

**MARSHFIELD UTILITIES, A MUNICIPAL UTILITY  
MARSHFIELD UTILITY COMMISSION  
February 10, 2014**

**COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES**

A regular meeting of the Marshfield Utility Commission was called to order by President Mike Eberl at 4:00 pm on February 10, 2014 in the downstairs meeting room of the utility office. Present were Commissioners Mike Eberl, Patrick Ott, George Holck, and Aaron Pitzenberger. Also present were Alderperson Robert Workinger and the Utility staff. Absent were Commissioner Harry Nienaber and Alderperson Russ Stauber.

- During citizen comments, Alderperson Robert Workinger commented on the AMI meter interview General Manager Bob Trussoni did with Marshfield Public Television, thanking him for being accurate and informative.
- A 10 year service award was presented to Jeffrey Nikolai.
- Mayor Chris Meyer arrived at 4:05pm.

**UC/14-08** Motion by Ott, seconded by Pitzenberger, to dispense with reading the minutes of the previous meetings and accept them as submitted. All ayes, motion carried.

**UC/14-09** Motion by Holck, seconded by Pitzenberger, to approve payroll for January in the amount of \$132,545.12 and general bills for January in the amount of \$3,164,827.00. All ayes, motion carried.

**UC/14-10** Motion by Ott, seconded by Holck, to approve the following job order(s):

- JO #17748 Day Rd OH primary rebuild, ½ mile North and South of Mill Creek: Rebuilding an aging #6 copper single phase line to new standard. \$68,286.00
- JO #17749 Co “H” rebuild West of Falcon Rd: Replace aging 3 phase overhead primary line and upgrade to larger conductors to keep in line with load growth. Rebuild to Co “V” 2 miles. \$211,170.00

All ayes, motion carried.

- The department managers reviewed noteworthy projects including:
  - Nick Kumm gave information on natural gas prices and why such extreme increases are occurring.
  - Dave Wasserburger stated that the Verizon antennae contract has been signed and construction plans are being reviewed. AT&T is currently reviewing their plan and contract for possible changes.
  - Bob Trussoni attended a Tea Party meeting to be available for questions on the AMI meters. Additionally, he was interviewed on the subject by Marshfield Public Television. A link to that interview is available on the Marshfield Utilities website.
  - As an update from last month’s meeting, the water tower temperatures are increasing. Main breaks and freezes are still occurring, but we do not need to implement city wide running water requirements as some other cities are doing.

**UC/14-11** Motion by Pitzenberger, seconded by Ott, to receive and place on file department reports. All ayes, motion carried.

- The General Manager discussed information regarding an AMI Opt Out policy. The group discussed what would be needed for both water and electric opt outs. Mayor Chris Meyer presented the perspectives of the customers including health concerns and a concern over the information being collected.

**UC/14-12** Motion by Pitzenberger, seconded by Eberl, to not offer an opt out option. Motion failed.

- The General Manager presented information regarding an insurance claim by Nasonville Dairy.

**UC/14-13** Motion by Ott, seconded by Holck, to deny the claim. All ayes, motion carried.

- The General Manager and Office Manager explained the Telco PILOT calculation and the changes to the law based on Act 22. Utility staff to determine the procedure going forward.

**UC/14-14** Motion by Ott, seconded by Pitzenberger, to go into closed session per Wisconsin State Statutes 19.85(1)(c) considering employment, promotion, compensation or performance evaluation data of any public employee over which the governmental body has jurisdiction or exercises responsibility for the purpose of discussing supervisory salary guidelines.

Roll call vote, all ayes, motion carried. Closed session at 4:56 p.m.

**UC/14-15** Motion by Pitzenberger, seconded by Holck, to go into open session. Roll call vote, all ayes, motion carried. Open session at 5:17 p.m.

**UC/14-16** Motion by Pitzenberger, seconded by Ott, to approve 2% scale increase and 2.8% quintile midpoint with additional adjustment to the scales of 10.5% for Electrical Engineer, 7.4% for Power Systems Engineer, 6.4% for Communications and Gas Manager, and 9.1% for General Manager. All ayes, motion carried.

**UC/14-17** Motion by Pitzenberger, seconded by Ott, to adjourn. All ayes, motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 5:19 p.m.

  
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Patrick Ott, Secretary

**Department: Electric**  
**Manager: Nicolas Kumm**  
Contributing: Greg Geiger  
Month: January 2014

- The M-1 generator did not run during the month of January.
- Cole Eswein attended another session of the Substation Electrical Apprenticeship program at Northeast Wisconsin Technical College January 13<sup>th</sup> – 17<sup>th</sup>.
- Cole and Dustin Oleson completed the replacement of the Nitrogen regulator assembly on the GSU. The manufacturer provided a replacement assembly under warranty.
- On January 8<sup>th</sup> MEUW provided Session 3 training to the electric department on substations, ladder safety and non-electric utility personnel critical observer training
- On January 15<sup>th</sup> MEUW provided Session 4 training via a Webinar to the electric utilities throughout the state. The instructors reviewed standards to determine interpretations to rules and identify utility best practices along with discussion on grounding or barricading aerial devices (bucket trucks).
- Bob and I attended the 2014 Wisconsin Energy Providers Conference in Madison, January 15<sup>th</sup> – 16<sup>th</sup>. The conference covered topics like distributed generation, EPA issues, electric/natural gas power vehicles, and communicating electric value.
- Greg and I attended the 2014 MEUW/Wisconsin REC Superintendent's Association Joint Conference in Wisconsin Dells, January 22-24<sup>th</sup>. The conference contained very good speakers on generations in the workforce, construction authority, and safety through front-line leadership.
- Derrek Caflisch has been working on the next phase Day Road area rebuild project.
- Don Rogers has been working on the Hwy H line rebuild.
- Faith Schmidt has been working on organizing the CEMA Seminars for electricians and general contractors, sending out letters for the water meter AMI change-out, and scheduling appointments with customers for the water meter AMI change-out.
- Nicolas Whipple has been working on the Enbridge line extension and AMI meter programming.
- The crews have been staying busy but not necessarily building line. Due to the extremely cold temperatures we have been focusing most of our efforts on tool and truck maintenance. We have also been working on reorganizing our material areas and setting limits for the new year.
- Greg has been working on material limits and getting them ready for Amanda to quote.

**Department:** Office  
**Manager:** Kent S. Mueller  
**Month:** January 2014

- We have been working on year-end closing activities. This is a very busy time of the year for accounting due to the many closing and recording requirements we have. We will be ready for the Schenck audit team to begin their work on Monday, February 10<sup>th</sup>. The financial statements will be presented to the Commission at the April 7<sup>th</sup> meeting.
- As a result of the extremely cold temperatures, the water department has implemented their “running water” program. For the water services that are susceptible to freezing, the water department has water running in these properties 24 hours a day to prevent the water service from freezing. The office bills the customers during this time based on average consumption, so that they aren’t billed for the additional consumption to keep the service from freezing.
- Some statistical highlights for 2013:
  1. The number of deferred payment agreements negotiated in 2013 was 1,153, down from 1,364 in 2012. This is the lowest number of agreements that we have had since 2009.
  2. The number of customers participating in our PowerPay™ program continued to grow. We recorded an average of 2,600 ACH customers in 2013 compared to 2,533 in 2012. Now, over 19.87% of all bills are paid through our ACH program.
- An \$85,165 payment to ATC for an additional voluntary capital call was made on 1/24/14. On 1/31/14, an ATC earnings distribution for the fourth quarter 2013 totaling \$143,191 was received. Since our initial investment in 2001, the utility has received over \$5.3 million in cash distributions from ATC.
- We started receiving collections for delinquent accounts registered with the Wisconsin DOR Tax Refund Intercept Program (TRIP) in 2010. Uncollectible customer accounts that are turned over to Alliance Collections are now automatically enrolled through the TRIP system. In 2013, we collected \$27,745 through this program, which is up from 2012 collections of \$19,697. In total, the \$42,979 was collected in 2013 on accounts that were sent to our collection agency.

**Department: Technical Services**

**Manager: Cathy Lotzer**

**Contributing: Heather Young, Shawn Marsh, Jim Benson**

**Month: January 2014**

- Cathy, Heather, Shawn, and Jim all participated in a website committee meeting. Suggestions for improvements were discussed.
- Cathy and Shawn met with all managers to discuss employee access for entry points to our new security system.
- Cathy, Heather, and Bob attended a Wisconsin Utility Association group meeting on January 17<sup>th</sup>.
- Cathy, Heather, and Shawn participated in a Cyber Security Awareness webinar directed at social media and security policies.
- Per Mar is scheduled to begin installation on February 5<sup>th</sup>.
- Heather sat in on a conference with the EPA SAB for discussion on the new and proposed NSPS rule for CO<sub>2</sub>.
- Shawn worked with Jim setting up the new projector in the downstairs meeting room and enabling access for laptops to connect to the wireless network and the wireless device simultaneously. We are still working on connecting with an iPad device.
- Shawn has been working through issues with the laptop used for reading large power meters; he will have to install the software on another laptop.
- Jim is working with both Hillers True Value and Reigel's Plumbing on the recycling program. We are ready to advertise the program.
- Jim has been addressing both residential and commercial business concerns with higher electrical consumption due to this colder than average season.

**Department:** Water  
**Manager:** Dave Wasserburger  
**Month:** January 2014

- We have 1,818 AMI meters installed. This represents about 22% of the total number of AMI meters to be installed. During the month of January we did not send out a large number of appointment letters. Our work load has changed to repairing leaks, thawing frozen services, and plowing hydrants.
- Crews repaired 15 main breaks in January. This compares to 14 repaired in 2013, 6 in 2012, and 5 in 2011. The winter of 1976/1977 is widely talked about by Water Departments as the worst winter ever. During the winter of 1976/1977 we had 12 main breaks in January and 14 in February.
- Penetrating frost in the roads has frozen up several water services. We cannot always get the water services thawed out on the same day that it is reported in as frozen. We will try to connect the house with the frozen service to a house that has running water until we can get the frozen service thawed. We had one case where we put the customer in a hotel for a couple of days. We were not able to thaw the service by water jetting from inside the basement and none of the neighboring houses had outside hose bibs that worked to hook house to house. We ended up digging up the water service at the boulevard and water jetting from there. We have kept records of water services which have frozen in the past. Many of these we have already excavated and lowered the water service to a depth of 7.5 feet. Those that have frozen in the past and have not yet been lowered have the water running in the house so the service does not freeze. We currently have about 65 of these.
- All of the hydrants have been plowed one time. The city has gone out and winged back the snow banks covering some of them up again. We will go back and plow them out as time permits.
- Snow depth and cold is making meter reading more difficult. Readers are now wearing snowshoes and progress is slow and hard. We will be using 2 people for much of the reading cycles until the snow conditions change.

### **Groundwater Guardians**

Pharmaceuticals are still being collected at the Marshfield Police Department. We are working on a dinner meeting for the Groundwater Guardian Group. A speaker will be present to discuss some water quality issues we are facing.