

PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMITTEE

APRIL 24, 2019

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m. by Chairman Jonathan Smith. Committee members present were Jonathan Smith and Barry VanHoozen. Also present were Bridgette Kabat, City Administrator, Laura Alkire, Law Director, and Alice Godsey, Director of Public Utilities.

CITIZENS' CONCERNS

Diane Bishop, 231 West Seventh Street, and Kathy Briggs, 972 Mulberry Street, expressed their displeasure with the charge added to their monthly water bills because they have chosen to not have a radio read meter installed. They requested that the fee be reconsidered and either lowered or eliminated. They said it is not fair that they have to pay to have someone come out to read their meter. Mr. Smith said that this was discussed at the time the City converted to monthly billing and the fee was changed from \$20 a quarter to \$12 a month to more closely reflect the actual cost. Mr. Smith asked that the Administration send the breakdown of the cost to Ms. Bishop and Ms. Briggs. Ms. Godsey said she will also reexamine the actual time involved to get and process the readings.

LEGISLATION TO LEVY CSSD 211 PHASE 2 SPECIAL ASSESSMENTS

Ms. Godsey reported that construction on Cherry Street Sewer Separation District 211 Phase 2 was completed in 2018. There is still some surface restoration ongoing, but it does not affect the cost of the project. There are 102 parcels to be assessed for a total of \$535,579.52 based on the same methodology used for the last twenty years. The Committee agreed 2-0 to recommend approval of the assessment.

LEGISLATION TO HIRE GEOTECHNICAL EVALUATION FOR FT. MEIGS DITCH

Ms. Godsey requested approval to enter into a contract with Bowser Morner for \$25,396.00 for them to look at the slope stability on the east side of the Fort Meigs ditch. Ms. Godsey said that they will do 18-20 test borings, evaluate the test points, and take a percentage of those samples to the lab to analyze the soil. They will also prepare an evaluation report. Mr. Smith asked if they will make recommendations on how to fix the ditch. Ms. Godsey said that this is a qualitative analysis of stability and if a structure is required, that would be another phase. Mr. Smith asked about the time frame. Ms. Godsey said that they are requesting that this be approved as an emergency and if it is approved, they should have the report by late June. Mr. Smith asked about the status of the fence. Ms. Kabat said that they need to understand the scope of this study before installing the fence. The Committee agreed 2-0 to recommend approval of the agreement with Bowser Morner.

BACKFLOW PREVENTION UPDATE

Ms. Godsey distributed an updated spreadsheet showing the status of backflow prevention within the City. There was discussion regarding the Ohio EPA rules regarding backflow and the City's rules. Ms. Kabat said our focus is to get compliance because we feel the best way to ensure the public water system is protected is by requiring RPZ. Mr. VanHoozen said that some commercial users use less water than residential customers

and by requiring the RPZ, it can be expensive for businesses. Laurie Melchior-Huskisson, 26810 Hull Prairie Road, said that painting all businesses with the same brush is a disservice. She said that she feels the City's rule is discretionary, and it does not say every commercial user has to have it. She said that we need to look at this with a common sense approach, and if she has to do it, every residence is going to have to do it. Mr. Smith asked to find out what devices other communities are requiring, and Ms. Alkire's opinion regarding the legal requirements. Ms. Alkire said that according to state law, it rests on the Utilities Director because they have the expertise.

UPDATE ON WATER OPTIONS

Mr. Smith stated that we have received the Jones and Henry summary. Ms. Godsey said that she received the draft route study and preliminary information on rate impacts. Ms. Kabat said that we need to have a sit down with Bowling Green because we have the projected transmission costs, and we need to ask BG what the costs to their facility would be and what they would charge us.

Ms. Kabat reported that they had a meeting with Toledo with our counter to their counter. She said the Administration's goal is to put together a matrix with the pros and cons and a rate by 1,000 cubic feet to compare apples to apples. Ms. Kabat said the City of Toledo has offered to do a presentation to City Council. Mr. Smith requested that this presentation be done as a committee of the whole. She said that it would be reasonable to have a decision by mid-summer with an effective date of January 1, 2020. Mr. Smith said that he would like to know how the other communities are reacting to this and if they intend to stay with Toledo. Ms. Kabat said that they are holding close to the vest and every community has different circumstances. She said that they conveyed to Toledo's Law Director that Toledo needs to take the first step.

OTHER BUSINESS

Mr. Smith asked if we have looked at the 99 year agreement with the Township to ensure that we are not charging too much giving the water conversations we are currently having with Toledo and BG, and that these costs are fair and equitable. Ms. Godsey said that the agreement limits the amount we can charge to non-residents up to 125% of the inside City sewer rates, and up to 115% of the inside City water rates.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 7:29 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jonathan Smith, Chairman
Public Utilities Committee

Next meeting: Wednesday, May 22, 2019 at 6:00 p.m.