



Marion Utilities
1540 N Washington St.
Marion, IN 46952
www.marionutilites.com

Service Board

BOARD MINUTES OF THE APRIL 6, 2023 MEETING

The Marion Utility Service Board held their meeting on Thursday, April 6, 2023 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; Von Jackson; and Herschel Lewis. Al Green was absent.

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

CONSIDERATION OF AGENDA ADDITIONS OR DELETIONS

Mr. Lewis moved, seconded by Mr. Jackson, to add Wessler Engineering Contract as Item D under New Business. All board members present voted aye. Motion carried unanimously.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Carl moved, seconded by Mr. Lewis, to approve the minutes of the March 2, 2023 meeting. All board members present voted aye. Motion carried unanimously.

FINANCIALS

Mr. Binkerd reported that Jennifer Wilson's office was not able to complete the financials in time for tonight's meeting. The February financials will be presented at the next meeting.

UPDATE ON PROJECTS

Mr. Pinkerton reported that the designs for 2023 were still being worked on.

CSO STORAGE TANK UPDATE

Mr. Binkerd said that there wasn't a lot to report. The engineers hired to do an assessment were working to understand the nature of the issue and to provide a cost estimate.

TRANSFERS & PAY REQUESTS

There were none.

LOAN: WASTEWATER TO SOLID WASTE

Mr. Binkerd presented Resolution 3-2015 a Wastewater to Solid Waste Loan. He reminded the Board that the January financials approved in February showed Solid Waste was in a financial bind. The operating cash account was below \$200,000 with no other funds having cash either. Mr. Binkerd said there was a need to do something about the cash balance. The minimum



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required balance was \$240,000. In reviewing the financials with Mrs. Wilson, it was recommended that Wastewater make a loan to Solid Waste. Mr. Binkerd said he took the document template from the 2015 Wastewater to Solid Waste loan and updated the figures to match the presently needed cash funds. Mr. Binkerd also added the first “Whereas” clause which authorized a loan for up to 5 years. It was written as a 0% cash loan. The repayment would be due in December 2024. Mr. Binkerd said that the loan would allow the cash account to reach the required minimum and keep it in good standing. Mr. Binkerd said he added a statement that mentioned efforts being pursued with City Council for a rate increase. Mr. Jackson asked what Mr. Conner’s thoughts on the matters were. Mr. Conner stated that if the group could table the item for five minutes, he would look at the Indiana Code. Mr. Conner said that the code has not changed so the Resolution was good and could be passed. Mr. Dorsey moved, seconded by Mr. Jackson, to approve the Wastewater to Solid Waste loan in the amount of \$250,000 with 0% interest, and due on or before December 31, 2024. All board members present voted aye. Motion carried unanimously.

HR SPECIALIST POSITION

Mr. Binkerd said that he had spoken with Mr. Dorsey regarding this position description. Mr. Dorsey received a draft this evening. Mr. Binkerd said that no action was going to be requested tonight. The job description was being updated in order to match needs. Mr. Binkerd said he was trying to add some responsibilities to the HR position in order to get Mrs. Humphries some help. Mr. Binkerd asked that the Board reach out if they should have any suggestions.

WESSLER ENGINEERING CONTRACT

Mrs. Shrader explained that Wessler Engineering was a known engineering firm with trusted staff. Mrs. Shrader said that there were some smaller projects that the larger engineering firms were not interested in, but Wessler was the right size for the projects. One of the projects was a structural design for a waste gas burner. Project number two concerned some new aeration blowers. Project number three was new digester gas booster and storage tank. Mrs. Shrader said that \$103,000 was the not to exceed price. These projects have been budgeted. Mr. Dorsey asked if bids had to be taken. Mrs. Shrader said no, as this was just for the engineering services. Mr. Lewis moved, seconded by Mr. Carl, to approve the contract with Wessler Engineering. All board members present voted aye. Motion carried unanimously.

SENIOR LEADERSHIP REPORTS

P. Pinkerton, Assistant Director for Engineering & Solid Waste

Mr. Pinkerton reported that sewer maintenance had been out with the street sweeper. It was needed due to the storms. Solid Waste saw 904 tons come through the Transfer Station during March. This was the second highest March. They averaged about 50 tons per day. Mr. Pinkerton said that the landfill had added two different surcharges. One was for fuel and the other was for environmental fees. The ordinance allows us to pass the surcharges on. Mr. Pinkerton said he wasn’t sure what the environmental surcharge was. If the surcharges were passed on, the fee would be about \$0.25 per customer. This was not a lot, but it would make a difference to Solid





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Waste. Mr. Dorsey asked what a tracker was. Mr. Binkerd said it was a statutory charge that could be passed along to customers to help recoup charges for fees imposed by landfills. To explain further, Mr. Binkerd said that unexpected charges, like the landfill's fuel charge, could be added on to customer's bills. The fuel charge for our trucks could not be passed along to customers' bills though. The official language in the ordinance stated that only charges imposed by a third party could be passed along to the customers. Mr. Logan added that only the actual surcharge fee amount could be passed along. The surcharge could not be marked up.

R. Shrader, Assistant Director for Operations and Maintenance

Mrs. Shrader shared that there was an electrical fire on Sunday. It was in one of the electrical breakers. Mrs. Shrader gave a special shout out to electrician Nick Ashba. Mr. Ashba and his wife went above and beyond his job description one that day. Mr. Ashba went in and made sure it was safe for the fire fighters to hose the area off. By 1 p.m. the plant was piped in and functioning within compliance standards. Mrs. Shrader said Mrs. Ashba brought Mr. Ashba a change of clothes as he arrived in his church clothes. She also brought him and everyone else working lunch. Mrs. Shrader asked for a special recognition for Mr. Ashba. She reminded the board that this was done when the 38,000 phone calls went out. Mrs. Shrader asked that she be allowed to purchase a \$150 gift card to the restaurant or event of his choice. Mrs. Shrader explained that Mr. Ashba had already ordered parts, and those should be in soon. She stated that had Mr. Ashba not had the knowledge and forethinking that \$100,000 of equipment could have been lost versus the \$18,000 worth of parts Mr. Ashba needed to perform the fix. Mr. Jackson asked if anyone was in the building at the time. Mrs. Shrader said the wastewater operator was in the building at the time. Mr. Dorsey said he would be more in favor of a cash award along with a nice letter of recommendation or recognition. Mr. Dorsey suggested that an award program be developed for employees as there seemed to be a lot of examples where employees were going above and beyond. Mr. Binkerd said he was thankful of the board for being in agreement to do something. Mr. Carl said he was in agreement, but the amount should be grossed up so that Mr. Ashba does receive \$150. Mrs. Shrader said that Mr. Ashba was an employee that calmly and quietly does his job without expectation. Mr. Lewis, Mr. Jackson, and Mr. Dorsey said to tell Mr. Ashba thank you very much.

C. Binkerd, Utility Director

Mr. Binkerd reported that Mrs. Erickson has resigned from the Board. Her husband's work situation was such that he had been driving 1 hour and 45 minutes one way every day. They were moving out of town to be closer to his employer. Mr. Binkerd shared that Mrs. Erickson expressed her appreciation of the board and stated that this was the best board she had served on.





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BOARD MEMBERS' COMMENTS

There were no board comments at this time.

CHAIRMAN'S REMARKS

Mr. Logan wished everyone a good evening and thanked them for their attendance.

The next meeting was scheduled for 5:30 p.m. on Thursday, April 20, 2023.

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 6:06 p.m.

Robert Logan, Chairman
Marion Utilities Service Board

ATTEST

Misty Humphries
Its Secretary

