

## **REGULAR MEETING OF THE KIMBERLY WATER COMMISSION**

**JULY 28, 2009**

Chairman Price called the meeting to order at 4:30 p.m. Members present for roll call were Commissioner Johnson, Strick and Chairman Price. Commissioner Stienen was absent. Also present was Operator Gerrits.

Commissioner Johnson moved, Strick seconded the motion to approve the minutes of the June 30<sup>th</sup> meeting with corrections. The motion carried by unanimous vote of the Commission.

The Commission discussed the request of the Wisconsin DNR to institute and carry out a cross connection control plan. The first issue was to control water loading stations, of which we utilize hydrants to fill village and contractors vehicles. Effective immediately, a hydrant at the Street Department Garage has been equipped with a meter and backflow preventer. This will be the only device available for water loading. A small building was built around the hydrant to provide some security, and a sign up station for water users.

Regarding cross connections, Administrator Hermus noted that an ordinance was adopted in 2005. However a formal plan was never developed to meet the new requirements. Information was received from neighboring communities regarding their programs and used to develop the outline for a program for our utility. Several issues were discussed in detail, including how to conduct the inspections and the costs of backflow preventers for residential use. After a long discussion, it was agreed that the utility will notify the DNR that we will begin a comprehensive program this fall to coincide with meter changes. A program will be developed by staff over the next month for adoption by the Commission. For instance, when cross connection sources are found, the utility could provide backflow preventers. This will prevent follow-up visits and provide some customer service. The devices cost about \$7.80 each. However, it was questioned if more than two backflow preventers are required, should we charge for extra units? If further work is required for more complicated devices such as boiler furnaces and lawn watering systems, a notice will be given to the home owner and follow-up inspections will be required after the fixes are installed. It was felt all commercial and industrial will have to conduct their own inspections and supply the utility with a report of compliance from a licensed plumber, or use a utility supplied inspector at a cost of about \$135. Staff cannot conduct commercial or industrial due to plumbing standards. This will be researched further with neighboring communities.

Staff has been trained at water conferences. They will also shadow a neighboring community as they conduct inspections to get a feel for the process and time requirement. Staff was concerned with the time requirement to conduct these inspections and compile the data. Meter changes take about 15 minutes, and they were told this inspection will add about ½ hour to each home visit.

Commissioner Strick moved, Johnson seconded the motion to proceed with inspections this fall to conduct about 50, and have staff formulate a formal policy incorporating our providing

backflow preventers to residential customers to prevent re-inspections. Staff will formalize a program for discussion next month. The motion carried by unanimous vote of the Commission.

The Commission reviewed the July 8<sup>th</sup> letter from the Wisconsin DNR regarding the utilities noncompliance regarding required monitoring. Staff was taking samples from raw water taps rather than from its entry points. Staff discovered the error this spring and has already corrected the last sample (which came back OK). However, because of the error, we must notify all customers of the failure to perform required monitoring. The staff is recommending that we choose option B, which will require a paragraph in next year's Consumer Confidence Report. The Commission agreed with this corrective action and a note will be placed in the file for next years CCR to include the notice.

Administrator Hermus noted the meeting held with Commissioner Strick and Johnson, and representatives of Little Chute's management staff and Commissioners regarding the use of contract services for their utility. The Little Chute Commission had nothing but positive results from this service, and could not think of any negative impact on the utility or its customers. However, Little Chute had a union shop prior to contracting, and several of their issues were due to staffing. Also, Little Chute uses a Director of Public Works to oversee the utility, and Kimberly does not. There was a lot of discussion regarding staff levels and manpower compared to our utility. Operator Gerrits noted that comp time is having a negative impact on the utility. There are also technology issues which could be used to free up time. Energenics has been contacted regarding auto readings for all deep wells. Currently, readings are done manually seven days a week. A valve turner could also be purchased which would greatly reduce time to annually turn valves and reduce injuries (we have had three work comp claims in the past several years due to turning stuck valves.) The loss of the mill water sales is also having an impact on the utility.

The Commission also questioned Operator Gerrits regarding advancing in the utility. Mr. Gerrits noted that he is very confident in his technical ability; however the reporting requirements are above him. He also is not willing to relocate, knowing we require our superintendent to reside in the community. He was also concerned with the stresses of running the utility.

After a long discussion, the Commission asked Administrator Hermus to meet with MCO regarding management of the utility, keeping the two operators. Also investigate how the utility could be staffed more efficiently, including overtime for water breaks, meter reading, summer helpers, etc. Obviously, after only a couple of days the operators have found a couple of fixes to save time and resources for the utility. Administrator Hermus was told to make sure to cover all options. If a report is not ready by next month, it can be discussed at a later date. With Mr. Rochon assisting the staff, we are not pressed for time, and the Commission is more concerned with making the right decision.

Commissioner Strick moved, Johnson seconded the motion to approve the bills and claims for the month of July. The motion carried by unanimous vote of the Commission.

Commissioner Johnson moved, Strick seconded the motion to approve the financial statements for the month of July as presented. The motion carried by unanimous vote of the Commission.

Administrator Hermus noted that the flow sites are still operating. The iron results have not changed over the past month. This will continue to be monitored over the next few weeks.

Commissioner Johnson moved, Strick seconded the motion to adjourn into closed session per the posted Agenda. The motion carried by unanimous vote of the Commission.

Commissioner Strick moved, Johnson seconded the motion to reconvene into open session. The motion carried by unanimous vote of the Commission

Commissioner Strick moved, Johnson seconded the motion to adjourn. The motion carried by unanimous vote of the Commission.

Rick J. Hermus  
Secretary