

STOUGHTON UTILITIES COMMITTEE REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

Monday, October 16, 2023 – 5:30 p.m.

Stoughton, WI

Page No. 1

Location: Edmund T. Malinowski Board Room, Stoughton Utilities Administration Office
600 South Fourth Street, Stoughton, Wisconsin
Optional Virtual Participation: GoToMeeting ID 246-466-925

Members Present: Citizen Member Carl Chenoweth, Citizen Member David Erdman (Chair), Alderperson Regina Hirsch, Alderperson Greg Jensen, Alderperson Daniel Payton, Mayor Tim Swadley, Citizen Member Dustin Thoren (Vice-Chair)

Excused: None

Absent: None

Others Present: Stoughton Utilities Assistant Director Brian Hoops, WPPI Energy Services Manager Darren Jacobson (Virtual), Stoughton Utilities Finance Manager Shannon Statz, Stoughton Utilities Director Jill Weiss

Call to Order: Chairperson Erdman called the regular Stoughton Utilities Committee Meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. Chenoweth, Erdman, Jensen, Payton, and Swadley were present in person. Hirsch and Thoren attended virtually.

Verification of Quorum: The chair verified that a quorum of the committee membership was present.

Certification of Compliance with Open Meetings Law: Hoops certified that the meeting had been properly noticed in compliance with open meetings law.

Public Comments: There were no public comments.

Utilities Committee Consent Agenda: Stoughton Utilities staff presented and discussed the Stoughton Utilities Committee consent agenda items, highlighting a letter from the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources officially reducing the lead and copper sampling and monitoring requirements following two recent rounds of sampling showing levels below action letters, and SU's recent recognition as a 2023 Dane County Climate Champion. Discussion followed.

Motion by Jensen, the motion seconded by Payton, to approve the following consent agenda items as presented:

- a. Draft Minutes of the September 18, 2023 Regular Utilities Committee Meeting
- b. Stoughton Utilities Payments Due List Report
- c. Stoughton Utilities Financial Summary
- d. Stoughton Utilities Statistical Report
- e. Stoughton Utilities Activities Report
- f. Communications

The motion carried unanimously 7 to 0.

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Monday, October 16, 2023 – 5:30 p.m.

Stoughton, WI

Page No. 2

Status of the Utilities Committee recommendation(s) to the Stoughton Common Council: Stoughton Utilities staff presented and discussed the following items from the Stoughton Utilities Committee that were recently approved and/or placed on file by the Stoughton Common Council:

Business:

1. Authorizing the Partial Release of a Platted Public Utility Easement on Lot 141 of John Nygaard's Virgin Lake Estates (2108 Wood View Dr), recorded as Document No. 5618013, Dane County Registry

Discussion followed.

Status of the PSCW Electric Rate Application Filing: Staff provided the committee with an update on the electric rate application that was filed with the Public Service Commission of Wisconsin (PSCW) in February 2023. The PSCW has completed their application cost of service study review and has moved it on to rate design. The projected approved rate of return is 6.2%, below the 7.0% applied for. A public hearing is being planned for November, likely the 14th or 15th, with a date and time to be finalized in the upcoming weeks. Hearing notices will be distributed in customers' billing statements and with a legal notice in the newspaper. Depending upon hearing and approval timing, the new rates may become effective December 1, 2023 or January 1, 2024. Discussion followed.

Stoughton Utilities Proposed 2024 Operating Budget: Stoughton Utilities staff presented and discussed preliminary projections that will be used to create the proposed 2024 electric, water, and wastewater budgets. Staff informed the committee that the budget had not changed substantially from the budget preview that was presented to the committee at their September 18, 2023 meeting. A verbal summary of the changes that were made following the preview was provided.

Staff presented a rate comparison of current water and wastewater rates of Stoughton and the surrounding communities, highlighting where the utility's current and five-year projected rates fell in comparison and showing our rates remain competitive in the area. Discussion followed.

The committee had questions regarding rate impacts to lower income customers, which lead to a discussion on the energy assistance program and what can be done to ensure customers have knowledge of the program and available funding, and improve ease of application with the goal of increasing participation in the program.

Motion by Chenoweth, the motion seconded by Jensen, to approve the Stoughton Utilities proposed 2024 budget appropriations in the sum of \$20,612,344 and for purposes herein set forth by the same, and recommend approval to the Stoughton Common Council at their November 7, 2023 meeting. The motion carried unanimously 7 to 0.

Following approval, Payton thanked staff for the information provided, for their diligence when preparing the budget, and for their continued efforts to educate and inform the committee. Other members expressed agreement.

Stoughton Utilities & City of Stoughton Investments: Annual Report: Stoughton Utilities staff presented a history of the City of Stoughton Investment Policy and the requirement contained within that the City's/Utility's investment advisor will provide an annual report to the Finance Committee and Utilities Committee noting the annual investment activity, portfolio summary, and recommendations for improvements. At this time the returns are acceptable and appropriate for the market, and no recommendations for improvements were made to the committee. Discussion followed.

STOUGHTON UTILITIES COMMITTEE REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

Monday, October 16, 2023 – 5:30 p.m.

Stoughton, WI

Page No. 3

2023 Public Power Week Community Outreach Event Summary: Stoughton Utilities staff presented and discussed our recent Public Power Week scavenger hunt customer outreach program. This year's scavenger hunt was completed using a scavenger hunt smart-phone app that allowed customers to complete challenges throughout the week as they had time. Challenges included submitting photos, open-ended questions and trivia related to Stoughton Utilities, energy efficiency, our community, and more. As challenges were completed, customers earned points and badges that earned them small prizes such as utility bill credits, and entries into drawings for larger prizes. Staff provided the committee a sampling of the challenges as well as a sampling of participant photos and customer feedback. Discussion followed.

Utilities Committee Future Agenda Items: Stoughton Utilities staff informed the committee that a presentation from WPPI Energy staff will occur at the November meeting, and staff will present information about two class action settlements related to PFAS where Stoughton Utilities is a member of the settlement class and must choose whether to remain or opt-out of the class. Staff also informed the committee they are working to prepare a communications plan focusing on rate transparency and a sustainability plan for presentation at a future meeting in early 2024. The committee inquired about the status of tours of utility facilities and a discussion was had about the possibility of touring a well before the November meeting.

Adjournment: Being no further business before the committee, motion by Jensen, seconded by Chenoweth, to adjourn the meeting at 6:45 p.m. The motion carried unanimously 7 to 0.

Respectfully submitted,

Brian R. Hoops
Stoughton Utilities Assistant Director

Shannon S. Statz
Stoughton Utilities Finance Manager