

**UTILITY COMMISSION  
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES  
February 10, 2020**

**CALL TO ORDER**

Pursuant to due call and notice thereof the regular Utility Commission meeting of the City of Rosemount was called to order on February 10, 2020, at 5:33 p.m. in the Upper Conference Room, City Hall, 2875 145<sup>th</sup> Street West, Rosemount.

Commissioner Demuth called meeting to order with Commissioners Cahn and Rome, Mayor Droste, Public Works Director/City Engineer Erickson, City Administrator Martin, and Public Works Coordinator Watson. Commissioner Cahn left the meeting at 6:45 p.m.

**ADDITIONS OR CORRECTIONS TO AGENDA**

None

**AUDIENCE INPUT**

None

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**Motion** by Rome **Second** by Cahn

**Motion** to approve the minutes of the January 13, 2020 Utility Commission meeting.

**Motion carried.**

**PUBLIC HEARINGS**

None

**OLD BUSINESS**

**6.a. Water Efficiency Rebate Advertisement**

Erickson updated the Commission on the progress of the water efficiency rebate program. He indicated one HOA is interested in getting an irrigation audit performed. He shared information from the staff's meeting with Lakeville and VRWJPO last week. He noted that Lakeville had one audit that resulted in a recommendation to shut the system down to save money to completely replace the system. He noted that staff will be meeting with an HOA leadership group that has formed among several Dakota County cities.

Droste asked whether the VRWJPO set limits to the amount we can pump from Shannon Pond. Erickson responded that we do not have any type of agreement with the Watershed, but we did talk to them before we began pumping. Erickson noted that a feasibility study is in progress.

The Commission briefly discussed the Woodbury program for selling smart controllers at a discounted rate. Rome indicated she would not be in favor because most people would rather purchase one on their own instead of being limited to what the City offers. Cahn informed the group about a program that Rachio is doing with Cottage Grove, Hugo, Lake Elmo and Woodbury. Cahn will provide the Rachio contact information to the rest of the Commission and staff. Demuth asked when the website will be updated with the new rebate program info; Watson indicated it will be done by Feb 11. The Commission would like to find ways to give away a smart meter – Leprechaun Days, the Home Expo, Arbor Day, etc. Martin will

talk to staff about doing a door prize giveaway at the Home Expo. Martin also suggested doing a video soon to inform residents of the rebates, water conservation, watering restrictions, etc.

Cahn asked if we had to return un-used rebate funds to the Met Council. Staff noted that since the grant is reimbursable, funds are provided upon request; therefore, there is no money to return. Rome asked if we can use the grant money to buy smart controllers, if there is any left near the end of the program. Staff believes the rebates can't be used by the City, they can only be used to reimburse customers. Staff will confirm. Woodbury buys their controllers with utility funds and watershed funds. Erickson noted that VRWJPO is willing to fund a portion of our irrigation audits.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### **7.a. Emergency Water Conservation Ordinance**

Erickson summarized the proposed language for an emergency water conservation ordinance, which is provided in the packet. If approved, the language can be added to the existing City Code via an ordinance changing the code. Cahn suggested to soften the last sentence; Watson suggested changing "shall" to "may."

**Motion** by Cahn **Second** by Rome

**Motion** to recommend City Council approval of the new language for the City Code, changing the last sentence to read "may" instead of "shall."

**Motion carried.**

### **7.b. Top 10% Letters**

Droste suggested removing his name from letter (use Wyland National Mayor's Challenge for Water Conservation instead), and does not want letter going to 2<sup>nd</sup> meter customers, or new customers who are establishing new lawns. Watson indicated that most addresses in the top 10% are more than two years old and are no longer establishing new lawns.

Droste mentioned that we should be installing smart meters in all new homes. Erickson noted that Badger gave a presentation on Feb 7 about smart water meters, no cost estimates were provided. Martin gave a summary of the features of the different types of smart meters, also noted only 10% of customers actually use the phone app (per Badger). Staff is exploring how the smart meters will interface with existing software (Civic and Cartegraph). Droste suggested staff visit Apple Valley to learn more about their smart meters and how it interfaces with their software.

Droste mentioned that he thought everyone was on the same quarter for the sewer billing. Watson reminded him that all customers will have different winter quarters, which was discussed previously when the city shifted to winter quarter billing for sewer. Watson does not believe any other Dakota County cities are on cycled billing – they either do monthly or quarterly where everyone is on the same calendar quarter.

Droste, Rome and Martin are concerned it's too soon for the letter due to sensitivity over the 2<sup>nd</sup> meter issue. Demuth noted that this letter is providing exactly what was asked for so residents can compare themselves to their neighbors. Demuth suggested we use **totals** instead of **quarters** in the letter, since the city uses cycled billing and not everyone has the same quarters. Demuth wants letter to clarify that it's **2019** data and it's compared to average **Rosemount** resident. Also add a sentence to the letter about how

conservation will help delay construction of additional wells/towers. Watson suggested we can leave out the 2<sup>nd</sup> meter customers and new customers, and still send the letter to the rest of the top 10%, incorporating Demuth's suggestions above. Demuth suggested capping it at 50 letters to see what kind of response we get.

Commission decided to send letters to all 688 customers, not identifying their usage but indicating they are a high water user (don't say top 10%). Provide info on rebate programs. Letter will be reviewed by Martin and sent out without bringing it back to the Commission.

### **7.c. Utility Commission Input for New Development**

Tabled until next meeting since Cahn needs to leave early and can't be part of the discussion.

### **7.d. Stormwater Rebate Policy**

Erickson would like additional comments from the Commission by the end of the week. Erickson does not want dollar amounts listed in the policy, but rather in a separate document. Demuth and Cahn think the requirement for shoreline vegetation is too stringent and no one will want to do it. They suggest softening the language to make it more user-friendly, and include a map of public waterways. Erickson noted that the policy itself is more technical, but the advertisement about it will be more simple and user-friendly. Demuth noted that the section about raingardens doesn't match what we did on Danbury Way (not allowed in right-of-way). Droste indicated that younger homeowners want smaller yards with less maintenance, so raingardens may not be maintained as well if new owners don't take care of them. Cahn wants an update next year to see how many people take advantage of these rebates, and what the dollar amount is.

**Motion** by Demuth **Second** by Rome

**Motion** to recommend City Council adopt the Stormwater Rebate Policy.

**Demuth-Aye, Rome-Aye, Cahn-abstain**

**Motion carried.**

### **7.e. Set Meeting Dates for 2020-2021**

No issues with meeting dates.

**Motion** by Demuth **Second** by Rome

**Motion** to set the 2020-2021 Utility Commission Meetings per the Attached Calendar.

**Motion carried.**

## **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

### **8.a. City Project Update**

Public Works Director/City Engineer Erickson gave brief overviews of the ongoing projects within in the city.

- The low bid for 2019 SIP (Phase 2) is below the engineer estimate
- Staff is working to extend the quiet zone to the Bonaire Path crossing near Greystone
- Erickson noted the residents have asked to have ribbon curb installed on Deepwoods Court to help prevent the shoulder from eroding/deteriorating

- Demuth noted there is an unsealed well in the Dunmore development. Erickson will follow up with the developer regarding the unsealed well. Demuth will provide a map.
- Demuth wondered about contamination from previous dry cleaning business on The Morrison site
- Akron Ave bid came in \$700k below estimate

### **8.b. Well Pumping Report**

Demuth commented positively about the reduction in consumption despite the growth. Demuth questioned the figures for Flint Hills and the Splash Pad from the 2019 summary provided at the previous meeting; Watson confirmed they are correct. Demuth would like staff to meet with a consultant to discuss a retrofit re-use system for the Splash Pad. Droste mentioned that a recirculating splash pad will likely be planned with the new recreation center.

### **8.c. Set Next Meeting Agenda for March 16, 2020.**

- Utility Commission input for new development (tabled from this meeting)

### **OTHER UPDATES**

- Saturday, March 14 Home Expo table. Ask Rachio about getting a demo for the expo. Commission members are welcome to be at the table.
- Demuth asked about being a **Level I** for nitrate levels. Erickson will check with Minnesota Department of Health.
- Demuth asked if we will use the Met Council water efficiency tool. Erickson will determine if/when staff has the time to explore this. Erickson will follow up with Brian Davis at the Met Council for more information.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

Commissioner Demuth adjourned the meeting at 7:07 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Christine Watson  
Public Works Coordinator