

ADOPTED UTILITY MINUTES

April 14, 2020

CITY HALL ~ 4:00 P.M.

Board Present: Darrell Nissen, Jeff Paplow, Brian Rossow, Steve Condon

Board Present Via Go To Meeting: Chad Janssen

Others Present: Kelly Rasche-Clerk, Cheryl Ulferts-Finance, Jeff Bechthold-MRES, Holly Rademacher-C.Service

Call the meeting to order.

Approval of the agenda -- Motion to approve the agenda, with changes as presented, made by **Condon/Rossow**, all yes, motion carried.

Approval of the minutes -- Motion to approve the minutes of March 10, 2020, made by **Janssen/Paplow**, all yes, motion carried.

Approval of Accounts Payable -- Motion to approve the Accounts Payable totaling **\$247,639.47** and approve the Investment and Transfer Activity, made by **Rossow/Condon**, all yes, motion carried.

SCHEDULED/UNSCHEDULED GUESTS

Scheduled

Unscheduled

DEPARTMENT REPORTS

Financial Report

End of Year 2019

First Quarter 2020

Accounts Receivable – collections are slower because of the COVID 19 issues. Disconnection were not done in April. Will try and keep people paying something on their bills. Inactive accounts have not seen success with the collections company. Consider small claims court or other options.

Missouri River Energy – Jeff Bechthold shared that Missouri River will continue with the rotation of crew members process for the remainder of April. Depending on the Kozy Heat project the crew may be called back in full, depending on the needs of the contractors. The outages in the past month have been related to ITC transmission issues. Lakefield is fed via Windom. The Lakefield generators are fired up if the outage is expected to be longer than 30 minutes. MRES is in discussion with ITC on ways to limit exposure of the transmission lines. The Lakefield substation is 2 miles from Lakefield vs the lines going to Windom Junction and then to Lakefield. Rossow asked if Lakefield has leverage on the starting of the generators sooner or run longer. The generators in Lakefield safeguard the community against a long-term outage not short term. Nissen asked about the status of lineman replacement. The position is being advertised but the actual hiring is on hold at this time, because of the stay at home order of the COVID 19 situation. Nissen asked about the process of billing because of the shortage of a person. MRES Billing should be less as we are paying a four-man total crew vs a five man total crew.

AGENDA ITEMS

1. **COVID 19 Temporary Policy Changes consideration** – Motion to waive penalty assessments and continue to work with customers on payment plans thru the Governor of Minnesota's emergency declaration made by **Rossow/Paplow**, all yes, motion carried. Customers will be reminded that payment will be due, following payment plans are encouraged.
 - a. **Penalty on past due utilities**
 - b. **Disconnection Policy**

2. **Even Pay Options for customers discussion** – Our utility program does not have the ability to do an even pay billing, but staff could do the process manually. Motion to direct staff to create a plan for an even pay program made by **Rossow/Condon**, all yes, motion carried.
3. **Council request to assist with purchase of forks for payloader** – Motion to pay \$3,000 from the electric fund of the cost of the forks for the payloader made by **Condon/Janssen**, all yes, motion carried.

OLD BUSINESS

OTHER BUSINESS

INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

1. **SMBS Report** – SMBS is looking to purchase a generator for the building in Lakefield. They have moved to a closed meeting process. The meetings will begin with a public comment period for people to address the board. The board will then move to the closed session. The closes meetings are recorded. Member city officials can view records of SMBS but must be reviewed at the SMBS office and no copies will be made of information. The Jackson Rep has resigned his position, the Jackson alternate will step into the position, Jackson will appoint a new alternate.
2. **Kozy Heat Electrical Project Update** – Right of way and route has been staked. The preconstruction meeting has been held. The contractor is moving equipment to town. The snow is holding up the project at this time. When the weather allows the crew is expected to work longer hours on Monday thru Thursday and Friday's no work. The first pay reimbursement to DEED has been submitted.

Motion to adjourn the meeting at 5:05 p.m. made by **Janssen/Condon**, all yes, motion carried.

Darrell Nissen, Chairman

Attest:

Kelly Rasche, Administrative Clerk