

**VILLAGE OF COTTAGE GROVE UTILITY COMMISSION  
MEETING MINUTES OF JANUARY 13, 2021**

1. **Call to Order.** The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Charlie Rogers at 5:02 p.m. This meeting was held online via Zoom.
2. **Determine that a quorum is present, and that the agenda was properly posted.** Roll call was taken, and it was determined that a quorum was present, and that the agenda had been properly posted. Present were Charlie Rogers (chair), Mike Hackel, Heidi Murphy, Jon Russell and Joanna Williams joined at 5:05pm. Also present were Public Works Director JJ Larson, and Kevin Lord of MSA.
3. **Public Appearances – Public’s opportunity to speak to Commission Members about any item that is not a specific agenda item.** None.
4. **Old Business**
  - a. **Update on Well #3 maintenance**

Larson reported that the well was back in service and the overall project went well and came in under budget. The contractor still has to return to do minor maintenance on the backup engine and pump water with it as well as wire in the level transducer that was added.
  - b. **Update on sustainability programs**

Larson reported that the sample rain barrel arrived at his office and it seems to be of good quality and simple to assemble. Murphy reported that the plan is to offer them for purchase this spring, with Village residents getting a discount, and that the vendor runs the entire sale on behalf of the Village. Rogers asked about progress with placing solar on the roof of the Municipal Service Building. Larson stated that the Sustainability Committee will be utilizing that committee’s expertise to determine what plan makes the most sense. Larson also stated that since the roof may have many years of useful life left and since a smaller, clamp-on solar installation is likely to be recommended, there may not be the need to replace the roof prior to moving forward with solar.
5. **New Business**
  - a. **Discuss and consider resuming late payment fees.**

Larson described that the Utility had seen no impact to customer’s ability to make utility payments and that in looking at PSC records, it appears the vast majority of utilities were resuming the assessment of late payment fees. Given that, and the fact that the billing software still requires late notices be printed and sent, there was no efficiency gain by not assessing the fees and he recommended the Utility resume assessing late payment charges. Motion by Rogers, seconded by Hackel to resume late payment fees, motion carried with a unanimous voice vote 5-0-0.
  - b. **Discuss and consider 2021 Water Utility operating budget.**

Larson presented the proposed Water Utility operating budget, highlighting the line that will be used to absorb the credit card payment fees, and the lines related to mains and well maintenance. Russell asked about utilizing the budget to pick up the costs for credit card processing online payments, Larson described that the PSC now allows utilities to capture that cost in the rates. Motion by Williams, seconded by Russell to approve the 2021 Water Utility operating budget, motion carried with a unanimous voice vote 5-0-0.

**c. Discuss and consider 2021 Sewer Utility operating budget**

Larson presented proposed operating budget, highlighting the increase in treatment costs from Madison Metropolitan Sewerage District, the proposed new Utility position, and a small increase to do system flow monitoring and pollutant investigation. Rogers asked about the total rate increase to utility bills, Larson explained that the sewer rate will go up 14% for the first quarter bills, but that the 3% water increase wouldn't take effect until at least July. Motion by Murphy, seconded by Rogers to approve the Sewer Utility operating budget, motion passed with a unanimous voice vote 5-0-0.

**d. Discuss and consider Water Utility Capital Plan.**

Larson presented the Capital Plan showing the portions of equipment replacements that are funded by water funds as well as the planned projects in the coming 5 years. Motion by Rogers, seconded by Hackel to approve the Water Utility Capital Plan, motion passed with a unanimous voice vote 5-0-0.

**e. Discuss and consider Sewer Utility Capital Plan.**

Larson presented the Capital Plan showing the portions of equipment replacements that are funded by sewer funds as well as the planned projects in the coming 5 years. Motion by Rogers, seconded Williams by to approve the Sewer Utility Capital Plan, motion passed with a unanimous voice vote 5-0-0.

**f. Discuss and consider sewer rates for 2021.**

Larson presented the recommended 14% sewer rate increase. Motion by Rogers, seconded by Russel to approve the sewer rate increase for 2021, motion passed with a unanimous voice vote 5-0-0.

**6. Engineer's Report.**

GLACIAL DRUMLIN PATH/CLARK STREET – MSA will be submitting plans to WisDOT on the grant portion of the plans in January. MSA is working with the Village Staff and Attorney with the properties west of Vilas Road to acquire lands for a pond that will benefit both the Village and the property owner. Once completed the plan is to complete the design for the roadway construction along Clark Street and Grove Street.

WESTLAWN FIFTH ADDITION PHASE 2 – Water and sanitary sewer have been installed for Phase 2. Storm sewer is being installed and utility testing is yet to be completed.

ATWELL SUITES HOTEL CTH TT – Water and sanitary sewer have been installed along the proposed entrance drive from CTH TT. The developer was planning to install what was necessary to complete the entrance road in order to make the land look more attractive for other developments.

COTTAGE GROVE COMMONS PHASE 2 – Utility work is just beginning for this development starting with the sanitary sewer relocation.

DEVELOPMENT REVIEWS – MSA is reviewing developments looking to continue. Cottage Grove Commons Phase 2 (CTH N and Gaston Road improvements) and Quarry Ridge Estates Phase B are anticipated to begin shortly. MSA is reviewing the plans of Glen Grove Apartments, Highland Village, and concepts of The Farm development as submitted.

## 7. Director's Report

### Well 3 maintenance

Municipal Well and Pump completed re-installing everything last week.

Only remaining items are programming new level transducer into SCADA and maintenance on our backup engine.

Well #2 is supplying the low zone while #3 is off; had no issues.

### AMI cost reporting

As of this writing, have a final cost for our AMI project.

Entire project came in slightly under the overall anticipated costs.

Prepared to submit the formal documentation to the PSC but will go over it with our auditors in the coming weeks prior to submission.

### Additional PSC reporting requirements

The PSC is requiring additional reporting of pandemic related costs; our Utility has not seen any real financial impacts.

There is also a required report on additional measures that are being taken by Utilities to assist customers with payments; our Utility Clerk has always been very helpful to customers and offered great flexibility in payment agreements, so we do not need additional measures or policy changes.

### Additional Utility position

Position description in this month's budget materials for consideration.

Village Board approved funding 10% of the position with General Fund money, remaining is planned 45% Water, 45% Sewer.

Assuming it is authorized, I plan to offer the job internally to our existing staff first.

Position will ease the workload for the rest of Marty's staff and allow us to be a bit more efficient across the board by having one person dedicated to these utility-specific duties.

8. **Approve vouchers for payment. Motion** by Rogers, seconded by Russel, to approve payment of the vouchers in the amount of \$17,673.55. Motion carried by a unanimous voice vote of 5-0-0.
9. **Approve the minutes of the November 18, 2020 meeting. Motion** by Williams, seconded by Murphy, to approve the minutes of the November 18, 2020 meeting as presented. Motion carried by a unanimous voice vote of 5-0-0.
10. **Approve the minutes of the December 16, 2020 meeting.**  
**Motion** by Rogers, seconded by Williams, to approve the minutes of the December 16, 2020 meeting as presented. Motion carried by a unanimous voice vote of 5-0-0.
11. **Set next meeting date.** The next meeting of the Utility Commission will be held on Wednesday, February 10, 2021 at 5:00 p.m.
12. **Future agenda items.**
  - Pollutant source investigation
13. **Adjournment. Motion** by Williams, seconded by Murphy, to adjourn the meeting at 5:54 p.m. Motion approved by unanimous voice vote, 5-0-0.

Respectfully submitted by JJ Larson, Director of Public Works & Utilities

Approved on: 3/10/21

*These minutes represent the general subject matter discussed in this meeting but do not reflect a verbatim discussion of the subjects and conversations that took place.*