

City of Sheboygan  
2020-11-16

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BOARD OF WATERWORKS COMMISSIONERS - 3: 30 PM - (Monday, November 16, 2020)Generated by Joe Trueblood on Tuesday, November 17, 2020

Members in Attendance:

President Gerald Van De Kreeke, Secretary Mark Smith, Member Tom Howe (all remote)

Staff:

Superintendent Joe Trueblood

(remote)

1. OPENING OF MEETINGPresident Van De Kreeke called the meeting to order at 3: 30 PM.

1.1 Pledge of AllegianceEveryone honored the flag of the United States.

2. MINUTES

2.1 Approval of minutes from the October 19, 2020 meetingCommissioner Smith made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Howe, to approve the minutes of the October 19, 2020 meeting.

Motion passed unanimously.

3. REPORTS

3.1 Financial reportsSuperintendent reviewed the reports prepared by Utility Accountant Gottsacker.

The water rate increase authorized by WI PSC went into effect on October 1, 2020.

Commissioner Smith made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Howe, to accept the financial reports as presented.

Motion carried unanimously.

3.2 Superintendent's report including operations, construction-maintenance, and customer relations/fiscal Superintendent reviewed the reports prepared by the supervisory team.

October water production was down 2.5 % from last year.

One water main break occurred, along with other maintenance work.

The number of paid accounts continued to be reduced from last year, probably due to absence of water disconnections.

Commissioner Smith made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Howe, to accept the Superintendent's report as presented.

Motion carried unanimously.

#### 4. ITEMS PREVIOUSLY HELD OVER FOR DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION

4.1 Raw Water Improvements (RWI) project Superintendent noted that preliminary design work concluded last month.

Staff continues to review the possibility of a FEMA/BRIC grant to pay for the shoreline protection construction and/or the entire RWI project.

Superintendent noted that after discussion with a consultant, staff does not think there is enough time to apply for FEMA/BRIC

for 2021 on the entire RWI project.

However, there is time to apply for the shoreline protection portion of the project, and work continues to proceed on this.

One major factor flagged by the state officials is the benefit/cost analysis.

Preliminary information on this has been submitted to the state, and they offered to do a preliminary analysis to determine if the project merits further review.

It could still be possible to apply for the entire RWI project in 2022, but

there is no certainty that a larger project would have a greater benefit outcome.

Superintendent noted that the amount of funding in FEMA/BRIC is about \$600 M spread across the entire country for 2021, and possibly \$1 B for 2022.

## 5. ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION

5.1 Review RWI final design proposal Superintendent noted that the Utility embarked on an underwater survey for the project in 2004, not long after severe icing events.

Over time, the RWI project fell below several others in priority, but those have been completed in the intervening years.

Several years ago, the Utility hired CDM Smith to conduct a feasibility study of the RWI, which included both site and technical analysis.

The Utility then engaged CDM Smith to complete preliminary design based on results from the feasibility study.

CDM Smith had teamed with Donohue & Associates, along with Collins Engineering, to complete the work.

Superintendent noted a high level of communication and interaction throughout preliminary design, which lead to consideration of many options.

Superintendent felt that CDM Smith had performed at a high level and completed preliminary design on time and within the engineering budget.

Due to the complexity of the project, and a number of variables that had to be determined during preliminary design, CDM Smith had given an estimate of detailed design engineering costs at that earlier time.

Now, with preliminary design completed, CDM Smith has provided a proposal for the detailed design and bidding phases of the project.

Superintendent reviewed the detailed proposal including a complete breakdown of hours and chargeable rates.

About \$400 k involved work done by Donohue & Associates.

Another \$285 k was allocated to STS for bathymetric survey and 5 borings into

the lake bottom.

Superintendent noted that both he and Operations Supervisor Swearingen had reviewed the proposal in detail.

Superintendent could not report anything that seemed out of line or unnecessary, with the possible exception of the bathymetric survey and borings.

It would be possible to bid the project using the data from 2004, but significant change could have taken place and the final layout location is slightly different than anticipated in 2004.

Commissioner Smith agreed that the uncertainty involving the old data would be offset by additional cost from the bidders.

Overall the engineering work would focus on a 54 " intake pipeline at a length of 7,000 LF, a shorewell

with 4 low lift VFD/pumps, two natural gas backup generators, a chemical feed station, all interconnecting yard and site work, along with a shoreline protection system.

Superintendent noted two optional work elements:

one is a 1,000 LF emergency intake and the second is a heater/camera system.

Although these are both optional, a second intake pipeline will be needed at some point in the not distant future when the 1959 36 " intake pipeline reaches the end of its working lifetime.

Superintendent stated that the heater system is really needed because it will not be as feasible to backflush the new intake pipeline due to the much larger volume in the shorewell and the pipeline itself.

Without the heater, the Utility would have no means of deterring ice.

Commissioner Smith noted routine maintenance on a heater system would be ongoing.

After further discussion, Commissioner Smith made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Howe, to accept the proposal from CDM Smith

for detailed design and bidding at a cost not to exceed \$1,997,829.00 along with

\$47,380.00 for emergency intake design and \$35,060.00 for intake heater and camera system design.

Motion carried unanimously.

5.2 Review annual chemical bids Superintendent reviewed the tabulation of chemical bids prepared by Supervisor Swearingen.

Three bids were received for low iron aluminum sulfate from Chemtrade, US Alco, and Affinity at \$273.00, \$449.12, and \$298.00 per dry ton;

for food grade aluminum sulfate from Chemtrade at \$283.00 per dry ton;

for fluoride from Hawkins at \$2,174.00 per dry ton;

for sodium hypochlorite from Rowell, Vertex, and Hydrite at \$0.799, \$0.98, and \$0.685 per gallon;

and for liquid phosphate from Hawkins and Carus at \$4.89 and \$5.876 per gallon.

Commissioner Van De Kreeke made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Smith, to approve all low bids, including the food grade aluminum sulfate bid.

Motion carried unanimously.

5.3 Review bankruptcies and write-offs Superintendent reviewed a listing of proposed write-offs prepared by Accountant Gottsacker

for cases involving bankruptcy and uncollectible accounts.

Commissioner Smith made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Howe, to approve the write-off of water charges totaling \$751.

34.

Motion carried unanimously.

5.4 Update on covid response Superintendent advised that several staff members have tested positive for covid

but did not impact the workplace.

All safety protocols remain in place.

Departments remain isolated from each other.

Superintendent stated confidence in the Utility's ability to maintain the core mission of supplying safe drinking water to the community.

Utility staff members have responded early and in ongoing fashion to the pandemic situation.

5.5 Review late payment charges Superintendent reviewed an updated order from WI PSC stating that the moratorium on water disconnections will continue in place until April 15, 2021.

However, each Utility has an option to begin imposing late payment fees, which would then become due at the April 15, 2021 deadline.

Superintendent stated that Accountant Gottsacker had prepared an estimate of about \$27,000 in lost revenue if the late fees are waived.

Commissioner Smith noted that the fees would have to be waived in a non-discriminatory manner, but that a waiver can have the appearance of rewarding customers who might simply choose not to pay on time even if they have the means to do so.

There was some discussion about whether or not the City would waive late fees on the sanitary sewer and garbage/recycling fees.

Commissioner Smith asked Superintendent Trueblood for an opinion on the matter, and Superintendent stated that the economic impact on many customers is real and he is in favor of extending the waiver.

Commissioner Van De Kreeke noted the potential dollar amount is relatively small.

Commissioner Van De Kreeke made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Smith, to continue to waive the late fees as allowed by WI PSC.

Motion carried unanimously.

5.6 PSC Code changes None other than the extension of the disconnection moratorium.

5.7 Approval of vouchers Commissioner Van De Kreeke made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Smith, to approve the general vouchers of

\$363,161.47 and gross payroll of \$239,596.  
29.

Motion carried unanimously.

## 6. PERSONNEL

6.1 Review wage proposal President Van De Kreeke stated that he had reviewed Superintendent's proposal regarding wage increases for 2021 and reviewed information on the impact of the pandemic on the local community.

While normally the Utility has used a merit wage system since dissolution of the bargaining group in 2011, this year all Utility staff performed at a high level throughout the pandemic situation.

The Commissioners commended all Utility staff for their efforts at serving the community and reacting early to the pandemic.

Commissioner Smith made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Howe, to approve a wage increase of the Midwest CPI plus 1 % for 2021 for all staff.

Motion carried unanimously.

## 7. NEXT MEETING

7.1 Next meeting will take place on Monday, December 21, at 3: 30 PM.

## 8. ADJOURN

8.1 Motion to Adjourn Commissioner Van De Kreeke made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Smith, to adjourn at 4: 35 PM.

Motion carried unanimously.