Utilities Advisory Board Meeting Minutes

August 22, 2023 at 12:00 p.m.

City Hall, Commission Chambers
401 S. Park Avenue | Winter Park, Florida

Present

Michael Poole, Linda Lindsey, Paul Conway, Leon Huffman, Mary Dipboye, Fred Guitton and Alison Yurko.

Staff Present

Director of Electric Utility Dan D'Alessandro; Director of Finance Wes Hamil; Director of Water and Wastewater Utility David Zusi; Electric Operations Manager Miguel Cruz; Virtually: Board Coordinator Tatia Ghviniashvili.

1) Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 12:00 p.m.

2) Consent Agenda

a. Approve the minutes of regular meeting July, 25,2023

Motion made by Linda Lindsey to approve the minutes as presented; seconded by Mary Dipboye. Motion carried unanimously with a 5-0 vote.

Alison Yurko and Fred Guitton arrived at 12:02 p.m.

3) Public Comments (for items not on the agenda):

There were none.

4) Action Items

a. Disconnect for Non-Pay Extreme Weather Moratorium Policy

Staff spoke on, and shared, the policy for disconnects pertaining to non-pay due to extreme weather, and noted that this policy is similar to that practiced by Duke Energy. The policy presented states that in the case of a heat advisory issued in Orange County from the National Weather Service, where the projected temperature is above 100 degrees Fahrenheit or the projected heat index is above 105 degrees Fahrenheit or warmer, disconnects will be suspended for non-paying customers. The same steps will be taken if the temperature is freezing. Once the weather normalizes, disconnects will resume.

A discussion was held and the board asked questions to help clarify the policy. Per board suggestion, staff will remove the numerical temperatures from the policy, and rely exclusively on the National Weather Service heat advisory issue.

Motion made by Paul Conway to approve the policy related to heat disconnects, with the amendment suggested; seconded by Linda Lindsey.

The board briefly discussed the tipping point for disconnects related to freezing- as seen in the policy- and whether or not language needs to be adjusted for consistency with the language associated with the heat index.

Motion carried unanimously with a 7-0 vote.

Staff will bring back the matter of disconnects pertaining to freezing temperatures at the next meeting.

b. Scope of services for electric strategic plan

Staff presented the scope of services, drafted with guidance from the Florida Municipal Power Agency (FMPA). Staff is seeking board approval before the plan can move forward to procurement and a Request for Proposal (RFP) be advertised for solicitation.

A discussion followed and the board asked questions. Based on board feedback, staff will modify the scope of services by changing the planning horizon from 3-5 years to 5-7 years, and include a dedicated section about staffing requirements. The timeline for the process was loosely outlined, and Mr. Conway volunteered to serve on the selection committee- on behalf of this board.

Motion made by Fred Guitton to approve the scope of services for the electric strategic plan, with the amendments suggested; seconded by Leon Huffman. Motion carried unanimously with a 7-0 vote.

5) Non-Action Items

a. Water and Wastewater Strategic Plan Update - David Zusi

An update was provided, and staff noted a contract has yet to be executed between the city and Robert (Bob) Daley due to delays within the procurement department. Despite this, minor work is being done.

Staff spoke briefly about the Sustainability Renewable Energy Plan, highlighting that progress is being made on the contractual process through procurement. A further update will be provided at the next meeting.

6) Staff Updates

a. Electric Utility - Dan D'Alessandro

Twenty transformers were received on special order, however, they turned out to be low profile transformers which the city does not use for new construction. These transformers will be used for maintenance, but will not contribute to the under-grounding project.

Staff also noted that moving forward, building 14 solar output will be included in the monthly electric update. A discussion ensued about the city's solar energy and the board asked questions.

b. Educational Campaign - Clarissa Howard

Attachments were included in the agenda packet; however, no discussion was held.

c. Water and Wastewater Utility - David Zusi

Staff has been working diligently on the implementation and integration of the new meter reading software. Additional towers have been placed and old electronics replaced, which have helped with readings. Progress has also been made toward getting improved outage management.

The floor opened for discussion and the board asked questions about the meter system. Staff made clarifications and spoke in further detail about staffing issues that are directly related to the speed at which certain projects are being completed.

d. Performance Measurement

The report was presented, with staff noting that data regarding solar power generated at the Events Center was included. The board asked various questions about the data, specifically about the Heart of Florida United Way Emergency Utility Assistance Program. Staff explained in detail how the program operates, and what role the city has in the program. An at-length discussion was held about the program, and the board noted that it would be beneficial to gather the data behind how many Winter Park residents applied to the program in the last 12 months, and why more individuals aren't applying for it- in respect to helping to decrease the number of disconnects.

More highlights from the report were shared, such as the fuel cost stabilization fund balance undercovering by about $344,000.00 for the month of July- with the balance moving in the intended direction. Further discussion was held and the board asked various clarifying questions.

7) Board Comments

a. Broadband and Smart City Ad-Hoc Committee Update - Paul Conway

Mr. Conway noted that the committee is drawing to an end, and a presentation will be given to the City Commission with the committee's recommendations. The executive summary from the presentation will be sent to this board for review.

A brief discussion followed.

b. Discussion pertaining to Governance of the Board - Michael Poole

A discussion was held about proposing a different governance structure for this board, and whether or not this would be a necessary step for the betterment of the board/structure.

Alison Yurko left at 1:19 p.m.

Staff highlighted some challenges that might be faced if governance was shifted and the board was granted more authority.

Fred Guitton left at 1:37 p.m.

Will be brought back before the board in the future, with a focus of discussing what the board hopes to accomplish in the long-run and why a change in governance could be useful/not useful- specifically as it relates to the strategic plan.

8) Upcoming Agenda Items

- Preview of the new bill
- Weather Plan as an Action Item
- Discussion of heat impact on the utility work force
- Follow up on data regarding disconnects
- Discussion item of the energy audit of city buildings
- Quanta Technology update

All regular staff updates will carry over every month.

9) Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 1:51 p.m.
Next meeting is scheduled for September 26, 2023.

Minutes approved by the board on _____September 26, 2023.
/s/ Tatia Ghviniashvili, Board Coordinator