

In Attendance:

Mayor S. Bierce, Alderman J. Wamser, Committee Members: M. Kreiter, D. Swan, J. Tormey

Also in Attendance:

DPW Director M. Wagner, Chief Engineer-Utilities R. Wirtz, Utility Billing Specialist R. Reed, Administrative Assistant S. Smaxwill

1. Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance

Mayor Bierce called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m. and requested everyone stand for the Pledge of Allegiance.

2. Public Comment - None

3. Discussion and Action Regarding the Minutes of August 26, 2021

3.1. Discussion and Action Regarding the Minutes of August 26, 2021

A motion was made and seconded, (D. Swan, J. Tormey) to approve the August 26, 2021 meeting minutes.

Motion Passed: 5-For, 0-Against.

4. Communications - None

5. Old Business

5.1. Discussion regarding the Glacier Road Light Request.

Ms. Wagner provided a follow-up to Mr. Swan's request at the June 24th meeting for accident report information where the streetlight was requested. She reported 15 crashes between Hickory and Roger Road since 2010, and 18 crashes within that corridor. She also provided the report information in the committee packets.

Mayor Bierce stated that is 1.5 crashes per year, but was unable to judge if that is a lot or not. Ms. Wagner said it's more than average, but not by much.

Mr. Tormey asked if the crashes were contributed to a lack of lighting, or if it is because of the time of day. Ms. Wagner stated that most appeared to be at night.

Ms. Wagner said the new chevrons were put up. Mr. Wamser asked if there were any extra chevrons for Tacoma Hills before the ground freezes. Ms. Wagner said no, and it would be a safety hazard because of the slope of the road.

Mayor Bierce feels the light was not warranted, and the committee agreed.

Mr. Tormey asked if there were in any changes in the crash rate since the chevrons were installed. Ms. Wagner said it's only been a month so it's probably too soon to know, but time will tell. Ms. Wagner doesn't recommend doing anything else at this time.

6. Status Reports - None

7. Storm Water Management Division

7.1. Discussion and possible action regarding the 2021 Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources MS4 Permit Audit.

Ms. Wagner reported that earlier this month the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) performed a periodic audit on our NR216 Permit. The DNR said there are a few changes and recommendations that will be provided to us in an audit letter. She reported they are mostly recommendations regarding documenting our program and procedures, with a few requirements and items to follow-up on, but they said overall we are doing a good job on the pieces of the audit performed. Ms. Wagner said this is promising and that our staff is doing what they are expecting us to do. There will be additional changes with the new permit, but until we get it our existing permit will remain in effect even though it has expired.

Mr. Wirtz stated the new permit should come out within the next two years. Once we get the new permit there will be more items and programs we will need to add to meet the compliance with the TMDLs; and then it will be another five years before the next audit.

Mayor Bierce asked if the DNR finds something where we are lacking will we get time to fix it? Mr. Wirtz said yes. Ms. Wagner stated that we will have 30 days to respond to the audit letter and provide a compliance schedule which they will solidify on their end. Mayor Bierce asked if we know of anything where we are out of compliance based on the preliminary audit. Ms. Wagner said there are a few things she is aware of that we are working towards but have not yet finished. She stated that nothing she learned surprised us.

8. Water and Sewer Division

8.1. Discussion and possible action regarding the payment of the reserve capacity assessments and interceptor capacity assessments.

Ms. Wagner stated this item came to us by way of Mr. Swan who recently connected to our municipal water system.

Ms. Wagner reported on the annual RCA/ICA rates for 2021: Water RCA is \$5,015.00, due upon connection to the system; Sewer RCA is \$3,140.00, due upon connection to the system. In addition, on the sewer side there may be a sewer ICA fee which ranges from \$307 to \$6,200 based on location, also due at time of connection. (ICA is for payment of oversizing of pipes downstream to accommodate flows). These rates are adjusted annually based on the construction cost index.

Mr. Swan asked if these fees could be paid over 10 years rather than up front, to be more appealing to people to make these connections. Ms. Wagner replied that our current ordinance has a provision that allows for payments over 10 years if there is a hardship or a reason why the customer cannot pay the fees in full. This hardship request would go before this committee, and then before the council for final approval.

Ms. Wagner stated that RCA/ICA fees are used to pay our debt payments. The way the debt payments are scheduled and what we bring in are paying for those debt payments. There isn't a lot of extra, so allowing customers to opt-in without a hardship could potentially cause issues on the water/sewer utility budgets. Publicizing this option is not something we would recommend. We feel there is already a provision in place in cases of hardship to make that appeal, and customers with hardships reach out to us and are provided with that information.

Mr. Tormey stated that if someone connects, and then the council adopts the 10-year plan, and then customer sells the property after 5 years, the new owner could have a property with a lien on it. Ms. Wagner stated that we disclose all special assessments and provide balances due on the assessments on all property title searches,

and most assessments are due at time of sale. Banks can still require payment due at time of sale if there is a lien on a property even if it is not due at time of sale. She said that if we changed our RCAs, we would make it that they would all be due at time of sale. We are trying to make all our assessments the same so it is easier to manage their accounting.

Mr. Tormey stated that if there is already a provision for a hardship, he tends to agree with Ms. Wagner's assessment.

Mr. Swan asked how do people know if there is a hardship option unless they ask? Ms. Wagner discussed the process for hardship requests.

Mr. Swan asked if it is still the county's goal for individuals to hook up to water and sewer versus well and septic, and if that is the case, the city should look for ways to make it possible for everyone to hook up eventually.

A discussion took place regarding the City of Waukesha and their requirements for mandatory connection to water and sewer. Ms. Wagner stated that if there are any areas left annexed, when the roads are improved they must connect. The City of Waukesha has its own RCA/ICA connection fees that are paid as part of the connection process, and they don't offer an option to stay on septic or well; when it comes through they must connect within a year, which is what our city policy used to be until it was changed.

The committee discussed issues related to hardships. Mayor Bierce suggested that if people have concerns and express them at a meeting, they will be directed to staff after the meeting; so there is an avenue already in place.

Ms. Wagner reported that we are contracting for a facility plan study of the sewer and water utility, and part of that is a septic and well relief plan. Part of the plan will be to decide if there are areas in the community where we are not going to serve them with sewer or water or both. It was the utility's intent to serve entire the community. Ultimately, it is the body's decision on how they want the community to develop. We are going through that process and will have discussions going forward on what parts of the community will or will not be served.

Mr. Swan asked what if we changed the special assessment payment plans from 10 years to 5 years? Ms. Wagner stated we normally allow 10-year plans for road and utility assessments, but not for connection fees because of how it would adversely affect our debt payments as they are strictly paid from the RCA and ICA income. She said she would not recommend that, stating assessments are typically 10 years. She said the committee could discuss this at a future meeting, but first she would have to look at the debt payments versus what is coming in every year.

Mr. Swan asked how many people would hook up if you gave them 10 years to pay the connection fees? Ms. Wagner stated most only connect if they need to or want to.

Mr. Swan asked what is the present rule? Ms. Wagner stated that current assessments vary and provided a few examples. Many of the older assessments do not have specific end dates requiring them to connect to the system. The latest trend is to pay the assessment fees, but not the connection fees until the home connects or is sold. She said that the sewer has a 15-year mandate, and that the DNR used to mandate connection within 1 year, but when the requirement went away the council opted for a 15-year plan to allow for those who added new septic get some use out of it. Water main has never had a mandatory connection until just recently when we reopened the discussion to require payment of assessments and connection; originally it was 15 years, same as the sewer, but the council directed to change it to mandatory connection at the time of sale instead of 15 years.

Mr. Swan asked if there is a provision for selling to family? Ms. Wagner said not yet, but it is being discussed and provisions will be worked out.

9. Engineering Division

9.1. Discussion and possible action regarding the 2022 Garbage and Recycling Fee Rate and the amendment of the Yard Waste Pick Up procedures.

Ms. Wagner said the council did not take action on the 2022 garbage and recycling contract because their meeting was canceled. She said the way the contract reads the garbage rate is allowed to increase by 1.682% for 2022. Johns Disposal (Johns) originally disagreed and said it was a 2.65% increase, the maximum increase allowed. Ms. Wagner expects a representative from Johns to attend the council meeting scheduled for 9/27/21 to plead their case for the 2.65% increase. Ms. Wagner's recommendation to committee is for the \$165.00 (annual) rate, versus the \$166.00. She said she could take the recommendation verbally to the council on 9/27/2021.

The committee discussed how rates dropped in 2014 when the city switched from Advanced Disposal's up-the-drive service to Johns Disposal's curbside only (except for hardship or age-related cases) and how it affected hardships.

Mayor Bierce asked if we have a lot of people applying for hardships and if they know how to request a hardship? Ms. Wagner stated the annual bill explains what qualifies for free up-the-drive hardships and said there are not a huge amount of hardships in the city.

The committee discussed the problem of leaving the carts on the driveway which is contrary to the ordinance, that all containers shall be brought back to the house within 24-hours after collection.

The committee unanimously agreed to Ms. Wagner's recommendation for the 2022 garbage rate of \$165.00 be taken to the council.

A motion was made and seconded (J. Tormey, D. Swan) for staff to recommend the rate of \$165.00 for the 2022 Garbage and Recycling Fee. Motion passed: 5-For, 0-Against.

Mr. Swan suggested the city's recycle center hours be changed or extended by one hour to keep the center open later. After discussion, Mayor Bierce directed Ms. Wagner to discuss with staff the possibility of changing the hours of the recycle center.

9.2. Discussion and possible action regarding the 5-year Road Paving Program and 10-year Bike and Pedestrian Program.

Ms. Wagner presented an updated 10-year plan to the Bike & Pedestrian Committee (BPC) on 9/22/21 and tweaked some of projects to correlate with our road construction projects. The BPC agreed that if we are doing the roads, that would be the time to do the bike paths. There are a few projects they would like us to move up if possible, such as the pedestrian crossing project (signals and landing ramps) at Hwy 164 at Ridgeview to accommodate the Hawk's Meadow subdivision. In general, the BPC was okay with the bike and pedestrian capital plan as I had laid it out. The BPC also had some discussion about looking for grants for these programs, as many have to be applied for ahead of time to secure funding. Ms. Wagner offered to look into the grant cycles and see if any of these projects might figure in with the bike and pedestrian projects moving forward.

Ms. Wagner reported on the 5-year road program for the road projects they are anticipating for the next several years. She presented it to council and put it into the 2022 budget. The council will be going through her recommendations to determine what will get funded. She asked the committee for thoughts or concerns for the capital program as laid out between the road program and the bike and pedestrian program. She stated once the Finance Committee has had a chance to review the budget, she will bring it back to this committee for more input.

Mr. Swan asked what the city uses to determine the road conditions. He discussed the possibility of hiring a company that drives the roads and gets information road conditions in a relatively short time, and reports when they should be redone. Ms. Wagner said we do have that. Our roads are required to be rated once every two

years. Our staff is trained to evaluate the condition of road segments using the PASER (Pavement Surface Evaluation Rating) system, with a 0-10 road rating. The county uses a PCI Index with a 0-100 road rating. She said the PASER ratings are factored in when looking at future road programs and our staff is always trying to beat the curve. The city has beefed up our crack filling program to make sure we are maintaining our roadways. The intent is to keep the good roads good. Many of the roads with a lower rating are on the cusp of having sewer and water extended to them. Some roads are in very old subdivisions on septic without a lot of room for replacement of septic fields or mounds. We correlate road projects with the utilities, though some of them have been extended because we need to work with the City of Waukesha. Waukesha has moved the connection point to three miles from our connection point, so we are working through some of those issues.

Mr. Wamser asked if the properties would be served with water by Waukesha? Ms. Wagner said Waukesha won't allow to extend their water because of the Great Lakes Compact. The PSC made a ruling that Waukesha cannot put the water return rate on their customers, so that cost is entirely on the sewer customers and that is why we are seeing significant increases in sewer rates both for their customers and ours.

Mr. Kreiter asked how our staff rates the road conditions. Ms. Wagner responded they use visual ratings based on guidance and training from the PASER system.

The committee discussed the bridge on Watertown Road between SR and M. Ms. Wagner said the county does not want the bridge.

10. Highway Division

10.1. Discussion and possible action regarding the DPW Facility Bid.

Ms. Wagner reported that she received 5 bids for the new DPW building and opened them in exact order as shown on the bid summary sheet, from high bid to low. On 9/13/21 the council awarded the lowest bid to Absolute Construction for everything but concrete and steel. We have had good luck with Absolute in the past with our fire station and a well house. She is going through the contracts right now, and plans are to start construction in early to mid-October with occupancy anticipated for the end of 2022. Plans are available to review.

Mr. Tormey asked if there was anything being torn down behind City Hall. Ms. Wagner said that it has yet to be determined what will happen to the existing yard once they move out. She mentioned suggestions of cold storage or possible rehabbing, but plans to get through the move first.

11. Public Comment

Ms. Wagner said she spoke with the city attorney and there is no issue with a private citizen donating American flag stickers to the city. DPW and Parks do not have an issue with applying a sticker to the approximately 60 city vehicles in the fleet. Ms. Wagner did not contact the fire department. Mr. Kreiter provided 40 stickers and offered more if needed.

12. Adjournment

A motion was made and seconded (J. Tormey, M. Kreiter) to adjourn the meeting at 4:50 p.m.

Motion passed: 5-For, 0-Against.

Respectfully Submitted,

Magdelene Wagner
Director of Public Works