



## Marion Utilities

1540 N Washington St.  
Marion, IN 46952  
[www.marionutilities.com](http://www.marionutilities.com)

## Service Board

### BOARD MINUTES OF THE FEBRUARY 15, 2024 MEETING

The Marion Utility Service Board held their meeting on Thursday, February 15, 2024 at 5:30 p.m. in the L.E.A.D. Center, Building 101, at Marion Utilities, 1540 N. Washington Street, Marion, Indiana.

Roll was called and those board members present were: Robert Logan, Chairman; Doug Carl; Bill Dorsey; Al Green; Von Jackson; Herschel Lewis; and Jayda Monteiro.

Also present at the meeting were: Chuck Binkerd, Director; Pat Pinkerton, Assistant Director for Engineering & Solid Waste; Robin Shrader, Assistant Director for Operations & Maintenance; Erika Devine, Council Liaison; Mike Conner, attorney; and Misty Humphries, Secretary.

#### **CONSIDERATION OF AGENDA ADDITIONS OR DELETIONS**

There were no additions or deletions to the agenda.

#### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Mr. Lewis moved, seconded by Mr. Carl, to approve the minutes of the February 1, 2024 meeting. All board members voted aye. Motion carried unanimously.

#### **UPDATE ON PROJECTS**

Mr. Pinkerton said that the cured-in-place projects from 2023 that didn't get completed were now complete. Mr. Pinkerton said he was waiting on some video and inspection of the work done.

#### **TRANSFERS & PAY REQUESTS**

Mr. Pinkerton presented one pay request to Keith Sullivan for the 11<sup>th</sup> Street Sanitary Sewer Replacement project that ran up the alley in the amount of \$44,883.17 with \$2,605 in retainage. Mr. Lewis moved, seconded by Mr. Carl, to approve the pay request. All board members voted aye. Motion carried unanimously.

#### **CHP REPAIR**

Mrs. Shrader said that this was more of an informational update. The CHP, combined heat and power unit, which takes the methane from the digesters and burns it to generate energy has come to a point in its lifespan where it was in need of some maintenance and additional repairs. The removal cost and getting it to the repair facility would cost \$25,000, \$30,000 for the generator repair, \$110,000 for the overhaul, and \$20,000 for the reinstallation which brings the total cost to approximately \$185,000. Mrs. Shrader said that there might be a few contingencies as well. She also noted that before the CHP was installed, the electric bill was double of what it had been since the CHP installation.



### **SRF PROJECT CONSULTANT AGREEMENT**

Mr. Pinkerton explained that this agreement involved the lead service line replacements. There was a section of town identified around 20<sup>th</sup> & Adams where 150 lead service lines would be replaced. There were also another 100 lines involved with Distribution projects. Mr. Pinkerton stated that one of the conditions of the SRF was that we have to go inside the house to the first fixture. He said we don't know what we are in for once we get to that point. We have to find the property owner, inform them, and get their consent to do this work on their property. Mr. Pinkerton said that Kayla Johnson was spoken with about this and some other items, and it was felt that she would be a good candidate to provide community education and help track down owners. This would broaden into projects in the future as there were potentially up to 7,000 service lines in the system. State saying we need to inventory those and not just on our side but the private property side as well. Mr. Pinkerton explained that this was a stepping stone to what would be coming up. He added that if a SRF consultant could be brought on board as a contractor for up to 30 hours a week eventually, at \$25/hour it could get us what we need in order to pursue the SRF. Mr. Logan asked how it would be unfunded. Mr. Pinkerton said that Mrs. Shrader was going to talk about that under Item E as there was going to be up to \$300,000 available to help pay for some things, and this may be one of them. Mr. Pinkerton conveyed that once this gets going the requirement could range from 3% to 10% a year which would be very expensive. Dr. Monteiro asked how long the contract would last. Mr. Pinkerton answered one year for up to 30 hours a week at \$25/hour. Mr. Dorsey clarified that the contract would not exceed a year. Mr. Lewis moved, seconded by Mr. Green, to approve the engagement with an SRF Consultant for one year, up to 30 hours a week at \$25 an hour. All board members voted aye. Motion carried unanimously.

### **2024 ECLIPSE SCHEDULE**

Mr. Binkerd told the Board that there was to be an eclipse on April 8<sup>th</sup>. The partial is to begin at 1:51 p.m. and end at 4:24 p.m. The full eclipse maximum is anticipated to be at 3:09 p.m. and would last only 2.5 minutes. The event though would last from shortly before 2 p.m. and until after 4 p.m. Mr. Binkerd said one of the things that Grant County EMS/EMA had shared was that the population of Marion may more than quadruple because Marion will be one of the locations that would have 100% coverage. Mr. Binkerd disclosed that the state had provided warnings and guidance to be ready and plan for an onslaught of people coming into the community. Mr. Binkerd asked for permission to close at noon on April 8<sup>th</sup> and send employees home for the afternoon so there wouldn't be employees and trucks out on the street during the time. The exception would be essential employees to keep the plant running that wouldn't normally be out in the community. Mr. Jackson asked if Mr. Binkerd had heard of highways being closed. Mr. Binkerd said that State Highway was in charge of those roads and knew that discussions would be had, but Mr. Binkerd was not sure if highways or other roads would be closed. Mr. Dorsey asked if the employees would be off with pay. Mr. Binkerd said yes. Mr. Jackson moved, seconded by Mr. Carl to approve the closing of the facilities on April 8<sup>th</sup> with the exception of operations necessary to keep the plant running. All board members voted aye. Motion carried unanimously. Mr. Dorsey asked how trash hauling would be affected. Mr. Pinkerton said he would look at Solid Waste possibly coming in earlier for pick-up or running the route as usual with some customers being picked up the next day, but those customers would be the last part of the route. Mr. Pinkerton said that all changes for Solid Waste would be communicated in advance to customers.

### **IFA ABONMARCHE PHASE III LEAD SERVICE LINE GRANT AGREEMENT**

Mrs. Shrader explained that Abonmarche was contracted with about a year ago that specializes in asset management specifically GIS systems. They have partnered with IFA (Indiana Finance Authority) and have an agreement where Abonmarche contracts with communities for lead and service line work which would be funded by grants. Mrs. Shrader said our involvement would essentially be giving IFA the “okay” for Abonmarche to do work on our behalf. Last year, there was an agreement for \$40,000 which covered Phases I and II. Those involved getting us up and going with the GIS. Mrs. Shrader stated that it was time for Phase III of the grant to be opened. The Utilities qualified for up to \$300,000 for anything that has to do with improving the inventory of the lead service lines. It could be potholing, meeting with people in the community, going into homes, or even gathering and uploading information into the GIS system. Abonmarche suggested pot holing 250 sites and additional funds could be used to cover other services like an SRF Consultant or more potholing. There would be no money transferred between Marion Utilities and Abonmarche. Mrs. Shrader added that this was done last year, and it worked well. Mrs. Shrader was looking only for approval to say, “Yes, we are participating in this”. Mr. Carl asked what pot holing was. Mrs. Shrader answered that it was a less invasive than digging with a shovel. It involved taking a vac truck to a location and creating small holes in order to accurately located the service line. Dr. Montiero moved, seconded by Mr. Lewis, to approve the IFA Abonmarche Phase III agreement for lead service lines. All board members voted aye. Motion carried unanimously.

### **SENIOR LEADERSHIP REPORTS**

#### **P. Pinkerton, Assistant Director for Engineering & Solid Waste**

Mr. Pinkerton reported that he had went through the 3<sup>rd</sup> round of submittals to SRF. Those were sent off this morning in preparation for closing on February 23<sup>rd</sup>. Mr. Pinkerton said one time SRF would email back and say thanks no more information was needed. Mr. Pinkerton stated it was a lot of money. SRF wanted post bid paperwork and while post submittal awards from contractors were coming in as well. Mr. Binkerd thanked Mr. Pinkerton, Mrs. Shrader, and their staff because it was a lot of work. However, the Utilities would see close to \$3.5 million because there would be a savings of \$2.5 million and \$1 million was being forgiven. Mr. Pinkerton added that the reduction in interest rate really brought on savings.

#### **R. Shrader, Assistant Director for Operations & Maintenance**

Mrs. Shrader said Merrell Brothers took 600,000 gallons from the digester. A fair amount of water had to be added which brought the cost to just shy of \$250,000. Mrs. Shrader said this was right at what she expected. The pumping was completely done, the digester was being put back in service, and measures would be taken to prevent this from happening again.

#### **C. Binkerd, Utility Director**

Mr. Binkerd said he wanted to officially announce his retirement for the record. The search for a new director would be on. Mr. Binkerd said he had accepted the position as the Director of the Grant County Economic Growth Council. The job would be posted as discussed in the executive session. Mr. Binkerd said he would be available through August if needed.

### **BOARD MEMBERS' COMMENTS**

Mr. Carl commented that he watched the City Council meeting the other night on YouTube. Mrs. Devine and Mr. McKinley toured the Utilities. They were both very positive and was complimentary about their tour.

### **CHAIRMAN'S REMARKS**

Mr. Logan remarked that it was good to have some new Council members coming out and seeing what was done here and learning about the process. He thanked everyone for coming out for the executive session and the regular meeting.

The next meeting was scheduled for 5:30 p.m. on Thursday, March 7, 2024.

There being no further business before the Board, Mr. Lewis moved, seconded by Mr. Carl, to adjourn the meeting. All board members present voted aye. Motion carried unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 6:06 p.m.

Robert Logan, Chairman  
Marion Utilities Service Board

ATTEST

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Misty D. Humphries". The signature is written in black ink on a light-colored background.

Misty Humphries  
Its Secretary