubrey Turner, Public Information Specialist; Paige Adams, Public Information Specialist; Earl Kraus, Assistant City Counselor; Christina Weaver, Administrative Technician II

Public: David Huhman, Climate and Environment Commission; Mike Murphy, CoMo Buzz; Jim Windsor, Public

Present: 4 - Thomas Jensen, David Switzer, Philip Fracica and Ryan Westwood

Absent: 1 - Jennifer Coleman

II. INTRODUCTIONS

A round robin was done for introductions.

III. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Mr. Ryan Westwood made a motion to approve the agenda as submitted with a second by Mr. David Switzer. Motion passed unanimously.

IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The September 10, 2025 meeting minutes were approved as submitted with a motion by Mr. David Switzer and a second by Mr. Phillip Fracica. Motion passed unanimously.

Attachments: [Meeting Minutes Draft 09 10 25](#)

V. FINANCIAL REPORTS as available

Monthly Financial Reports

Mrs. Sarah Talbert presented the Monthly Financial Reports through August 2025. Overall electric revenues through August 2025 are up due to the overall billed usage being higher about 2.3% compared to FY 2024. Salaries and wages are higher due to

wage increases that the City Manager proposed with the FY 2025 budget and compression pay adjustments that were implemented in June 2024. Materials, supplies, and power purchase increased capacity costs for Prairie State compared to FY 2024 is about \$2.2 million; increased costs for our load (MISO) compared to FY 2024 is about \$16.6 million; higher LMP and DA are due to congestion and volatility of the generation in MISO and weather. Services and miscellaneous are lower due to repair and modification of Unit 4 at CEC in FY 2024. August 2-25 represents 91.67% of the budget year. Electric operating revenues are currently 95.07% of the budget; same time last year was at 95.00% of the budget. Electric operating expenses are currently at 89.03% of the budget; same time last year was at 81.96% of the budget.

Overall water revenues through August 2025 are up due to the overall billed usage being higher about 1.06% compared to FY 2024. Salaries and wages are higher due to wage increases that the City Manager proposed with the FY 2025 budget and compression pay adjustments that were implemented in June 2024. Materials and supplies are higher due to the purchase of water meters. Services and miscellaneous are lower due to contractual services for street cut repairs and lime hauling in FY 2024. August 2025 represents 91.67% of the budget year. Water operating revenues are currently at 87.04% of the budget; same time last year was at 93.08% of the budget. Water operating expenses are currently at 74.26% of the budget; same time last year was at 72.21% of the budget.

Attachments: [Electric Statements-August 2025](#)
[Water Statements-August 2025](#)
[FY 2025 Summary Change in Billed usage for Water and Electric](#)

VI. DIRECTOR'S REPORTS

a) Introduce Water Irrigation Ordinance

Mrs. Maggie Jones introduced the irrigation ordinance draft. The main points of the draft are: The Limitations and Watering Schedule, Exemptions and Exceptions, Requirements for Automatic Irrigation, and Penalties. As for the timeline of the ordinance, the plan is to have a discussion about the draft in November or December and adjustments will be made based on the comments and suggestions provided, then there will be an interested parties meeting early 2026, it will be presented to City Council in spring of 2026 and hopefully go into effect FY 2027 (October 2026). Mr. David Huhman asked the board what problem the irrigation ordinance is trying to fix. Mr. David Switzer responded that the primary problem is over-irrigation in the southwest area as they've had issues with water pressure due to how much they irrigate in the area. The solutions to the problem are either building a water tower there, which is going to be expensive for everyone, or to put an ordinance in place that will require them to time their irrigation.

Attachments: [Irrigation Ordinance - DRAFT](#)

b) Monthly Power Cost Adjustment (PCA) Report

Mrs. Sarah Talbert presented the Monthly Power Cost Adjustment Report through August 2025. The PCA has been capped out since February. She expressed that the mayor and some council members have mentioned interest in bringing back the PCA to them since it has been capped. The board discussed the PCA and possibly taking it to council to adjust the cap.

Through August 2025, purchased power is off by about \$10 million from what was forecasted, and energy sold is off about 22 million from what was forecasted.

Attachments: [PCA Board Report - August 2025](#)

c) Council Item Update

Mrs. Sarah Talbert discussed the council item updates.

At the council meeting on September 2, 2025, Council Bill 184-25, Council Bill 221-25, and Resolution 128-25 were approved. There was Public Hearing 26-25. Council Bill 183-25 was tabled for a vote on September 15. Council Bill 232-25 and Council Bill 238-25 were introduced.

At the council meeting on September 15, Council Bill 183-25 and Council Bill 232-25 were adopted. Council Bill 238-25 and Resolution 130-25 were approved. Council Bill 248-25 was introduced. Report 48-25 was presented.

At the council meeting on October 6, Council Bill 248-25, Resolution 136-25, and Resolution 137-25 were approved.

Attachments: [Council Item Updates - September 2025](#)

VII. CHAIRMAN'S REPORTS

a) Public Input Meeting

Mrs. Sarah Talbert announced that the public input meeting will be October 29 at 6 pm in the Council Chambers in City Hall. The board members reviewed and finalized the agenda for the meeting.

Attachments: [Agenda Draft](#)

b) Advisory Board Report to Council

The board reviewed the Advisory Board Report for City Council draft. Mr. David Switzer recommended some changes to the language regarding the rate increase. The draft will be discussed further at the next meeting.

Attachments: [WLAB FY2025 Annual Report](#)

c) WLAB 2025/2026 Goals

The board reviewed their FY 2026 drafted goals. The draft will be discussed more at the next meeting.

Attachments: [WLAB Goals](#)

d) Rolling Calendar

Mrs. Sarah Talbert presented the rolling calendar and some changes were made.

Attachments: [WL Rolling Agenda October](#)

VIII. PUBLIC EMAIL COMMENTS

None.

IX. GENERAL COMMENTS BY PUBLIC, MEMBERS AND STAFF

Mr. Jim Windsor reviewed the City's budget and received a large Excel file that he condensed into a table that he provided to the board. His big concern is how much utilities are paying for administrative charges. Water and Light pays 27.8% of the general administrative fee, and utilities as a whole pay over 70%, and any general fund department pays nothing to those. Police and Fire utilize the Law Department, Finance Department, and Human Resources. Additionally, most of everything east of Hwy 63 and south of the interstate is Boone Electric and the Water District, where there are a lot of customers that are City residents that pay nothing into this outside of the sewer and solid waste portions. Electric and Water are basically paying to provide all of these services to the citizens of Columbia and he believes it is a problem. In addition, there are some circular charges; for instance, beyond the utilities, the airport is next on the administrative fee then it's IT. If you look at the IT charges, Water and Light pays a substantial amount of that charge. It's the same way with building utility charges and janitorial service; it all adds up where Water and Light is paying a substantial amount for the operation of the City that gets passed on to us as rate payers. He would hope that the board will ask for more clarity on some of this because they talk about rate increases that are going to happen in the future and affordability, and all of this goes toward the base charge. It needs to be spread out and sales tax and property tax needs to be paying for some of this stuff, and otherwise there needs to be a very clear justification for it. Additionally, he would like a budget that people can understand, and the City's budget needs to be more transparent. He also urges the board to say something about the annexation of the water plant before the \$900 thousand hits. We don't need more water rate increases that are just to feed into the general fund; it's easy to raise rates compared to passing a sales tax or property tax. He also mentioned that a few years ago, the board had a goal related to rental property efficiency that he urges them to bring back.

Mr. David Switzer mentioned that Mr. Jim Windsor had previously brought up at a council meeting that the public should have a say in the moment on things that are voted on during board and committee meetings. He would suggest following council rule and limiting the amount of time that each person gets to speak, specifically when the board is voting on a recommendation for council.

Mr. Thomas Jensen suggested that any time there's a handout or the scope and scale of the comment is to that extent, it deserves a spot on the agenda and recommends they should apply to get on the normal agenda if the comment isn't going to be brief. He also mentioned that there is new sodium-ion technology for batteries, and the costs are a fraction of anything that involves lithium. It would dramatically change some of the strategies we talk about. Within 3 years we will see a lot of companies

bringing products to market.

Mr. Phillip Fracica mentioned that he noticed Planning and Zoning had some re-zoning for a site for a potential data center, and he asked if staff had been contacted by anyone or if there's any movement on that side of things that they can speak to.

Mrs. Erin Keys said they get contacted by them off and on, and often inform them that the City doesn't have 100 megawatts to spare so it's unclear what they're planning to do with the site. Even if the data centers were able to generate their own electricity, it would be a large draw on water, so the City is being careful with how they approach data centers.

She also commented that, in addition the IRP kickoff, there was also a kickoff with AMI. The City contracted with Ameresco, which is an energy service company that does performance-based contracting. They are going to be doing work at the ARC and the Armory to look at what they can do to make them more energy efficient, and they're going to do an audit to determine the potential savings on water.

The City has recently received 2 solar proposals and would like to add an agenda item to the rolling calendar to discuss them with the board.

X. NEXT MEETING DATE

November 12, 2025

XI. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 9:18 a.m. on a motion by Mr. David Switzer and a second by Mr. Ryan Westwood. 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 or Jason West at Jason.West@como.gov.

Members of the public may attend any open meeting. For requests for accommodations related to disability, please call 573.874.CITY (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: 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.