

**MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING
UTILITY SERVICE BOARD
NOVEMBER 18TH, 2024**

The Regular Meeting of the Utility Service Board of the City of Jasper, Indiana, was held in the Council Chambers of City Hall in Jasper at 7:00 PM on Monday, November 18th, 2024.

UPON CALL OF THE ROLL, THE FOLLOWING WERE PRESENT:

<u>ROLL CALL:</u>	<u>In Person</u>	<u>By Zoom</u>
Roger Seng – Chairman	☒	☐
Tara Eckman – Secretary	☒	☐
Steve Hale – Wastewater Commissioner	☒	☐
Bibianna Green – Gas Commissioner	☒	☐
Brian Hostetter – Electric Commissioner	☒	☐
Phil Schmidt – Water Commissioner	☒	☐

ALSO PRESENT:

Ed Hollinden – Wastewater Manager	☒	☐
Tim Doersam – Gas & Water Manager	☒	☐
Stan Seifert – Electric Manager	☒	☐
Rob Young – General Manager	☒	☐
Ashley Kiefer – Office Manager	☒	☐
Renee Kabrick – City Attorney	☒	☐

ABSENT:

Adam Auffart – Vice Chairman

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chairman Roger Seng led the Pledge of Allegiance.

QUOTE OPENING: CHEMICALS FOR 2025 - WATER

Rob Young opened the quotes and read aloud. Quotes for various items were requested from the following companies.

1. Brenntag Mid-South
2. Chemical Resources
3. Hawkins – did not submit a quote
4. Hexagon Technologies – did not submit a quote
5. JCI Jones Chemicals
6. Mississippi Lime
7. Sal Chemical – did not submit a quote
8. Univar USA, Inc. – did not submit a quote
9. USALCO, LLC – did not submit a quote
10. Water Solutions

Not all companies that submitted quoted on every item included in the request. All quotes included a Non-Collusion Affidavit, an Indiana Legal Employment Declaration, an Affidavit Regarding Non-Responsibility, and a Nepotism Policy Affirmation, except JCI Jones which did not include the Affidavit Regarding Non-Responsibility.

Tim Doersam asked to take all under advisement and report back at next month's meeting.

Brian Hostetter made a motion to take all bids under advisement. Phil Schmidt seconded the motion. Motion approved, 6-0.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: OCTOBER 21st, 2024 REGULAR MEETING

Chairman Roger Seng presented the minutes from the October 21st, 2024 regular meeting with no corrections needed.

Tara Eckman made a motion to approve the minutes, Bibiana Green seconded the motion. Motion approved, 7-0.

PHIL BUEHLER WITH BROSNER LAND SURVEYING – PETITION TO VACATE A PORTION OF A PUBLIC UTILITY & DRAINAGE EASEMENT - LOT 1 - HUNTERS RUN ESTATES

Phil Buehler presented the current utility easement and requested permission to vacate a portion and add a new portion to replace the vacated portion. Buehler also provided the new proposed easement. All utility managers approved.

Phil Schmidt made a motion to vacate the current easement. Tara Eckman seconded the motion. Motion approved, 6-0.

PRESENTATION OF 2025 CAPITAL EXPENDITURE PLAN DRAFTS & COMMITTEE MEETING

Ashley Kiefer gave the scheduled dates for the committee meetings for the presentation of the 2025 Capital Expenditure plans for the departments. A joint Water and Gas Committee meeting will be held on Wednesday, December 11th, 2024 at 1:00PM, and a joint Electric and Wastewater Committee meeting will be held on Tuesday, December 10th, 2024 at 10:30 PM.

ELECTRIC – UPDATE ON SMALL BUCKET TRUCK BID OPENING FROM OCTOBER

Stan Seifert stated that the amount of the bid from Altec Industries in last month’s meeting was read incorrectly. The bid amount was \$264,096 with a \$20,000 trade in for a total net cost of \$244,096. Altec’s bid amount was higher than the low bid, but the low bid did not meet specifications, so Seifert still recommended Altec’s bid.

REQUEST APPROVAL TO PURCHASE OF POWER QUALITY MONITOR FOR \$5,376.75

Seifert asked for permission to purchase a Power Quality Monitor from PMI for \$5,376.75. It is a Garmin, which is the same brand they currently have and starts capture at 1 minute as compared to the AMI meter capture which is in 15 minute intervals. This allows them to get information quicker to resolve issues.

Steve Hale made a motion to approve the quote from PMI for \$5,376.75. Tara Eckman seconded the motion. Motion approved, 6-0.

ELECTRIC - REQUEST APPROVAL FOR FRONTIER TO RELOCATE PHONE LINE FOR \$16,143.21 - (FOR NORTHWEST SUBSTATION PROJECT) ELECTRIC COMMITTEE REPORT

Seifert stated that the location of the Northwest Substation project has a Frontier phone line that runs through it and they had discussed with Frontier about moving it. Seifert stated it would cost more to move the building back from the line than to have Frontier move the line. Frontier gave a cost of \$16,143.21 to move the line away from the substation site, which would include boring it under St. Charles Street to completely remove it from near the building site.

Discussion was had about an easement for the Frontier lines with the city with Seifert stating there is no easement to anyone’s knowledge. City Attorney Renee Kabrick stated that if there is no actual easement, the city should not be responsible for the total cost of the relocation of the line. Kabrick stated that she would look into it for more information.

Brian Hostetter made a motion to approve the cost to relocate the line, pending legal review. Bibianna Green seconded the motion. Motion approved, 6-0.

ELECTRIC PLANNING COMMITTEE REPORT

Brian Hostetter, Chairman of the Electric Committee, stated the Electric Committee met October 29th, 2024 at 1:30 PM at the Jasper Municipal Electric Dept - 505 E. 8th Street, Jasper, IN. He read the minutes from the meeting aloud:

“Present was Stan Seifert, Rob Young, Roger Seng, Brian Hostetter, Steve Hale, Chad Lueken, Mark Fierst, Ashley Kiefer, Renee Kabrick, Mayor Dean Vonderheide, Joe Stephens from Enviroforensics.

New Business: Discuss the potential of planning a new building on the former power plant site

Stan Seifert took all attendees on a tour of the facility to look at the current structures and discussed the former power plant property on 15th Street. Seifert pointed out that they currently do not have enough room to park all the trucks inside and some of the space that trucks are parked is not meant for driving on and is crumbling underneath. The electric building was originally built in 1947 and has been modified and added on to multiple times throughout the years.

Seifert then shared preliminary plans that had been drawn up by the CAD engineer in the electric department and sent to Universal Design for further design work and estimations. The proposed building would be 41,000 square feet pre-engineered construction. It would house all electric departments and equipment under one roof with the exception of wire storage. Universal Design gave a high estimate of \$8.8 million with the final cost including design, civil engineering, and the build. The plans also include moving the transformer yard behind the new building. There is also enough room on the lot to add a wire storage building in the future when able.

Rob Young suggested another rate study for electric be done as soon as early 2025, as the last one was done in 2022. Young also recommended getting an estimated cost to repair the current facility to compare as well.

The Committee discussed the options and recommended that the Electric Department put together more of a proposed project plan including environmental studies, capital expenditure plan, etc. and present to the committee again.

The Electric Committee meeting ended at 2:40 PM.”

GAS – WINTER OUTLOOK ON GAS EXPECTATIONS

Tim Doersam stated that Natural gas prices have remained very low most of the year due to weak Winter demands for Winter '23-24. As we approach Winter '24-'25 prices as of now have fallen back more than .30 lower as we head to the November expiration date. Jasper currently has 54,700 dth locked in at \$3.16/dth via ANR and 33,200 dth locked in at \$3.00/dth via TETCO.

The larger numbers are weighted to the peak months of December through February. Storage continues to remain high, meaning that the gas supply remains high. Prices have increased very little and the city is price protected from any sharp increases, for 87,900 dth of it's supply should there be an immediate need for gas during potential cold weather.

GAS PLANNING COMMITTEE REPORT

Bibianna Green, Chairman of the Gas Planning Committee, stated the Gas Committee did not meet during the past month.

WATER PLANNING COMMITTEE REPORT

Phil Schmidt, Chairman of the Water Planning Committee, stated the Water Committee did not meet during the past month.

WASTEWATER PLANNING COMMITTEE REPORT

Steve Hale, Chairman of the Wastewater Committee, stated the Wastewater Committee did not meet during the past month.

BUSINESS OFFICE MANAGER – RESOLUTION #USB 2024-5 - AUTHORIZING & ESTABLISHING POLICY FOR ELECTRONIC FUNDS TRANSFERS

Office Manager Ashley Kiefer shared Resolution #USB 2024-5, regarding the electronic funds transfers for payment to certain vendors for claims every month. Once approved by the Utility Service Board it will go to the Common Council, who will make an ordinance for the Utilities' departments.

Bibianna Green made a motion to approve Resolution #USB 2024-5. Phil Schmidt seconded the motion. Motion approved, 6-0.

BUSINESS OFFICE MANAGER - RESOLUTION #USB 2024-7 - REMOVE RATES & CHARGES FOR 2014 WHODERVILLE GAS EXTENSION

Kiefer shared Resolution #USB 2024-7 regarding the removal of extended rates and charges to residents in the Whoderville area as the extension fees has now expired. As of the November 2024 billing date, the last installment was completed and therefore can be removed from future billing. Once approved by the Utility Service Board it will go to the Common Council, who will make an amendment to the original ordinance for the Utilities' departments.

Tara Eckman made a motion to approve Resolution #USB 2024-7. Steve Hale seconded the motion. Motion approved, 6-0.

BUSINESS OFFICE MANAGER - UPDATE ON IMPLEMENTATION OF TYLER SMART METER PORTAL

Kiefer provided an update on the smart meter portal, stating that it is on track to be implemented in February 2025. This portal will allow customers to have access to their account information including meter usage, along with the ability to set up alerts for excessive usage.

GENERAL MANAGER – REQUEST APPROVAL OF AGREEMENT WITH GO GOV FOR \$4,800 FOR NOTIFICATION APP - (UTILITIES PORTION - \$2,400) - CIVIL CITY TO PAY OTHER HALF - APPROVED BY BPW

General Manager Rob Young asked for approval of \$2,400 for the utilities’ portion of the agreement with GoGov, an app designed to give users access to city information along with utility account access. Young stated that in the future, the utility departments could send out push notifications for outages or disruptions in service, if people were to sign up.

Brian Hostetter made a motion to approve the utilities’ portion of \$2,400 to GoGov. Bibianna Green seconded the motion. Motion approved, 6-0.

GENERAL MANAGER – RESOLUTION #USB 2024-6 - ESTABLISHING A POLICY FOR SERVICE ALERT NOTIFICATIONS

Young shared Resolution #USB 2024-6, which formally outlines communication required for various levels of Water Main Breaks and Boil Notification. Included in the Resolution is protocol on who is to receive alerts, along with defined levels of notifications.

Phil Schmidt made a motion to approve Resolution #USB 2024-6. Steve Hale seconded the motion. Motion approved, 6-0.

GENERAL MANAGER – REQUEST APPROVAL OF AGREEMENT WITH EXOS IT FOR \$302,186 - (UTILITIES PORTION - \$151,093) - CIVIL CITY TO PAY OTHER HALF - APPROVED BY BPW

Rob Young asked for approval of the utilities’ portion of the total cost of an agreement with Exos IT, whose services would be shared with the civil city. He stated that Exos works with many government entities and would provide an in-house dedicated person to manage all IT for the City of Jasper. A portion of the total cost is a \$20,000 one-time set up fee, which would not be included next year should it be renewed. The total cost of the agreement is \$302,186, with \$151,093 being the utilities’ responsibility.

Tara Eckman made a motion to approve the cost of \$151,093 to Exos IT. Steve Seconded the motion. Motion approved, 6-0.

GENERAL MANAGER – 2025 INSURANCE UPDATE

Young shared that cost for insurance for the utilities' has gone up 16.2% or \$39,000 to a total of \$279,281, not including the Electric utility which has not been received yet. The coverage also went up by the same percentage. Young stated they should have a quote for Electric insurance by the next utility service board meeting.

GENERAL MANAGER – NOTIFICATION LETTERS FOR "UNKNOWN MATERIAL" WATER SERVICE LINES MAILED 11/1/24

Young shared that the follow up mailing of notification letters for “unknown material” water service lines was mailed on November 1st, meeting the EPA deadline of by November 16th.

GENERAL MANAGER - WATER SERVICE LINES IN MILL STREET PROJECT AREA - 7 UNCONFIRMED OUT OF 55

Rob Young stated that 7 out of 55 service lines in the Mill Street water main project area were still unconfirmed after multiple attempts to reach the owners. The Water department would continue their efforts to reach the home owners, along with a Business office employee that was going door to door to follow up on all remaining lead line surveys with no answer.

GENERAL MANAGER – UPDATE ON WETLANDS DELINEATION & SITE SURVEY FOR NORTHSIDE WASTEWATER TREATMENT PLAN

Young advised that the cost for the Wetlands Delineation had come in at \$5,500, which was well under the previously approved \$20,000, and was scheduled for 12/3/24. A site survey was due to be scheduled soon as well.

FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT & PRESENTATION OF CLAIM DOCKET

Secretary Tara Eckman reported the Finance Committee had met tonight and reviewed the claims on the Claim Docket.

The Finance Committee recommended approval of the claims as presented.

Bibianna Green made a motion to approve the claims as presented. Steve Hale seconded the motion. Motion approved, 6-0.

There being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 7:52PM upon motion by Brian Hostetter and seconded by Phil Schmidt. Motion approved, 6-0.

The minutes were hereby approved _____ with without corrections this 16th day of December, 2024.

Attest: J. Beckman
Secretary

Roger A. Sey
Chairman