

**OFFICIAL PROCEEDINGS OF THE
BOARD OF WATER, ELECTRIC,
AND COMMUNICATIONS TRUSTEES
OF THE CITY OF MUSCATINE, IOWA
MARCH 31, 2020 – 5:30 P.M.**

The Board of Trustees met in regular session by Cisco WebEx online conferencing on Tuesday, March 31, 2020, at 5:30 p.m. The meeting was not held in person due to the ongoing coronavirus pandemic, with the orders to maintain social distancing and avoid group gatherings. The Utility is following the guidance provided by the Iowa Public Information Board and the Governor's Orders on how to conduct electronic public meetings. MP&W has made the meeting via Web Ex available for members of the public who are interested.

Chairperson Tracy McGinnis called the meeting to order. Members of the Board were present as follows: Trustees Steven Bradford, Susan Eversmeyer, Kevin Fields, Keith Porter, and Tracy McGinnis.

Also present were Gage Huston, General Manager of Muscatine Power and Water; Brenda Christensen, Board Secretary; Charles Potter, Muscatine Journal; Erika Cox, Brandy Olson, Brad Spratt, Ryan Streck, Doug White, and Greg Maiers of Muscatine Power and Water.

Chairperson McGinnis asked if there was anyone joining in the WebEx who wished to make any public comments. There were no public comments.

The minutes of the February 25, 2020, public hearing and regular meeting were presented as previously submitted to all Board members. Trustee Bradford moved, seconded by Trustee Eversmeyer, that the February 25, 2020, public hearing and regular meeting minutes be approved. All Trustees voted aye. Motion carried.

The list of expenditures and transactions for February 2020 was presented as previously submitted to all Board members. Trustee Porter commented about the number of large checks still written by the Utility and wondered what was being done to get more of the vendors on electronic payments. Mr. Spratt explained both Accounting and Supply Chain are working to get additional vendors to accept electronic payments. Trustee Eversmeyer asked about the number of payments made to temporary employment agencies, Mr. Huston explained many of the temporary employees are for the FTTH Project. After additional discussion, Trustee Porter moved, seconded by Trustee Fields to ratify payment of \$6,244,802.69 for the Electric Utility, \$300,525.40 for the Water Utility, and \$1,207,085.81 for the Communications Utility for a cumulative total of \$7,752,413.90. All Trustees voted aye. Motion carried.

Mr. Huston reviewed the previously submitted memorandum to all Board members regarding the recommendation to award a contract for the Unit 9 ESP Roof Replacement Project. This project was approved with the 2020 Operating Budget for a total expenditure of \$180,000, with a published estimate of \$172,000. A total of six bids were received, opened publicly, and read aloud on March 3, 2020, at 3:00 p.m. The bids received had a wide range of dollar amounts with Jim Giese Commercial Roofing, Inc. being the lowest bid. Mr. Spratt stated the company had not worked for MP&W before but had contract work with several other industries in Muscatine and the references checked out well. Staff has reviewed the bids and recommend the award of

the contract be made to the low bidder, Jim Giese Commercial Roofing, Inc. of Eldridge, IA, for a total price of \$82,240. The following resolution was submitted:

RESOLUTION 20-09

WHEREAS, it appears in a written report from Muscatine Power and Water Management that the bid for the Unit 9 ESP Roof Replacement Project, as submitted by Jim Giese Commercial Roofing, Inc., of Eldridge, IA, for a total price of \$82,240 was the best and lowest bid received; now therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of Water, Electric, and Communications Trustees of the City of Muscatine, Iowa, that the proposal from Jim Giese Commercial Roofing, Inc., of Eldridge, IA, for a total price of \$82,240 for the Unit 9 ESP Roof Replacement Project was hereby accepted as submitted; and,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the General Manager and Secretary of the Board were hereby authorized, empowered, and directed to execute a contract in the sum approved by the Board of Water, Electric, and Communications Trustees.

Trustee Eversmeyer moved, seconded by Trustee Fields that said resolution should be passed, approved, and adopted on this 31st day of March 2020. On roll call Trustees Porter, Eversmeyer, Fields, Bradford, and McGinnis voted aye. Voting nay, none. Resolution carried.

Mr. Huston reminded the Board at the December 2019 Board Meeting an overall revenue increase of 3.5% was approved for the Water Utility to be effective April 1, 2020, and at the February 2020 Board Meeting an overall revenue increase of just under 9% was approved for TV/Video services, also to be effective April 1, 2020. He continued that, due to the recent outbreak of COVID-19, MP&W has taken significant measures to protect the health and safety of our customer/owners and to give them peace of mind regarding their essential utility services, Staff is now recommending the previously approved rate adjustments for Water service and TV/Video service be postponed to further insulate our customers from the negative impacts of this outbreak. He reviewed the analysis completed showing the impact of both Net Income and End-of-Year Cash Balances for both Utilities. Mr. Huston continued that a 4-month postponement model was included but Staff was not recommending this due to the fact that it could affect the rate adjustment needed next year. Trustee Fields encouraged Staff to do more stress testing on financials to evaluate the potential impacts of the coronavirus pandemic. After additional discussion, the following resolutions were submitted:

RESOLUTION 20-10

COMMUNICATION UTILITY RATE ADJUSTMENT

WHEREAS, the Board of Water, Electric, and Communications Trustees of the City of Muscatine, Iowa set a revenue increase effective for Communications Utility billings after April 1, 2020; and,

WHEREAS, due to the recent outbreak of COVID-19, MPW has taken significant measures to protect the health and safety of our customer/owners and to give them peace of mind regarding their essential utility services, included a moratorium on utility disconnections and the waiving of late fees; and,

BE IT RESOLVED, that the previously approved rate adjustments for TV/Video service effective with Communications Utility billings after April 1, 2020, be postponed until May 1, 2020, to further insulate our customers from the negative impacts of this outbreak.

Trustee Eversmeyer moved, seconded by Trustee Fields that said resolution should be passed, approved, and adopted on this 31st day of March 2020. On roll call Trustees Porter, Eversmeyer, Fields, Bradford, and McGinnis voted aye. Voting nay, none. Resolution carried.

RESOLUTION 20-11
WATER UTILITY RATE ADJUSTMENT

WHEREAS, the Board of Water, Electric, and Communications Trustees of the City of Muscatine, Iowa set a water revenue increase effective with Water Utility billings after April 1, 2020, and

WHEREAS, due to the recent outbreak of COVID-19, MPW has taken significant measures to protect the health and safety of our customer/owners and to give them peace of mind regarding their essential utility services, included a moratorium on utility disconnections and the waiving of late fees, and

BE IT RESOLVED, that the previously approved rate adjustments for Water service effective with Water Utility billings after April 1, 2020, be postponed until May 1, 2020, to further insulate our customers from the negative impacts of this outbreak.

Trustee Eversmeyer moved, seconded by Trustee Fields that said resolution should be passed, approved, and adopted on this 31st day of March 2020. On roll call Trustees Bradford, Fields, Eversmeyer, Porter, and McGinnis voted aye. Voting nay, none. Resolution carried.

Trustee McGinnis next advised the Board they had been provided with updated/revised copy of the Service Rules for the Electric, Water, and Communications Utilities. Mr. Huston reviewed the updates to the Customer Service Rules and told the Board no action was being requested at this meeting, but approval will be requested at the April Board meeting.

Trustee McGinnis introduced the next item as Requesting the Mayor and City Council Designate May 3-9, 2020, as Drinking Water Week. Mr. Huston reviewed the previously submitted memorandum to the Board members to approve a resolution requesting the Muscatine Mayor and City Council designate the week of May 3-9, 2020, as Drinking Water Week. He continued that for more than 40 years the American Water Works Association and its members have celebrated Drinking Water Week; the week is a unique opportunity for both water professionals and the communities they serve to increase the awareness of the public to the benefits of water. He stated MP&W would be participating in Drinking Water Week through public awareness activities. The following resolution was submitted:

RESOLUTION 20-12
DRINKING WATER WEEK
May 3-9, 2020

WHEREAS, the Board of Water, Electric, and Communications Trustees of the City of Muscatine, Iowa wish to recognize its customers and employees during Drinking Water Week; and,

WHEREAS, water is our most valuable natural resource; and

WHEREAS, MPW's municipal water supply provides many benefits to the Muscatine community, including supporting public health, providing fire protection, supporting our economy, and sustaining the quality of life we enjoy; and

WHEREAS, Muscatine Power and Water provides our homes, businesses, farms, social service and local government agencies with reliable, efficient and low-cost water services; employing sound business practices designed to ensure the best possible service at the lowest possible rate; now therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Trustees request that the Mayor and City Council designate the week of May 3-9, 2020, as Drinking Water Week in Muscatine, in order to honor Muscatine Power and Water, its employees who work together to provide the best possible water services; its consumer-owners, and,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that Muscatine has joined hands with other communities across the nation to celebrate the benefits of a consumer-owned water utility for our local and national progress.

Trustee Eversmeyer moved, seconded by Trustee Fields that said resolution should be passed, approved, and adopted on this 31st day of March 2020. On roll call Trustees Eversmeyer, Porter, Bradford, Fields, and McGinnis voted aye. Voting nay, none. Resolution carried.

In the General Manager's report, Mr. Huston gave an in-depth review of MP&W's coronavirus preparation and the Utility's response over the past couple of weeks. He stated the Utility is committed to ensuring essential utility services will be maintained to the Muscatine community and Staff continues to adapt work practices daily depending on conditions. Employees and customers continue to be flexible as the Utility works through these unprecedented challenges. Mr. Huston continued he has been proud and amazed at the response of employees throughout this crisis and the focus on the protection of essential services and the health of our customers because our customers are our neighbors, our family, and our friends. He also shared MP&W had been working with the Muscatine School District to provide public Wi-Fi in several areas of Muscatine so students would be able to participate in online learning opportunities. Mr. Huston next discussed Mark Yerington, Manager GIS-MAGIC, has been working with the Water Department Staff to better integrate the benefits of GIS with their daily fieldwork. The benefits so far have included streamlined data collection, integrity of the GIS data, more timely updates, and ease of access to information. One of our most recent improvements worth noting is Water Utility work crews now have the ability to update GIS data in the field. This will increase efficiencies across the Utility and decrease time wasted transferring information from field crews to GIS teams. During this time, Mr. Spratt also shared that recently, several vendors bidding on the Mississippi Drive Corridor Underground – Cable Pull Contract had requested a

date extension due to their inability to ramp up fast enough during these major changes to address the current pandemic situation to get everything done electronically. After some investigation of the Iowa Code it was decided the Utility could allow an extension and an addendum was posted for all vendors.

The February Financial Operating Statements and Balance Sheets were presented as previously submitted to all Board members. Mr. Spratt reviewed the February financials for each Utility. Trustee Porter moved, seconded by Trustee Eversmeyer, to receive and place on file the February Financial Operating Statements and Balance Sheets for the Water, Electric, and Communications Utilities. All Trustees voted aye. Motion carried.

The Competitive Quotes for Public Improvements Report was presented as previously submitted to all Board members. There were no items for approval. The report was received and placed on file.

The February Departmental Reports were presented as previously submitted to all Board members. Mr. Huston provided an update on the Line 106 Project and what MP&W was doing in response to the increased internet load due to many people being at home. Ms. Cox next gave a FTTH Project update. After additional discussion, Trustee Bradford moved, seconded by Trustee Fields, to receive and place on file the February Departmental Reports. All Trustees voted aye. Motion carried.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:40 p.m.

BOARD OF WATER, ELECTRIC, AND
COMMUNICATIONS TRUSTEES OF
THE CITY OF MUSCATINE, IOWA



Brenda Christensen
Board Secretary