



## Marion Utilities

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

## Service Board

### BOARD MINUTES OF THE MARCH 19, 2026 MEETING

The Marion Utility Service Board held their meeting on Thursday, March 19, 2026 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; Isaiah Fuller, Mike Graft, Al Green, Herschel Lewis, and Jayda Monteiro. Kristy Barney was absent.

Also present at the meeting were: Robin Shrader, Director; Pat Pinkerton, Assistant Director for Engineering & Solid Waste; Chad Guyer, Assistant Director for Operations & Maintenance; Kyle Persinger, Attorney; Tiffany Snyder, Accounting Billing Coordinator; Misty Humphries, Secretary; and Gary Fordyce, City Council.

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

There were none.

#### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Mr. Lewis moved, seconded by Reverend Green, to approve the minutes of the March 5, 2026 meeting. A roll call vote was taken. The votes were as follows: Mr. Graft, yes; Reverend Green, yes; Mr. Lewis, yes; Dr. Monteiro, abstain; and Mr. Logan, yes. (Mr. Fuller had not yet arrived.) Motion carried by majority.

#### **UPDATE ON PROJECTS**

Mr. Pinkerton reported that it was still a little slow out there. There was a CSO 009 meeting scheduled for tomorrow with Commonwealth. There was still a lot of paperwork submittals being completed. Mr. Pinkerton said that Keith Sullivan's crew had a soft start on the water lagoons. Mr. Pinkerton wasn't sure if the crew would be onsite next week or not. He added that once the crews are full start, it wouldn't take them very long to complete the project.

#### **RATE PROPOSAL**

Mrs. Shrader reported that last Tuesday, she went before the City Council once again to present a request to petition the IURC for a water rate increase of 39.21% above the current rates. President Cowgill offered a few comments, but there was really no other discussion. Two members of the community spoke during the public hearing session, but neither were opposed to the increase. The Council then voted to suspend the rules and passed the ordinance unanimously. Mrs. Shrader stated that this afternoon, the Senior Leadership Team met with legal and financial advisors to discuss next steps in preparing the case for the IURC. She also stated that as soon as the signed ordinance was received, we would move forward with that plan. Mr. Logan said he appreciated everyone's work on this. He then thanked Mr. Fordyce and Council for moving this forward.

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



Mr. Pinkerton presented a pay request to Thieneman for the CSO 009 work done to date which included mostly bonds, paperwork, soil borings, and erosion control in the amount of \$198,750 with \$5,962.50 held in retainage. Mr. Lewis moved, seconded by Reverend Green, to approve the pay request. A roll call vote was taken. The votes were as follows: Mr. Fuller, yes; Mr. Graft, yes; Reverend Green, yes; Mr. Lewis, yes; Dr. Monteiro, yes; and Mr. Logan, yes. Motion carried unanimously.

### **SOFTWARE CONTRACTPONSORSHIP REQUESTS**

Mrs. Humphries reminded the board that the 2026 budgets included the purchase of new software for the billing, accounting, and HR processes. Mrs. Humphries that this would involve two vendors-Frey and Invoice Cloud. Mrs. Humphries said the first vendor, Frey, would work as an umbrella as they have written software for each process. The BUCS program would take care of all of the accounting needs. With that, Mrs. Humphries said, we would have access to general ledger, accounts payable, a budget planning module which was not available under the current software so Excel has to be used, a bank reconciliation and check void feature which was a huge benefit. Mrs. Humphries explained that the Utilities has 14 bank accounts that Mrs. Snyder has to reconcile each month. Currently, there was not a bank reconciliation module that worked available to aid in those reconciliations so Mrs. Snyder has to complete those by hand which requires the printing and review of various reports. The hope was that the bank reconciliation module would aid in the process making it easier and a little faster. Mrs. Humphries added that the BUCS program would also include blank check stock, encumbrance processing, fixed asset module for which an external spreadsheet had to be contracted out, as well as formatting and uploading information into the AFR. Mrs. Humphries explained that if we were given access to the AFR, we could upload utilities' information into the Indiana Gateway and AFR for the controller's office which would save the controller and staff manual entry. Should the controller's office not allow the upload of the information, we could still print a report to provide to the controller's office for continued manual entry. Mrs. Humphries added that there would be licenses also provided that would allow for different permission and security settings. Mrs. Humphries explained that when State Board of Accounts (SBOA) conducts their audit each year, they like to have a view only license available to them so that they can login to the software without being able to change or edit information so to avoid mistakes. Crowe also receives a view only license to aid in financial review, preparation, and so they may assist with any questions.

The second program that would be included in the purchase was the CHIPS program which would take care of the payroll and HR needs. Modules included in that program included a bank reconciliation for payroll purposes. Mrs. Humphries said that this would be incredibly helpful as our current software imports everything into the accounting general ledger which was daunting to review. Mrs. Humphries quipped that President Cowgill asked for a copy of the ledger and printed out, the ledger was 492 pages because the current software presents entries over multiple lines and sometimes creates those double entries. Electronic filing, ACH direct deposit, and a timeclock interface would also be included. Mrs. Humphries explained that the current timeclock program was developed and written by the IT Coordinator whom Mrs. Humphries has said was amazing as he can develop and often build anything requested. The Frey timeclock interface would be able to import the time entries to the software. Again, a number user licenses with varying security and permissions would be provided in order to allow administrative staff to complete their current responsibilities without having access to confidential information.

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##### **MAYORAL APPOINTMENTS (4-YEAR TERMS)**

Isaiah Fuller (7/2024-7/2028) Al Green (7/2023-7/2027)  
Herschel Lewis (7/2022-7/2026) Jayda Monteiro (7/2025-7/2029)

##### **CITY COUNCIL APPOINTMENT (4-YEAR TERMS)**

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The third Frey program was CUBIC. This would be used to meet customer service and billing needs. There would be 47 multi-user licenses tailored according to position responsibilities. The CUBIC program would also interface with the new Kamstrup meters and READy software. Mrs. Humphries said this would provide greater customer service and allow for an easy billing process. Mrs. Humphries said that the CUBIC program was also offering a new lien module which was not developed or available when the utilities was previous with Frey. Previous and current liens have to be processed outside of the software. The new module would allow for lien correspondence, processing, filing, history, and notation with the software. The price of the new software included three historical years of conversion, training for staff, and Crystal Report licenses which we currently only have one of now. This would allow our IT Coordinator and Communication Specialist to develop and design our own branded forms, reports, and billing statements.

Mrs. Humphries said that the second vendor involved with this move was Invoice Cloud. Invoice Cloud will enable us to send an e-bill and smart links to a cell phone number. The message would state that a new bill was available for viewing and payment along with the bill due date, and a link for making a payment. Invoice Cloud would also set up reminders for customers when their bills were coming due. Lastly, a customer that makes a payment using the link would also receive a payment confirmation message. Mrs. Humphries said that there was a potential savings by partnering with Invoice Cloud. The savings presented here were based upon the postage rates of \$0.78 and the postal office was discussing another rate increase so there could be additional savings. Mrs. Humphries said approximately 12,000 bills were sent out each month. The goal was to see a 5% increase to adoption of paperless bills. If this was reached, the cost would be \$0.10 per bill instead of the \$0.78 per bill. Mrs. Humphries said ideally a marker of 25-30% of e-bill adoption could be reached. The cost of the software was \$102,114. Mrs. Humphries said the postage cost for sending bills out was \$115,620.83. Mr. Lewis asked if there was any maintenance costs. Mrs. Humphries said yes, maintenance was approximately was \$2,500 when the utilities were contracted with Frey before. To give a perspective the cost of the billing software alone with the current provide was \$28,000. To date from 2015 through today's date of March 19, 2026, \$458,000 has been spent on the current software which doesn't meet our needs. Mrs. Humphries said that because the Utilities were previously contracted with Frey and because that software structure was still available on our servers and network, Frey was willing to credit us for that and only charge for updates to the software. Mrs. Humphries said that was something that a lot of providers would not do. Mr. Graft asked what the maintenance fee would be annually after the initial investment. Mrs. Humphries said it was 10.25%. Mr. Graft asked if this would be of the total billings. Mrs. Humphries said yes. Mrs. Humphries said that Mr. Persinger had also reviewed both contracts from Frey and Invoice Cloud. Mr. Graft asked if customers would be able to use Zillow or PayPal; or what other options would be available to customers so that they would not feel as though we were directly connected to their bank account. Mrs. Humphries said that customers will be able to use Visa, Mastercard, Discover-all of which could be used now. New payment sources would include American Express, PayPal, and Venmo. Mrs. Humphries said that she was not sure if Klarna would be available or not. However, a new option available to customer would be to make longer term arrangements with PayPal. PayPal would send the balance owed to the utilities and would then work directly with the customer to pay off the balance. Mr. Graft asked what the target would be to capture the 5%. He clarified by asking if inserts would be put in statements and posting on the website as social media would be done. Mrs. Humphries said that Invoice Cloud had a marketing team that would assist us with a media campaign and social

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media blitz. Mrs. Humphries said that current costs for mailing inserts was received, and that cost was approximately \$3,600 so that would not be ideal due to the added costs. Mrs. Humphries said that the Utilities were also a member of the Chamber of Commerce which offers billboard posting for a month. Mrs. Humphries said that the utilities were hoping to get on that schedule as well. Mrs. Humphries said that customers still paid with a lot of checks and even money orders so she was hoping that Invoice Cloud could reach some of those customers as well. Mr. Graft said that he thought it would be helpful to customers especially those that would receive reminders.

Mr. Logan asked if there was support in place should we need to contact them. Mrs. Humphries said yes. Mrs. Snyder added that Frey was located in Kentucky which was very close. Our current providers were located in Arizona which was three hours behind and Arkansas which was an hour behind. Mrs. Snyder said that this would be a big difference in the support we will be able to receive. Mrs. Humphries said that Frey has also guaranteed us that Dean Eldridge, who was previously assigned to our account, would resume as our support person. Mr. Eldridge was familiar with our organization, our operation, and even how our costs were allocated. Under the current software provider, a ticket has to be submitted and then someone will call or email you back. With Frey, our calls would go directly to Mr. Eldridge. Mr. Logan asked how easy the transition would be especially with annual reports being completed. Mrs. Humphries said that the timeframe for transition was looking to take place in July or August and taking approximately three months. The vendors have also assured us that they can import all of our information so that at year end, we can generate all needed reports directly from their software. Mr. Logan asked if there were any negatives. Mrs. Humphries said that the current systems has a lot more bells and whistles. The current software looks slick with different fonts and colors. Frey's software uses Arial and there weren't as many color combinations available. However, if we want a report to look pretty, it could be exported and the font changed or the report could be customized by using Crystal Reports. Dr. Monteiro asked if we shopped around and looked at other providers. Mrs. Humphries said we did. One of the things that we were set on was hosting the software and not using a cloud based provider due to the hacking attempts. Mrs. Humphries said that the closest vendor, other than Frey, that we found was based in Europe. Mrs. Humphries noted that Keystone had been contacted. Keystone was the software used by the City; however, Keystone did not respond to our request. It may have been due to the recent acquisition of Keystone by Bose a much larger software company. Mr. Graft asked if Mrs. Humphries thought or not that the software would be able to integrate with Keystone. Mrs. Humphries said that staff would follow the current protocol which was to print reports with the needed codes already entered. Mrs. Humphries explained that Mrs. Snyder and Mrs. Wilson with Crowe work on the codes monthly now to send those to the controller's office for uploading into the Gateway. Mrs. Humphries said hopefully there would come a time when the Controller, Deputy Controller, Mrs. Snyder, and herself could work together to allow the Utilities to either enter or upload the needed information into the Gateway. Currently, a report has to be printed and sent for manual entry. A file import by Crowe could be done to enter information without a submittal being done, but there was a preference to manually enter the information. Mrs. Humphries said that the goal was to make the entry of Gateway and AFR information easier and quicker for the Controller, Deputy Controller, and Mrs. Snyder. Mr. Lewis moved, seconded by Reverend Green, to approve the software contracts and purchase. A roll call vote was taken. The votes were as follows: Mr. Fuller, yes; Mr. Graft, yes; Reverend Green, yes; Mr. Lewis, yes; Dr. Monteiro, yes; and Mr. Logan, yes. Motion carried unanimously. Mr. Logan thanked everyone for their cooperation, questions, and work on this issue. This

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would be a much needed improvement over the two systems which don't communicate with each other properly.

### **SENIOR LEADERSHIP REPORTS**

#### **M. Humphries, Executive Assistant/Administrative Manager**

Mrs. Humphries reported that she would be out of the office beginning tomorrow through Friday, March 27<sup>th</sup>. She will return to the office on Monday, March 30<sup>th</sup> after her son's spring break.

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

Mr. Pinkerton had nothing further to report.

#### **C. Guyer, Assistant Director for Operations & Maintenance**

Mr. Guyer said that there would be some tower work on Butler Avenue. Work there was completed in 2024, but an annual inspection revealed some warranty work needed. Clear Creek would be back in on Monday. The work would probably take a week. After that, Clear Creek would move to Meridian Street as they anticipate the same problem in that tank that they found in Butler. Mr. Guyer said that there would be some cost on our end for the inspection, but the warranty work would be covered.

#### **R. Shrader, Director**

Mrs. Shrader said next week was the AWWA conference so there would be some people in and out of the office. Mrs. Shrader then said that last week we scheduled a meeting with the Personnel Committee, primarily to discuss our preliminary thought processes for managing through the next round of retirements. There were currently 10 employees eligible for full retirement in 2026. Just since the time of that meeting, we have received two additional retirement notifications, but they were from employees in positions outside the scope of what we had discussed. At this time, there are no decisions requiring board approval.

The other part of our discussion was about the annual employee appreciation breakfast. Historically we have done this once a year. Our last was in May of 2025. It is an internal gathering where we try to honor our employees for their ongoing hard work and dedication. This year, we would like to incorporate longevity recognition for employees who celebrated a milestone work anniversary during the previous year. Those milestones will be 10yrs, 15yrs, 20yrs, 25yrs, or 30+yrs and would entail a gift not to exceed a certain monetary threshold, with the lowest being \$50 and the highest being \$350, though few people make it to that top mark. This was presented to the Personnel Committee. And correct me if I'm wrong, but they all seemed enthusiastic about us continuing what has become part of our cultural tradition. As such, we have set a tentative date for this to happen on Thursday, May 7, from 8am-10am in the morning. And we would like to ask for the board's approval to close our offices to the public during that brief window for this opportunity. Dr. Monteiro said she didn't know if she liked the multiple milestones being given. Mr. Lewis said that at each milestone someone would be paid. Mrs. Shrader said that the idea was that at each milestone reached, a gift meeting that milestone value could be selected from a catalog. Mrs. Shrader said for instance this year, the gifts would total less than \$1,000 actually less than \$800. Mr. Lewis said that was because there were so many employees that were not at the longer years of service. Mrs. Humphries added that there was one employee who reached his 40 years of service last year. Mrs. Shrader said that a host of other organizations were contacted and questioned about what they did and that was how the levels presented were reached. Mrs. Humphries said that by allowing an employee

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to pick an item, their W-2 would not have to be adjusted. Mrs. Shrader added that a plaque could be picked as well. Mr. Fuller said that we would want to ensure that the catalog items were quality. Mrs. Shrader said that that catalog reviewed seemed reasonable. The main goal was the gesture of recognition to those long term employees. Mrs. Shrader stated getting back to the breakfast it was very low key. Mr. Fuller moved, seconded by Mr. Lewis, to approve the employee breakfast and delayed opening of the office until 10 a.m. A roll call vote was taken. The votes were as follows: Mr. Fuller, yes; Mr. Graft, yes; Reverend Green, yes; Mr. Lewis, yes; Dr. Monteiro, yes; and Mr. Logan, yes. Motion carried unanimously.

**BOARD MEMBERS' COMMENTS**

Dr. Monteiro said she hoped everyone was able to enjoy the sunshine.

**CHAIRMAN'S REMARKS**

Mr. Logan nice to see everyone. Mr. Logan noted that when the meetings start it was now much lighter. He closed by thanking everyone for their attendance. City Council thank you for passing the ordinance and excellent report by Mr. Fordyce on the Utility Service Board meeting.

The next meeting was scheduled for 5:30 p.m. on Thursday, April 2, 2026.

There being no further business before the Board, Mr. Lewis moved, seconded by Mr. Graft, to adjourn the meeting. A roll call vote was taken. The votes were as follows: Mr. Fuller, yes; Mr. Graft, yes; Reverend Green, yes; Mr. Lewis, yes; and Mr. Logan, yes. Motion carried by majority.

Meeting adjourned at 6:16 p.m.

Robert Logan, Chairman  
Marion Utilities Service Board

ATTEST



Misty Humphries, Its Secretary

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