

BLACK RIVER FALLS UTILITY COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

May 18, 2020

Utility Commission President John Lund called a meeting of the Black River Falls Municipal Utility Commission to order on May 18, 2020 at 3:59 p.m. in the Council Room at 101 South Second Street. Commissioners in attendance were Jay Eddy, Jeff Amo, Pete Olson, and Don Mathews. Also present were General Manager Casey Engebretson, Office Manager Julie Babcock, and JoDee Brooke (Banner Journal).

A motion was made by Commissioner Olson and seconded by Commissioner Mathews to approve the minutes from the February 24, 2020 Regular Meeting.

Aye: Lund, Amo, Eddy, Olson, and Mathews
Motion carried.

A motion was made by Commissioner Eddy and seconded by Commissioner Mathews to approve the accounts payable vouchers; February Accounts Payable (CK #36334 - 36393; HC #100377 - #100384) – Totaling \$656,287.14; March Accounts Payable (CK #36394 – 36449 and 36451 - 36464; HC #100385 - #100392) – Totaling \$643,128.88; April Accounts Payable (CK #36465 - 36525; HC #100393 - #100400) – Totaling \$762,432.85

Aye: Lund, Amo, Eddy, Olson, and Mathews
Motion Carried.

Julie Babcock reviewed the April 2020 financial statements.

Julie Babcock reviewed the February, March, and April 2020 arrearages. Julie noted the increase in arrearages due to customer non-payment resulting from the PSCW Order prohibiting disconnects.

Casey Engebretson reviewed programs offered by WPPI in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The Member Loan program parameters were changed to allow a short-term interim loan to increase liquidity issues at member utilities. The Community Recharge Program is a grant offered to all 51 member utilities, totaling \$502,000, to be used for Covid relief efforts in each community. Appropriations are calculated using total revenues and the number of electric meters. BRFMU's portion will be \$6,100.00. The Commission discussed different options for the grant funds. Engebretson also stated that if approved by the WPPI Board of Directors, WPPI staff would also utilize approximately \$4.8M dollars to lower the wholesale energy costs in July and August. Any decrease in costs will flow through the utility to the customer through the Power Cost Adjustment Calculation (PCAC).

A motion was made by Commissioner Mathews and seconded by Commissioner Olson to authorize Casey Engebretson to administer the Community Recharge Grant funds as discussed, so long as Engebretson discusses potential uses with Commission President Lund.

Aye: Lund, Amo, Eddy, Olson, and Mathews
Motion Carried.

Casey Engebretson stated that the Water Dept. would be postponing two (2) water main projects in 2020, due to uncertainty with revenues due to COVID-19.

Casey Engebretson discussed the coating issues on the final clarifiers at the WWTP. Staff met with Crane Engineering in March and the primer was determined to be the issue. Crane will recoat both clarifiers when the weather allows. This warranty work will be at no cost to the Utility.

Casey Engebretson explained the work the electric crew performed in preparation of the Hwy 12/27 bridge project. Kevin LaValley researched underground and overhead options for the distribution circuit. Electric crews completed a temporary distribution circuit, which will be returned to overhead at the completion of the project. This option saved approximately \$16,000.

Casey Engebretson asked the Commission to revisit the handbook language change approved at the January 2020 Commission meeting and revisited at the February 2020 meeting, concerning sick leave usage. Engebretson collaborated with the City Administrator to ensure the language was the same as the City's handbook.

A motion was made by Commissioner Amo and seconded by Commissioner Eddy to approve the handbook revision as presented.

Aye: Lund, Amo, Eddy, Olson, and Mathews
Motion Carried.

A motion was made by Commissioner Olson and seconded by Commissioner Amo to award the BRFMU/WPPI Economic Development grant to the Black River Falls Downtown Association in the amount of \$1,000.00.

Aye: Lund, Amo, Eddy, Olson, and Mathews
Motion carried.

Casey Engebretson provided an update on the operations center. The PSCW continues to review the Construction Authorization and the electric rate case. Engebretson has collaborated with the architect, project manager, and Focus on Energy to realize energy efficiency options and incentives.

Casey Engebretson notified the Commission that the potential buyer of the sand stockpile no longer needs the sand. Engebretson has received a number of requests to purchase sand; however, access to the stockpile is currently limited.

The Commission discussed the upcoming retirement of Electric Line Foreman Cal Thompson. Cal's last day will be August 1, 2020. Casey Engebretson requested authorization to post the Line Foreman position internally.

A motion was made by Commissioner Eddy and seconded by Commissioner Mathews to approve the posting of the Line Foreman position internally.

Aye: Lund, Amo, Eddy, Olson, and Mathews
Motion carried.

A motion was made by Commissioner Amo and seconded by Commissioner Eddy to adjourn at 5:10 p.m.

Aye: Lund, Amo, Eddy, Olson, and Mathews
Motion carried.

Casey Engebretson, General Manager
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