Utilities Advisory Board Meeting Minutes

April 25, 2023 at 12:00 p.m.

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

Present

Michael Poole, Linda Lindsey, Paul Conway, Mary Dipboye, Leon Huffman, and Fred Guitton; Board Coordinator Tatia Ghviniashvili.

Absent

Alison Yurko.

Staff Present

Director of Electric Utility Dan D'Alessandro; Director of Finance Wes Hamil; Director of Water and Wastewater Utility David Zusi; Director of Communications Clarissa Howard; Director of Natural Resources & Sustainability Gloria Eby; Supervisor of Electric Utility Services Benjamin Wells.

1) Call to Order

Chair Michael Poole called the meeting to order at 12:01 p.m.

2) Consent Agenda

a. Approve the minutes of regular meeting March 28, 2023

Mr. Conway suggested changing "brought before the board for approval" to read as "brought before the board for recommendation to the City Commission for approval."

Motion made by Paul Conway to approve the minutes as amended; seconded by Leon Huffman. Motion carried unanimously with a 4-0 vote.

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

There were no public comments.

4) Action Items

a. Septic to Sewer Conversion - David Zusi

Updates were provided on the process of changing the septic to sewer Code of Ordinance, with changes related to annexation language, as well as the management and monitoring of privately-owned lift stations. Staff is actively working with the city attorneys to make modifications, and will bring the modified ordinance to the board for recommendation for approval to the City Commission. Mr. Zusi commented on impact fees and a discussion on billing was held.

b. Sewer and Water Strategic Plan - David Zusi

A brief update was provided and staff will work to provide the document to the board for review.

c. Reviewing 20 MW Solar Acquisition through FMPA to present to Commission - Dan D'Alessandro

Mr. D'Alessandro referenced the presentation from FMPA (found in the agenda packet), and explained the upcoming phases of the project, which will be the acquisition of another 10 MW for the city. A discussion ensued about solar power and purchasing it with a flat rate, instead of a time of use rate, and the board asked questions. Staff is seeking board recommendation for approval to the City Commission for an additional 20 MW of solar. A brief discussion followed about solar power and how to stagger future contracts, and staff answered questions.

Motion made by Paul Conway to make a recommendation to the City Commission to acquire 20 MW of solar; seconded by Fred Guitton. Motion carried unanimously with a 6-0 vote.

5) Non-Action Items

a. Renewable Energy Discussion - Dan D'Alessandro, David Zusi and Gloria Eby

Mr. Poole made a few opening remarks and highlighted that the Keep Winter Park Beautiful & Sustainable Advisory Board (KWPB&SAB) have made a recommendation for approval to the City Commission for scenario 3A (outlined by Quanta Technology in previous meetings), and have also approved a recommendation to hire an individual to help facilitate this scenario forward.

Mary Dipboye arrived at 12:08 p.m.

Michael Mount, Quanta Technology, gave a brief overview of the renewable energy targets defined and recommended at previous City Commission and Board Work Sessions. He explained that scenario 3A is an accelerated version of scenario 1A, and both are focused on achieving 100% renewable energy by 2050.

Fred Guitton arrived at 12:13 p.m.

A roadmap for the recommendations was presented, divided between financial targets, studies that need to be completed to refine work/targets, technology assessments, and purchases. These were further broken down into short, mid, and long-term goals, and Mr. Mount detailed each one in terms of suggested actions and projects that would need to be completed.

The floor opened for board questions and further discussion. Mr. Mount and staff made the necessary clarifications to questions regarding a roadmap for infrastructure modification, maintaining contract for fossil fuel backup as opposed to buying battery storage, nuclear power, reduction of consumption of energy through power, city owned facilities, etc.

Per board request, Mr. Mount gave a general outline of the qualifications and knowledge base someone should possess to qualify for the staff role recommended by the KWPB&SAB. This individual will need to be senior enough to coordinate multiple parallel tasks- with economic and technical elements- should be able to manage outside economic and engineering consultants, and work effectively with internal departments, all while being very comfortable with basic utility operations and economic/financial analyses.

A brief discussion followed about NEM (net energy metering) and carbon credits. Staff will provide written recommendations to be voted on by the board at the next meeting.

6) Staff Updates

a. Electric Utility - Dan D'Alessandro

Mr. D'Alessandro gave a few project updates. There has been minimal progress on undergrounding, as supply chain issues continue. The board asked questions about production meters and staff made the necessary clarifications.

b. Water & Wastewater Utility - David Zusi

Mr. Zusi highlighted that six portable emergency generators were budgeted for the next two years. Staff is also applying for an Orange County hazard mitigation grant to help accelerate the acquirement of the generators mentioned above. Discussions took place about legislature that is being proposed that would stop a municipal utility in giving money back to the municipality that it is attached to, as well as lead piping. A discussion followed clarifying the process of adding items to meeting agendas.

c. Performance Measurement - (attachment only)

Mr. Hamil highlighted that accounts receivable over sixty days past due and disconnects for non-payments have decreased. Average wait time has gone down to two minutes and twelve seconds for the month of February.

The board asked a few questions to clarify the data provided.

d. Finance Quarterly - Wes Hamil

Fuel cost continues to decrease, and staff is looking at reducing rates starting May 1, 2023.

e. Educational Campaign - Clarissa Howard

Ms. Howard gave an update on the educational campaign. Per previous board suggestions, staff is working to modify the electric rate comparison chart. As part of the educational plan, a community meeting will be held to discuss city utility projects and hurricane preparedness. A draft press release was presented that outlines the details of the event and staff will release it at the date of this meeting.

f. Covanta Speaker - Dan D'Alessandro - May 23rd meeting

Mr. D'Alessandro noted that a speaker from Covanta Energy Corporation will be at the next meeting.

7) Board Comments

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

Mr. Conway gave updates on the recent meeting, which focused largely on networks and engineer presentations. A brief discussion followed about the project.

b. Chair and Vice Chair Appointments

No discussion took place, but staff will send an email out to the board about adding this to the upcoming agenda.

8) Upcoming Agenda Items

- Renewable Energy- Quanta Technology
- Sewer and Water Strategic Plan
- Legislation Issue Impact
- Storm Prep Discussion

9) Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 2:00 p.m.
Next meeting is scheduled for May 23, 2023.

Minutes approved by the board on May 23, 2023.
/s/ Tatia Ghviniashvili, Board Coordinator