

**Lanesboro Public Utilities
Regular Meeting
Tuesday, June 21, 2022 10:00 a.m.
Lanesboro Community Center Meeting Room and Zoom**

Present: Jon Pieper and Brian Roelofs

Absent: Elliot Riggott

Staff/Council Present: None

Visitors: Bonita Underbakke, Council Member Mindy Albrecht-Benson, Supervisor Jerod Wagner, and Darla Taylor

Regular Meeting:

Commissioner Pieper called the regular meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.

- A. Public Comments:** No comments were made.
- B. Agenda:** Member Pieper motioned to approve the agenda with the removal of a tour of the facilities. Member Roelofs seconded the motion. The tour will be rescheduled for the July meeting. Motion carried with all in favor.
- C. Consent Agenda:** Member Pieper motioned to approve the Consent agenda as presented. Member Roelofs seconded the motion. Motion carried with all in favor.
 - Minutes of the Regular Meeting, May 17, 2022
 - Accounts Payable
- D. Wastewater Treatment Facility Update:** Contractors have run into pockets of rock while attempting to bore for the discharge line under the DNR Bike Trail. Engineers are working with the DNR to request permission to open up the trail in order to install the line. Although the necessary piping has arrived, the switchgear for operating the plant has still not been delivered.
- E. Staff Update:** Supervisor Wagner noted the following:
 - A comparison to previous years shows the current wholesale power cost is excessive. This is believed to be due to the decommissioning of the Genoa Power Plant, therefore causing higher traffic on the lines, which drives up the cost.
 - The project to upgrade the diesel generator is still underway. Wagner received a call on May 27 noting supply chain issues as well as a surge in service requests.
 - There has been a significant reduction in concerns with the existing Wastewater Treatment Facility since the correction for the storm water connections at the current Merchants Bank building. There are most likely still other buildings that need to be corrected.
 - Engineers have noted that although we currently land apply a dry application from the Wastewater Treatment Facility on 5 acres, a change will be required for the new plant. The design of the new facility did not allow for the installation of drying beds, and therefore liquid land application will be used going forward. In order to meet requirements, we would need 20 acres of land to apply annually.
 - Total capacity figures from UMMEG showed that Lanesboro was 557 long, therefore a sale of the excess capacity to Cumberland, WI has been initiated. The total revenue to be received from the sale is \$13,139.07.
 - We have received notice that we may be called on to run the generator, however at this time have not been given direct orders to do so. There is also discussion that the annual

surge tests be changed to quarterly. More information to be shared as discussions continue.

- Members shared the following questions:
 - i. Are there other areas in which we can cut electrical costs in City buildings or facilities? Examples included lightbulbs, tree plantings for shade, and smart thermostats for heating and cooling. Wagner will investigate.
 - ii. Do we have current estimated costs for running the generator? Wagner will reach out to UMMEG to request help in determining that figure.
 - iii. Do we have access to current market rate figures? Wagner noted that although we can see those figures, it is required that we provide a 48 hour notice prior to starting the generator.

F. City Council Update: Member Albrecht-Benson noted that the Council had approved the contract for a Street and Utility improvement project with Generation X Construction. The project will need to be split between this year and next due to the School's schedule and material availability. We are currently waiting on an updated project schedule. Wagner noted that the electrical portion of the project for the Coffee/Beacon/Rochelle loop has already begun.

Regular Business

A. Sewer Service Charges for Multi-Unit Structures: Current ordinance were reviewed. It was discussed that for every utility account a base charge would be assessed, noting that there are apartments in town that do not have a separate utility account and share a meter, and therefore are not assessed a base charge. Future applications will be considered on an individual basis.

B. Continued Business:

a. Capital Projects:

- i. **Carbon Neutrality:** Supervisor Wagner noted that at a recent Dairyland meeting he was introduced to the new CEO, who noted he wanted to hear from all facilities, no matter the classification. Also at this meeting representatives from Ashley Furniture offered to share a presentation including research showing that although renewable energy is beneficial, the impact of decommissioning coal plants has led to an over correction. Wagner also noted that other communities are holding back on battery implementation.
- ii. **Drip Lines Investigations:** No updates were available.
- iii. **Storm Sewer Investigations:** No new updates were available.
- iv. **Land Acquisition:** No additional updates were available.

b. Miscellaneous:

- i. **Car Charging Station:** MiEnergy shared that as a part of their pilot program, they learned that car charging stations could not be contained within a garage space, they had to be installed on the exterior of a structure.
- ii. **Capital Outlay Budgeting:** Members requested updated cost estimates for a 10 year capital improvement plan to assist with budgeting for 2023.

Next Meeting: Tuesday, July 19, 2022 at 10:00 a.m.

Adjourn Regular Meeting: Motion was made by Commissioner Pieper to adjourn the regular meeting of the Public Utilities Commission at 10:30 a.m. Motion was seconded by Commissioner Roelofs. Motion carried with all in favor.

Respectfully Submitted,

Michele Peterson
City Administrator/Clerk