



Marion Utilities

1540 N Washington St.
Marion, IN 46952
www.marionutilities.com

Service Board

Memo To: All Utility Board Members
From: Bob Logan, Chairman
Date: July 13, 2021
Re: Agenda for July 15, 2021 Utility Board Meeting

Dear Board Member:

This is to inform you of our Board Meeting to be held Thursday, July 15, 2021 at 5:30 p.m. in the L.E.A.D Center Building 101 at Marion Utilities, 1540 North Washington Street, Marion, Indiana.

The following will be the agenda:

- I. **ROLL CALL**

- II. **INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS**

- III. **CONSIDERATION OF AGENDA ADDITIONS OR DELETIONS**

- IV. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**
 - A. Regular meeting of June 17, 2021

- V. **FINANCIALS**
 - A. 2021 March Financials

- VI. **OLD BUSINESS**
 - A. Update on Projects – C. Binkerd
 - B. 2219 S. Washington St. Adjustment Request- Water Committee





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VII. NEW BUSINESS

- A. Transfers & Pay Requests - Senior Leadership Team
- B. Digester Repair Quotes- R. Shrader
- C. New Golf Cart Quotes- R. Shrader
- D. Solid Waste Retirement- P. Pinkerton
- E. SWIF Grant- C. Binkerd
- F. Property Purchase: Home Ave & Lincoln- P. Pinkerton
- G. Meter Pilot Study- R. Shrader
- H. Field Technician Position- R. Shrader

VIII. SENIOR LEADERSHIP REPORTS

- A. Assistant Director for Engineering- P. Pinkerton
- B. Assistant Director for Operations & Maintenance- R. Shrader
- C. Utility Director- C. Binkerd

IX. BOARD MEMBERS' COMMENTS

X. CHAIRMAN'S REMARKS

XI. NEXT MEETING

Thursday, August 5, 2021

Robert Logan, Chairman
Marion Utility Service Board

cc: News Media
City Administration/Council
Department Heads





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Service Board

BOARD MINUTES OF THE JULY 15, 2021 MEETING

The Marion Utility Service Board held their meeting on Thursday, July 15, 2021 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: Bob Logan, Chairman; Doug Carl; Bill Dorsey; Mia Erickson; Al Green; Von Jackson; and Herschel Lewis.

Also present at the meeting were: Chuck Binkerd, Director; Pat Pinkerton, Assistant Director for Engineering; Robin Shrader, Assistant Director for Operations and Maintenance; Mike Conner, Attorney; Tiffany Snyder, Accounting/Billing Coordinator; Misty Humphries, Secretary; and Mark Theel, Marion Utilities.

CONSIDERATION OF AGENDA ADDITIONS OR DELETIONS

Mr. Carl moved, seconded by Mr. Jackson, to add IDEM Expert Consulting as Item I under new business. All board members in attendance voted aye. Motion carried unanimously.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Carl moved, seconded by Mrs. Erickson, to approve the minutes of the June 17, 2021 regular meeting. All board members in attendance voted aye. Motion carried unanimously.

FINANCIALS

Mrs. Snyder reminded the Board that the January and February preliminary financials were presented at the last meeting. She then stated that the January and February financials had been finalized. After further review, the gains that were saw in January by all four utilities increased. This was due to missing exports from the billing software. The February financials saw a loss in three utilities; however, the loss was not as much as presented in the preliminary financials. Again, this was due to missing exports. The Wastewater division experienced a gain. Mrs. Snyder stated that she and Mrs. Wilson were working to complete the March financials as well. In February, there was a loss in three of the Utilities. Mr. Lewis moved, seconded by Mr. Carl, to approve the finalized January and February financials. All board members in attendance voted aye. Motion carried unanimously.

UPDATE ON PROJECTS

Mr. Pinkerton reported that Insight had been in town working on the cured-in-place projects that were bid earlier. The Northwood area was completed. Insight would be working in the 18th & Meridian area next week. Mr. Pinkerton stated that there had been some emergency repairs in the 17th & Gallatin alley. Approximately, 40 ft of sewer collapsed and needed replaced. It is under an AT&T duct bank. They had to dig underneath both sides of it and replace the sewer. This may be more than a T&M, but there was no choice in the matter as the main backed up. The other emergency issue was worse. AT&T duct



banks were again over the sewer, but this time there were three to five duct banks on top of the sewer. The location is at 5th-6th & Washington St. Alley. Mr. Pinkerton asked about the legality of other utilities taking up the entire right of way and laying their utilities on top of ours restricting our ability to work. Mr. Pinkerton said right now the answer is for AT&T to be onsite helping to dig around their utilities. Mr. Jackson asked if there is any communication between AT&T or the other utilities and us when AT&T installs their services. Mr. Pinkerton said that we now receive locate requests. However, these services were put in place decades ago and there probably wasn't a lot of communication at that time. Mr. Lewis asked what a duct bank was. Mr. Pinkerton said that it was a passage way for services to go through. Mr. Jackson said it was like a conduit. Mr. Pinkerton said Mr. Jackson was correct. Mr. Logan asked if this was T&M work the Utility employees were doing. Mr. Pinkerton said no, that Keith Sullivan helped with the first one emergency issue, and Dave's was helping with the last issue. However, there was no room for digging so Utility crews hydro-excavated the area. Mr. Pinkerton added that AT&T not only put their duct banks on our sewer but also their vault.

2219 S. WASHINGTON ST. ADJUSTMENT REQUEST

Mr. Binkerd reminded the board that Grace House made a request for an adjustment due to tenants vacating apartments that had leaky toilets without reporting the issue to management. The Committee met and discussed the issue. It was a tough issue because people want to help; however, the Board does not adjust for leaky toilets or vacant premises with active services. Mr. Binkerd said that the Committee would recommend that Grace House apply for assistance through the H2O Fund. Mr. Logan asked who managed the H2O Fund. Mr. Binkerd answered the United Way. Mr. Carl added that Grace House had paid the bill in its entirety. Mr. Carl moved, seconded by Mr. Lewis, to accept the recommendation of the Water Committee. All board members in attendance voted aye. Motion carried unanimously.

TRANSFERS & PAY REQUESTS

There were none.

DIGESTER REPAIR QUOTES

Mrs. Shrader explained that the #1 and #2 digesters were located behind the L.E.A.D. Center. The digesters are used for residuals. The brick on the digesters is failing. There was \$430,000 budgeted for this work and also included #3 and #4 digesters. Repairs for #3 and #4 would be brought back at a later time. Quotes for repairs were sought from three vendors. Two of the three vendors responded. Blakely's quoted \$157,000; Complete Masonry did not respond to the quote; and Hagerman Group did not respond to the quote. Mr. Lewis asked what kind of work would be done. Mrs. Shrader said tuck pointing. Mr. Carl asked if Blakely's had been used before. Mrs. Shrader said yes. Mr. Logan asked if the quote was a fair price. Mrs. Shrader said it is a bit high but given issues from COVID it is a fair price. Mrs. Erickson moved, seconded by Mr. Jackson, to approve the quote submitted by Blakely's in the amount of \$157,000. All board members in attendance voted aye. Motion carried unanimously.

NEW GOLF CART QUOTES

Mrs. Shrader said it was time to look at quotes for a new golf cart. The quantity of trips from building to building by operators using golf carts was incredible and miles are racked up quickly. There were two quotes submitted. GT Carts, from Monticello, quoted \$7,729.10. EZGO Freedom RXV Golf Cars, from Ft. Wayne, quoted \$8,500. Mrs. Shrader said that the prices were slightly over the amount budgeted but with supply chain issues the prices were not bad. EZGO couldn't deliver until the cart until next May though. GT Carts could deliver sooner. Mrs. Shrader said that \$6,000 was budgeted for the purchase.

However, \$30,000 was budgeted for pickup truck purchase that would not happen this year due to supply chain issues. This would leave enough money in the budget to cover the \$1,721 difference. Mr. Lewis moved, seconded by Mr. Green, to approve the quote submitted by GT Carts. All board members in attendance voted aye. Motion carried unanimously.

SOLID WASTE RETIREMENT

Mr. Pinkerton stated that Tracy Emmons had been with the Utility for 19 years. He would be retiring on July 29th. Mr. Pinkerton asked for permission to bestow the customary gift along with hosting a reception for Mr. Emmons. Mrs. Erickson moved, seconded by Mr. Lewis, to approve the retirement request for Mr. Emmons. All board members in attendance voted aye. Motion carried unanimously. The Board thanked Mr. Emmons for his work and dedication to the Utility and Community over the years.

SWIF GRANT

Mr. Binkerd said that this was an interesting time as quite a bit of money was out there for a lot of projects. There was an opportunity to partner with the County. A conversation was held with a County Commissioner about a potential project in the 38th Street and Home Avenue area. Mr. Binkerd said this was a county area, but there are failing sewers in the area that ultimately ends up at the Utility. There are environmental concerns as well. After the conversations, it was realized that the County could provide 50% of the costs through the County American Rescue Plan. The other 50% could be contributed by the Utilities through the State Water Infrastructure Grant Funds. Both entities would contribute \$1,750,000. This would be subject to the grant award though. Mr. Pinkerton said that there is not a commitment from the County yet. Mr. Pinkerton said the grant had to be submitted by the 15th and was also the reason it was being presented now. Mr. Jackson asked if the area was the one discussed several years ago. Mr. Pinkerton said yes. However, he was not sure if the grant application was completed as there was not a lot of public support for it. Mr. Binkerd said this would be a great blessing to those in that area. Mr. Binkerd asked for approval subject to the receipt of the grant and partnership with the County. Mr. Carl asked if the line would run to the house or if it would just be in the street. Mr. Pinkerton said they would just be to the property line. Mr. Pinkerton said the County Health Department had been in the area and did not trust any of the systems out there. They would also have the authority to require people to tap into the sewer. Mr. Jackson asked if there was any liability on utility engineers. Mr. Binkerd said he didn't think there was any liability as a consultant would be used on the project. Mr. Jackson asked what the acronym stood for. Mr. Binkerd answered State Water Infrastructure Fund. Mr. Lewis moved, seconded by Mrs. Erickson, to approve the project subject to grant approval and partnership with the County. All board members in attendance voted aye. Motion carried unanimously.

PROPERTY PURCHASE: HOME AVE & LINCOLN

Mr. Pinkerton presented an aerial map with three colors: red, purple, and blue. Mr. Pinkerton met with Mr. John Jackson to discuss the purple area. Mr. Johnson was open to a purchase of the property. Mr. Pinkerton said the land assessed at \$3,500. A \$5,000 offer was made. Mr. Jackson was willing to accept the offer. Mr. Carl asked what the red property represented. Mr. Pinkerton said that the triangular area in the red was owned by the railroad. The railroad was not interested in selling the area. The rectangular area in red may be of interest for purchasing purposes in the future. Mr. Dorsey moved, seconded by Mr. Green, to approve the property purchase for the amount of \$5,000. All board members in attendance voted aye. Motion carried unanimously.

METER PILOT STUDY

Mrs. Shrader said that lead and copper service remediation and meter overhaul had been mentioned several times. Mrs. Shrader said that ultrasonics would be the preferred meter as there is no moving parts which would require less maintenance. Kamstrup is a Danish company with a base in Atlanta. Mrs. Shrader said she has been very pleased with them. The choice comes down between Kamstrup and Neptune. Mrs. Shrader said she would like to see Kamstrup because we know what Neptune does already. It would include 500 meters with installation and different sizes. It also includes the software. It is software that reads almost constantly. There are alerts that would be sent for high or low usage as well as tampering. Mrs. Shrader would like to proceed with the study for \$250,628 this year which was only \$628 over the budgeted amount. Mr. Logan asked if this would take over meter reading. Mr. Binkerd said yes. This type of system could have sent Grace House a text alerting them of the issue and an adjustment may not have been needed. Mr. Binkerd said Kamstrup was really ahead of Neptune which was a solid system. Mr. Carl asked how the 500 would be chosen. Mrs. Shrader said it would depend on the receiver, but it would be a broad area. Mrs. Shrader would like to see some placed in trouble areas where there are a lot of rereads each month. Mr. Jackson asked if this was forward thinking software and wanted to know who would control the data. Mrs. Shrader said that it was Cloud based software. There would be a monthly fee that would take care of maintenance and security. The current meter readers are contractors so there would not be downsizing any Utility employees. Mrs. Shrader said that a gain would be that every third meter would have a listening device to help with leak detection. Mr. Binkerd jokingly said not the type of listening devices we've been accused of using. Mrs. Shrader said that in the future the meters could be equipped with an on/off switch as well. Mrs. Erickson asked how soon this could be implemented. Mrs. Shrader said before the weather turned cold. Mr. Logan asked how much it would cost for all 11,000 meters. Mrs. Shrader said \$2 million with some overage for labor costs. However, there would need to be a cyclical installation so that in the future all meters would not need to be replaced at the same time. Mr. Carl asked how long the meters last. Mrs. Shrader answered that the warranty was 20 years so at least that long hopefully. Mr. Carl then questioned how much data the study would provide. Mrs. Shrader said 1 years' worth. Mr. Dorsey asked who would read the data and if this would cause another position to be added. Mrs. Shrader said no because the CSRs would have access to the information. Mr. Binkerd added that this system could potentially be a huge help to customers as well because customers would have the same information available to them as far as usage and readings that staff would have. Mr. Jackson said that it sounded like the meters should help customers and with troubleshooting. Mr. Lewis moved, seconded by Mr. Green, to approve the meter pilot study. All board members in attendance voted aye. Motion carried unanimously.

FIELD TECHNICIAN POSITION

Mrs. Shrader said that historically the number of Distribution Crew numbers had been experimented with...especially with those that help the customer service group. The numbers were decreased recently because it was thought that more contracting would be done. There were some issues that were being worked through. A retiree has been working part time to assist with needs. The retiree has notified us that he will be leaving at the end of September. Mrs. Shrader said that there was a current position that hadn't been filled, and she would like to fill it. There was a review of the position description and slight changes were made to the description. The pay range was a reflection of changes made four to five years ago to the technician positions across the board. Mrs. Shrader said that there was not a candidate at that time. She wanted to bring this back, ask the Board for approval to fill the position, and get approval of the description updates. Mr. Dorsey asked how many field technicians were employed. Mrs. Shrader said one. Mr. Dorsey asked if the person would be in an on-call rotation. Mrs. Shrader said yes.

Mrs. Erickson moved, seconded by Mr. Lewis, to approve the Field Technician job description. All board members in attendance voted aye. Motion carried unanimously.

I&M EXPERT CONSULTING

Mr. Binkerd said that this had been an issue over the last seven years. The Board had engaged with NewGen in the past. This was done in cooperation with the City of Fort Wayne. Mr. Binkerd said that I&M had requested rate increases come from 6-8% to 40% recently. He felt it was important as the Utility was a large electric user, as well as the city, to engage in fighting rate increases. It made sense to look at the rate increases from a rate payer perspective. Mr. Binkerd stated that the IURC had agreed with us on several items. I&M had just filed for another rate increase. A few meetings ago, a resolution was brought to the board to engage with the City of Ft. Wayne to fight the large purchase of a power plant. The issue was that I&M built it, sold it, leased it back, and now want to buy it back and decommission it. The costs would be passed back to rate payers. Now this rate increase had been presented on top of that issue. The rate increase looked to be 6% at first. However, because their rate increase was so complex it worked out to a 15% increase. Mr. Binkerd said he would like to engage with these experts. Their fee could be \$100,000 which would be split that with Ft. Wayne. Our portion would be \$35,000. The experts would be working on a time and materials method according to Mr. Binkerd. Mr. Carl asked if this was in the budget. Mr. Binkerd said that there was a budget line, but he could not say where that budget line was. Mr. Binkerd said it was a big complicated mess. Mr. Lewis moved, seconded by Mr. Jackson, to approve the engagement with NewGen. All board members in attendance voted aye. Motion carried unanimously.

SENIOR LEADERSHIP REPORTS

P. Pinkerton, Assistant Director for Engineering

Mr. Pinkerton said that System Maintenance crews had swept the main through fairs twice. They were going through the rest of the city for a second time. In June, Solid Waste averaged 56 tons again. Mr. Pinkerton reported that solid waste was busier this year than the previous year. Fifty-three tons had been hauled to the landfill by the end of June. Revenue from drop offs was up by \$40,000. Last year's revenue from drop off customers at the Transfer Station totaled \$44,000. Mr. Pinkerton also stated that the bailer was here and had been used. It is definitely bigger. One bailer takes care of plastic and the other one cardboard. Number one plastics were about \$70 per ton at the time of report.

R. Shrader, Assistant Director for Operations & Maintenance

Mrs. Shrader said that she attended the Wastewater Challenge in Columbus yesterday. Teams compete in five disciplines: lab, safety, residuals, collections, and operations & maintenance. Mrs. Erickson asked if she won. Mrs. Shrader said she was just there to watch and ended up being put on a team with others that signed up to watch. Her team did win the operations & maintenance discipline. It was definitely a fun time, and she hoped to have pictures to share soon.

C. Binkerd, Utility Director

Mr. Binkerd said that he would be in Atlanta during the first week of August for the National Management Conference for AWWA and WEF. Mr. Binkerd stated that the Senior Leadership Team would continue to look at the Customer Service operations to ensure that it met the goals of our operation and was serving the community. Mr. Binkerd thanked the Board for indulging the big agenda.

BOARD MEMBERS' COMMENTS

There were no comments at this time.

CHAIRMAN'S REMARKS

Mr. Logan thanked everyone for their attendance and involvement. He stated that it was wonderful to work with such an outstanding group of people.

The next meeting was scheduled for Thursday, August 5, 2021 perhaps.

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

Meeting adjourned at 6:32 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