



City of Columbia, Missouri

Meeting Minutes

Water and Light Advisory Board

Wednesday, January 10, 2024
8:00 AM

Regular

701 E Broadway
Conference Room
1A/1B

I. CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Coffin called the meeting to order at 8:01 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; Chelsea Miller, Treasurer; Shedonna Shivers, Assistant Treasurer; Madison Jones-Smith, Administrative Technician I

Council Members: Betsy Peters

Public: Jim Windsor, Mike Murphy, Dick Parker

Present: 4 - Thomas Jensen, David Switzer, Gregg Coffin and Amanda Jacobs

Absent: 1 - Philip Fracica

II. INTRODUCTIONS

A round robin was done for introductions.

III. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

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

IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The December 12, 2023 EV Training minutes were approved with changes on a motion by Ms. Amanda Jacobs and a second by Mr. Tom Jensen.

The December 13, 2023 meeting minutes were approved as submitted with a motion by Mr. Tom Jensen and a second by Ms. Amanda Jacobs.

Attachments: [Meeting Minutes Draft 12 12 23 EV Training](#)

[Meeting Minutes Draft 12 13 23](#)

V. PAYIT (AUTOPAY) UPDATE

Ms. Miller from the finance department gave an update about the City's new online payment system, Payit. She stated that in some phases, Payit is live. In the next few months, starting about February first, they will begin to roll out the autopay phase of the launching process. She discussed the plan to send out some emails and mail to notify customers of the switch and letting them know they will have to switch from the in-house

system of autopay and bank draft to Payit. Ms. Miller then stated they are working towards creating notifications for autopay that would let the customer know when they have a bill posting, notify them when it's almost time for the auto payment, and when the payment is pulled out of the account. She also stated that they are working towards getting autopay through a debit or credit card along with the bank drafting option.

VI. FINANCIAL REPORTS (as available)

a) Monthly Financial Report

Ms. Talbert stated that the month-to-date electric operating revenues and expenses were up in November 2023 as compared to November 2022. She also stated that the year-to-date values for electric were also up in November 2023 by about 1.4 million as compared to November 2022. Ms. Talbert discussed that the month-to-date water operating revenues and expenses were up in November 2023 than in November 2022. She also stated that the year-to-date numbers were also higher than in November 2022. Ms. Talbert discussed the month-to-date and year-to-date actuals for water and electric and stated that the water operating expenses and revenues were lower compared to the proposed budget, the same going for electric. She stated that the city was okay on their budget. Ms. Talbert also provided the 13-month rolling comparisons for both electric and water. She stated that for both water and electric the expenses for November 2023 were higher than in 2022. She also stated that the 13-month rolling comparisons for the water and electric operating revenues were also up in November of 2023 than in November 2022. Ms. Talbert also stated that the monthly and annual water and electric usage billed in Fiscal Year 23 was higher compared to Fiscal Year 22.

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

VII. NEW BUSINESS

a) Line Extension Policy Discussion

Mr. Coffin discussed the Line Extension Policy and noted that the board could look it over and review and have a discussion at a later meeting. He stated that the idea would need policies to be put in place and an ordinance would need to be drafted. Mr. Windsor noted that an ordinance was originally drafted, but that engineering thought it was too much and there needed to be some sort of a flat fee instead of a rate.

Attachments: [Prime Group - Columbia Water and Light Line Extension](#)
[Utility Financial Solutions - Columbia MO Electric Line Extension](#)

VIII. DIRECTOR'S REPORTS

a) Annual Engineering Fiscal Reports

Ms. Talbert provided the engineering fiscal reports for both water and electric. She asked if there were any questions over it. Mr. Coffin expressed that he would like to see a ratio of underground to overhead KV distribution. Mr. Coffin asked in regards to the water report why the total amount of water supplied to Columbia's distribution system is lower compared to the amount of water pumped from eighteen different gravel-packed wells near the McBaine Water Treatment plant. Mr. Sorrell stated that it is due to metering and losses.

Attachments: [FY 2023 Electric Fiscal Report](#)
[FY 2023 Water Fiscal Report](#)

b) Training/Tours

Ms. Talbert asked the board for input on what types of training the board would like to participate in as well as what facilities they would want to tour. It was discussed that there was interest in a tour of the McBaine Water Treatment Plant. Ms. Talbert stated that originally there were sometimes meetings of this nature off site at a particular facility, but that legal did not want the board to have meetings off site anymore. Mr. Coffin expressed that the tour should happen when it is warmer in April and May and that he wanted to see a before and after of the upgrades that are scheduled to take place. Mr. Coffin also expressed an interest in a potential tour of Truman Solar. He also discussed wanting to have Automated Metering Infrastructure (AMI) training in the future. Mr. Jensen expressed that in the past they had taken accounting training and wondered if that could be a potential training as well.

c) Council Item Update

Ms. Talbert discussed council item updates for the last few meetings. She stated that Council Bill 292-23 authorizing a joint funding agreement with the City of Columbia and the U.S. Geological Survey for water resource investigations was approved at the December 4th meeting. She stated at the council meeting on December 18th, Jim Windsor had a scheduled public comment asking what goals were met by the July 1, 2023 electric rate increase. She also stated that there was a discussion about amending the FY 2024 annual budget in which Water and Light had the Water CIP and Electric CIP to amend. Ms. Talbert stated there was no meeting on January 2nd. She also stated that there were two outstanding items for the council to consider, the annual WLAB report and FY 2024 goals and Authorizing the city manager to enter into an agreement for Deed of Water Utility Easement and Related agreements.

Attachments: [Council Item Updates - December 2023](#)

IX. CHAIRMAN'S REPORTS

a) Follow-Up On Rate Affordability Metrics Meeting

Ms. Talbert stated that the board should reach out to Mr. Manny Teodoro to see when a good time for him would be to come and give his presentation to the board. She asked Mr. Switzer if she needed to be the one to reach out and he said yes. The board decided that they should try for the February 14th meeting as the meeting for Mr. Teodoro to give the presentation, otherwise they would push it to March or April.

b) Review Renewable Ordinance

Mr. Coffin discussed the renewable energy ordinance. He stated that the council was giving the advisory board a chance to amend the ordinance. Mr. Coffin then asked the board to name their pros and cons of the ordinance. Ms. Jacobs, Mr. Switzer, and Mr. Jensen all expressed that the wording and the dates were all too confusing and or not flexible enough. Ms. Jacobs stated that it needed to be more flexible in order to account for the set backs that are out of their control. Mr. Jensen stated that the ordinance opened up a discussion every month and that the word renewable was not a good way to describe what the city is going towards because landfill gasses were seen as renewable. He stated there needed to be some clarifying words in order to make the ordinance feasible and flexible. Mr. Switzer stated that goals can be a good thing, but that goals that are out of the control of the people that have to reach them are hard. He stated that there needed to be more feasible and attainable goals within the ordinance itself. Mr. Coffin stated he would like to hear the input of staff at the next meeting about this ordinance in order to see the impact. He stated that the next steps were to read over the ordinance and start to make changes as needed and draft up a new one.

Attachments: [2023 Renewable Energy Plan FINAL](#)

[City Renewable Energy Ordinance](#)

c) Rolling Calendar

Ms. Talbert discussed the rolling calendar and added a few things to the February meeting schedule. She stated that they would revisit the renewable ordinance, have the rate affordability metrics presentation, and finalize a date for the tour of the McBaine treatment plant.

Attachments: [WL Rolling Agenda January](#)

X. PUBLIC EMAIL COMMENTS

None.

XI. GENERAL COMMENTS BY PUBLIC, MEMBERS AND STAFF

Mr. Windsor stated that 120 years ago Columbia purchased the water and light utility and that he felt these anniversaries needed to be recognized. He stated that Darrell Dunlap and Howard Electric could speak on their experiences with renewables and state the positives and pitfalls. Mr. Windsor then stated that the cap for renewable energy was blown past by 60 percent in 2022 and that it would be fiscally irresponsible to do anything with renewables or the fossil fuel contracts until they know about what the contract would cost them in the long run.

Mr. Parker stated that there were seven days worldwide where the temperature did not increase by 1.5 percent. He also stated that he believed that MISO and renewable energy could replace fossil fuels. Mr. Parker also commended the board for taking action.

XII. NEXT MEETING DATE

February 14, 2024

XIII. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 10:15 A.M. on a motion by Mr. David Switzer with a second by Mr. Thomas Jensen.

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)