



Utilities Commission
Commission Meeting

Minutes

May 4, 2022
8:30 AM

CALL TO ORDER

Attendee Name	Title	Status	Arrived
Brian Ball	City Engineer	Present	
Richard Dzik	Safety Service Director	Present	
Keith Burley	Alternate Member	Absent	
Kenneth Griffith		Absent	
Rachel Curtis		Absent	
Tom Marshall		Present	

Others in attendance: Tammy Woods, Council Representative; Kristen Goldner, Recording Secretary; Gary Koester, citizen.

MINUTES APPROVAL

Approval of Minutes is postponed until the next regular meeting in June.

- Utilities Commission - Commission Meeting - Apr 6, 2022 8:30 AM
- Utilities Commission - Special Meeting - Apr 20, 2022 9:00 AM

ADJUSTMENT JOURNAL

- April Adjustment Journal
- Motion to Approve the April Adjustment Journal

RESULT:	APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER:	Brian Ball, City Engineer
SECONDER:	Tom Marshall
AYES:	Ball, Dzik, Marshall
ABSENT:	Burley, Griffith, Curtis

STORMWATER RULES & REGULATIONS PUBLIC COMMENTS

NEW BUSINESS

Tenant Paid Utility Bills & Tenant Responsibility

Mr. Dzik said this agenda item came up in a discussion about how we handle situations when tenants/renters don't pay utility bills and if there is anything the Commission can do to hold tenants accountable. He asked about tracking tenants who leave one Mount Vernon property and move to another leaving behind unpaid utility bills.

Ms. Goldner said they do this to the best of their ability but sometimes they will move into a new residence and put the water into a different name. Maybe we know they are there but there is no recourse.

Mr. Dzik asked if Tom has seen this elsewhere.

Mr. Marshall mentioned deposits and said that most places require a deposit just like for a electric or gas bill.

Mr. Ball said some utilities required a credit check and the deposit is graduated based on the person's credit.

Mr. Dzik said that is a whole new level of us engaging with a company to do credit checks as well.

Mr. Marshall said a deposit is sufficient in his mind.

There was some discussion over how much other utilities charge and Mr. Marshall suggested an amount that would cover an amount that would be due after getting water shut off.

Mr. Dzik said that would probably be about two months of minimum. He also asked if that would be every user or would we track tenant vs. landowner.

Mr. Marshall said it would be easier to just apply it universally. It's not too much to ask to put a deposit down on a utility, it's a pretty common practice.

Ms. Woods said she wonders if, legally, you could apply different rules for tenant vs. owner.

Mr. Ball agreed that it is easier to just do it across the board.

Mr. Marshall said his staff could check around to some peer cities and draft a recommendation.

Pittsburgh Avenue West Section

Mr. Ball said we are looking at other priorities right now so we are probably looking at shelving this project.

The Commission agreed to furlough this project.

Policy Regarding Service Line Extensions and Renewals

Mr. Marshall asked if we currently have a policy in place.

Mr. Dzik said it would be in the Utility Rules & Regulations; he doesn't think we have anything more formal unless there is something in the office. He asked for Tom's thoughts.

Mr. Marshall said if we have a comprehensive plan for the city that it should include a comprehensive plan for utility build out. He spoke about the need for detailing when and how we would extend service outside the city. He recommends having a working group/committee to look into this policy, benchmark what other municipalities do, and come up with a range of options to present to Council.

Mr. Dzik said he doesn't think we do much in extensions other than with Clinton Township. He mentioned the Gambier water contract and the Mount Vernon Developmental Center which falls a bit outside the city.

Mr. Ball said we also have the city/county contract and we do have an active project in design under this contract.

Mr. Dzik thinks a working committee would be good. He mentioned the members of this commission and asked who else should be engaged.

Mr. Ball said this falls into the Mayor's strategic plan and so folks from engineering, street department, and maybe some of Tom's guys.

Mr. Marshall thinks this needs to be brought before our elected officials for the direction and then all of those departments can meet.

Mr. Dzik said he would work with Rob, there shouldn't be a majority of Council or this Commission on the committee.

OLD BUSINESS

Parrott Street Sanitary Sewer Extension

There has been no progress on this at all. Mr. Dzik suggested we take this off the agenda until there is some movement on it.

Stormwater Master Plan

Mr. Ball said this will probably roll over into the city-wide plan. Both options of having an outside consultant or city staff develop this were voted down so it will roll into the city master plan.

Mr. Marshall asked if we have a list of projects that are important to stormwater management.

Mr. Ball said we do but most people said that is not a sufficient master plan for their standards. We do have a list of approximately \$100 million worth of projects.

Mr. Marshall said he would be happy to take a look at it, he has done a lot of stormwater master plans in his time.

Stormwater Control Measure Inspection Plans

Mr. Ball said we do not have any updates on this, we aren't really staffed for it right now.

Treatment Plant Projects

Mr. Marshall discussed the progress of the lime project. It will be a community project. Kokosing is getting ready to start moving that lime. It will be piled up behind the water plant, probably for a while. It will get it out of the lagoon, though, so we can start using the lagoon again.

Mr. Marshall also discussed the state of the silos at the treatment plant; they are in danger of structural failure. He recommended having a vendor come in, put in the new system, and take the old ones when they are done. He also spoke about the phosphorous mandate from the EPA for the wastewater plant. Mr. Marshall made the suggestion that we decommission the anaerobic digesters. They are in need of multi-million dollar repairs. Instead, he suggested we look at de-watering our sludge and landfilling it. It looks like it might be a cheaper alternative and it actually doesn't even take up any space in the landfill. We have a consultant who is working on evaluating those options for us now.

Status of Receivables/Lien Process

Ms. Goldner spoke about her meeting with the County Auditor to help plan a workflow on this.

Mr. Dzik asked about the new software capabilities.

Ms. Goldner said she had not processed any liens yet but has generated the reports in the new system.

Mr. Ball spoke about liens in regards to the Stormwater Utility and maybe doing another round of letters to those customers.

Ms. Goldner and Mr. Marshall discussed their plan to send letters to all customers up for potential lien and to provide those customers with more time to resolve the debt before placing the lien.

Ms. Goldner said she would add some text about stormwater to the draft letter she has and send it to Mr. Ball for review.

Mr. Dzik asked about automating the letter generation with the new billing software. Ms. Goldner confirmed that it is a feature.

Mr. Marshall also mentioned the billing office's new shutoff policy to allow customers longer to pay before being shut off.

Westgate Mobile Home Community Agreement

Mr. Ball said we have placed this project on hold and have notified the EPA that we are terminating our loan application with the EPA. We required that they pay off the engineering before moving forward and they were unable to do that. He is still making monthly payments.

This will be taken off the agenda for a while. Engineering is tracking this but it will not be a project for a while.

Gilchrist Estates Stormwater Operation Agreement

Mr. Ball said we can't do anything on this until the Stormwater Rules and Regulations are in place. He has notified them; we have to have the rules before we can enter into the final agreement.

Mr. Dzik mentioned the special meeting and that we want to provide a time for public comment if anyone wants to speak about this.

Mr. Ball spoke about the public comment email. He has received one email that was a more specific question. Mr. Ball forwarded it to an outside attorney who is in the process of answering that question. Mr. Ball said he did see one of the lawyers on the sidewalk who thought it was a good idea.

Mr. Dzik asked if anyone present wanted to speak about the Stormwater Rules and Regulations.

Mr. Koester, citizen, asked about where to find a copy of the Rules and Regulations.

Mr. Dzik and Mr. Ball described how to find it on the city's website and offered to get him a copy.

Mr. Marshall asked how we notified the public that there is a comment period.

Mr. Ball said it was mentioned in press conferences, by the mayor, on the website, the City Facebook page.

Mr. Dzik said we also had copies on the last two Utilities Commission agenda.

Mr. Ball said we also notified Schlabaugh's and sent them a copy.

New Gambier Road Reservoir Update

Mr. Ball said we are not going to pave the driveway because Tom is looking for money for other things. The contractor still has to install the stairs inside and outside the vault. There is some seeding and cleanup still. We are going to defer the roof work until later.

Mr. Marshall said the next step is to remove the soil off the top of the reservoir, clean, prep, and coat the concrete surface and then either put the dirt back on or insulate it in some other way.

Mr. Dzik said if he remembers correctly, it almost had to be a two-phase project.

Mr. Ball explained the project and some of the uncertainties they faced going into it.

Mr. Marshall talked about the reservoir and that it doesn't provide adequate pressure to service the low-pressure areas of the city. The high-pressure pumps have to be on non-stop to provide pressure to the Industrial Park and low-pressure areas not serviced by the two towers. We need to look at providing pressure for the Industrial Park.

Clintonville Project Update

Mr. Ball said the sanitary aspects are completely installed and they are working on the post-construction camera work. We really need to go door-to-door and dye test to make sure we have the separation and proper connection. We do have one house that probably has a washer still hooked to the old sanitary which is now a storm drain. This project is getting an enormous amount of stormwater out of the sanitary sewer. There is a lot of clean up and the crews are working on that. Mr. Ball spoke about Pearl Avenue and the options there. Mr. Dzik discussed the challenges for the public and landscaping needs. Mr. Ball mentioned that it is included in the contract.

Major Purchases (Vac Truck, Valve-turning Trailer, Street Sweeper)

Mr. Ball, referring to the last email he had on this, said the Sweeper is June/July, the Vac truck is August, the Valve-turner is May/June. This is from a February 18th update and Mr. Ball hasn't received an update since.

OTHER**ADJOURN**

- Adjourn Motion

Mr. Ball made a motion to adjourn the meeting, Mr. Marshall, Second and the meeting was adjourned at 9:15 AM.

RESULT:	APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER:	Brian Ball, City Engineer
SECONDER:	Tom Marshall
AYES:	Ball, Dzik, Marshall
ABSENT:	Burley, Griffith, Curtis

Rick Dzik, Chairman

Kristen Goldner, Recording Secretary

ADJUSTMENTS
April 2022

Account #	Amount	Name	Address	Leak Credit Y or N	Reason	Date of Credit
Multiple	\$ 6,360.00			N	April 2022 non-payment fees-159 shut-offs	04/05/22
30.89.1	\$ (138.60)	South Vernon United Methodist	142 Columbus Rd	Y	Freeze Credit for 9ccf	04/07/22
03.94.3	\$ (28.96)	Lisa McVay	802 E. Gambier St.	Y	Service Line Leak Credit (1/2 water & all wastewater back to average)	04/11/22
Multiple	\$ 8,747.17			N	March 2022 Sale of Water	04/15/22
23.30.5	\$ (62.52)	Knox Co. Land Reutilization	503-505 W. High St.	N	Account should have been on vacancy rate-Waived billing after meter was pulled.	04/19/22

Communication: April Adjustment Journal (Adjustment Journal)

Any Adjustment over \$500 goes to Water/Wastewater Commission