

# **WATER AND LIGHT COMMISSION MINUTES**

## **REGULAR MEETING**

### **APRIL 5, 2010**

The regular meeting of the Water and Light Commission was called to order in the Worthington Public Utilities Conference Room at 3:00 P.M., DST, by President Robert J. Demuth with the following members present: Randy Thompson, James Elsing, Ron Wood and Gary Hoffmann.

Staff members present were Scott Hain, General Manager; Deb Scheidt, Secretary to the Commission

Others present: None

#### **AGENDA ADDITIONS/CLOSURE**

Scott Hain, General Manager, requested the addition of *Peace Avenue of Flags, Chamber Request for Downtown Flower Baskets* and *Southwest Minnesota Fishing Club Request*. A motion was made by Commissioner Hoffmann, seconded by Commissioner Wood and unanimously carried to close the agenda with the addition of *Peace Avenue of Flags, Chamber Request for Downtown Flower Baskets* and *Southwest Minnesota Fishing Club Request*.

#### **WATER AND LIGHT COMMISSION MINUTES**

A motion was made by Commissioner Wood, seconded by Commissioner Thompson and unanimously carried to approve the Water and Light Commission minutes of the regular meeting held March 15, 2010.

#### **FINANCIAL STATEMENTS AND STAFF REPORTS**

A motion was made by Commissioner Wood, seconded by Commissioner Hoffmann and unanimously carried to accept the Financial Statements for February 2010.

#### **APPOINTMENT TO ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AD-HOC COMMITTEE**

Scott Hain, General Manager, reported that the City Council identified the establishment of an economic development plan for the City of Worthington as a one of their strategic planning goals for 2010. The plan will define the tools, opportunities and direction the City will support in its continual effort to promote economic growth. Discussion was held on the formation of an ad-hoc committee to assist City staff in the creation of an economic development plan. The committee will consist of 15 representatives from various organizations and will meet once or twice per month until a successful plan has been developed which is tentatively scheduled to be completed by October 1, 2010. The City requested that the Water and Light Commission appoint one of its members to serve on the ad-hoc committee.

A motion was made by Commissioner Wood, seconded by Commissioner Elsing and unanimously carried to appoint Commissioner Hoffmann to serve on the economic development ad-hoc committee.

### **AMI/AMR/LOAD MANAGEMENT PROJECT UPDATE**

Scott Hain, General Manager, provided an update on the status of the AMI/AMR/Load Management project. The update included information on equipment purchases, installation of meters, demand response units and fiber and training for Worthington Public Utilities personnel. A brief discussion was held on customer participation, possibly allowing customers to “opt out” of participating and potential “opt out” fees that might be charged to non-participating customers.

### **WASTEWATER UPDATE**

Scott Hain, General Manager, reported that the wastewater treatment facility has been running at peak capacity since March 11 and that excess flow was diverted to the equalization basins. Flow from the City has now decreased and we are currently bringing water back from the equalization basins and still maintaining peak flow. Mr. Hain reported that no by-pass was made out of the equalization basins and that the use of by-pass pumps in the City was not necessary to relieve pressure on the sanitary sewer system.

Mr. Hain also provided Commission members with an update on the re-issuance of the wastewater treatment facility’s National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit which expired on June 30, 2009, and the status of the watershed-wide permit to address the Heron Lake TMDL issue. Brief discussion was held on the more stringent phosphorus limitations imposed by the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) and the dechlorination requirement that may be included in the re-issued permit.

### **SENATOR AL FRANKEN VISIT**

Mr. Hain informed the Commission that Senator Al Franken would be holding meetings in Sioux Falls, South Dakota, Luverne, Minnesota, and Worthington, Minnesota, on April 10, 2010. The focus of the Sioux Falls and Luverne meetings will include an update on the Lewis and Clark project, the need for increased funding for the project and lost economic development opportunities in southwest Minnesota due to lack of water. Commissioners Demuth and Hoffmann and Scott Hain, General Manager, will attend the meetings in Sioux Falls, Luverne and possibly Worthington and Commissioners Wood and Thompson indicated they planned to attend the meeting in Worthington.

### **PEACE AVENUE OF FLAGS**

Scott Hain, General Manager, reported that he and Pat Demuth, Electric Superintendent, had met with representatives of the Chamber of Commerce Community Improvement Committee and received a request for assistance from the Electric Department in re-instituting the Peace Avenue of Flags along North Humiston Avenue and the placement of additional flags along a portion of Oxford Street. Once completed, approximately 70 flags representing various nations would be installed and the Chamber desires to have the installation completed by June 9, 2010.

After a brief discussion, it was the consensus of the Commission that the Worthington Public Utilities Electric Department assist in the installation of the Peace Avenue of Flags as time permits. Mr. Hain indicated that he would also meet with Craig Clark, City Administrator, regarding possible assistance from the Public Works Department.

### **CHAMBER REQUEST FOR DOWNTOWN FLOWER BASKETS**

During their 2010 budget process, the City of Worthington eliminated funding for the downtown flower baskets project due to a reduction in Local Government Aid (LGA) which would result in the elimination of the project. In an effort to prevent the elimination of the project, the Chamber of Commerce has committed to a financial contribution in the amount of \$3,250, or one-half the total project cost. Through a letter to President Demuth, the Water and Light Commission received a formal request from the Chamber to also consider a contribution to the project. Commissioner Wood recommended that Worthington Public Utilities consider a contribution of half of the remaining project cost (up to \$1,625) and that a request be made to the City to consider funding the remainder.

After discussion, a motion was made by Commissioner Thompson, seconded by Commissioner Hoffmann and unanimously carried to approve Worthington Public Utilities to fund half of the remaining cost of the downtown flower basket project in an amount of up to \$1,625. Commissioner Wood indicated that he would present the Chamber's request to the City Council for consideration at their April 12 special budget meeting.

### **SOUTHWEST MINNESOTA FISHING CLUB REQUEST**

Based upon a request made by the President of the Southwest Minnesota Fishing Club (SWMFC), a motion was made by Commissioner Wood, seconded by Commissioner Thompson and unanimously carried for the Wastewater Department to provide assistance to SWMFC to determine the cause of a drainage issue they are experiencing with the fish rearing ponds located near the former outdoor swimming pool site.

### **FACILITIES TOUR**

Scott Hain, General Manager, reported that he would conduct a tour of various utility facilities throughout the community for interested Commissioners after adjournment of the meeting.

**UTILITY BILLS PAYABLE**

A motion was made by Commissioner Thompson, seconded by Commissioner Wood and unanimously carried to approve the utility bills payable totaling \$302,414.15 for March 26 and April 2, 2010.

**ADJOURNMENT**

A motion was made by Commissioner Thompson, seconded by Commissioner Hoffmann and unanimously carried to adjourn the meeting at 4:05 P.M., DST. President Demuth declared the meeting adjourned.

Deb A. Scheidt  
Secretary to the Commission