Utilities Advisory Board Meeting Minutes

February 28, 2023 at 12:00 p.m.

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

Present

In person: Alison Yurko, Linda Lindsey, Paul Conway, Mary Dipboye, Leon Huffman; Virtually: Fred Guitton; Board Coordinator Tatia Ghviniashvili.

Absent

Michael Poole.

Staff Present

Director of Finance Wes Hamil; Electric Utility Operations Manager Miguel Cruz; Electric Utility Engineer Manager Mourad Belfakih.

1) Call to Order

Vice Chair Linda Lindsey called the meeting to order at 12:02 p.m.

2) Consent Agenda

a. Approve the minutes of regular meeting, January 24, 2023

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

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

Ms. Lindsey spoke of a recent interaction she'd had with a resident, indicating that the individual was not notified about electric work being done on their property. She asked staff what protocol is in place for communicating this type of information to residents.

Mr. Belfakih noted that the procedure involves leaving a flyer on the customers doorstep, as well as posting signage on both ends of the street to indicate any potential drilling, presence of city staff, etc. This process is done for large projects, but smaller, more last-minute cases (emergency-work), do not usually get notified ahead of time. Staff indicated that they had already communicated with said resident and explained the situation.

4) Action Items

a. Electric, Sewer, & Water Strategic Plan - Dan D’Alessandro and David Zusi

Ms. Lindsey brought up concerns with the lack of information under specific agenda items. She asked staff to include supplemental materials/documents, as well as a suggested requested action from the board. Mr. Hamil will communicate with the staff responsible to make those changes/additions to the agenda packets moving forward.

The board held a brief discussion about being proactive in terms of moving the Strategic Plan along, and a consensus was made asking staff to provide a detailed report on the item in the agenda packet for the next meeting.

Action was not taken and the item was deferred due to absence of staff.

b. Septic to Sewer Conversion - David Zusi

Item deferred to next meeting due to absence of staff.

5) Non-Action Items

a. Private Lift Station Policy - David Zusi

The board and staff held a brief discussion about the private lift station policy, as well as the quantity of lift stations located around the city.

Further discussion of item deferred to next meeting due to absence of staff.

6) Staff Updates

a. Electric Utility - Dan D'Alessandro

In the absence of Mr. D’Alessandro, Mr. Belfakih gave updates to electric utility and all ongoing projects (as highlighted in the agenda packet). Staff is proactively working on the undergrounding project, and installing transformers as they become available. Twenty transformers were received on February 27, which are currently in the process of being installed.

A discussion ensued about the format of the electric utility report, and Mr. Guitton asked staff to alter the way information is presented- for the purpose of clarity. The board asked various questions pertaining to the installation of transformers on residential property. Staff responded that transformers are always placed in public rights of way, but it is part of the yard the resident maintains. Staff works with residents to place transformers in the best location that works for both the resident and the electric service.

b. Water & Wastewater Utility - David Zusi

Item deferred to next meeting due to absence of staff.

c. Performance Measurement - (attachment only)

Mr. Hamil shared some key highlights from the Utility Monthly Performance Measurements report. Call volumes have declined in December and disconnects for non-pay will resume this coming month. City staff is reaching out to customers who might be impacted, which is proving to be effective in receiving payments. The average revenue per kWh for non-fuel is consistent, averaging at around eight and a half cents. Accounts receivable over 60 days has grown to 17%, but is expected to come down once disconnects resume.

The board asked questions about the data presented, and staff made the necessary clarifications. Reliability data is currently listed as unavailable; however, staff will work to obtain it for a future meeting. A brief discussion was held regarding the water sewer utility data, and a consensus was made to report the data on a rolling-12 basis as opposed to on a monthly basis.

d. Educational Campaign - Clarissa Howard

The board held a brief discussion regarding the attachments (found in the agenda packet), pointing out that the bill comparison chart as seen in the *Winter Park Update* is housing too much data, causing the chart to look small and illegible.

Mr. Hamil shared that Winter Park's Electric utility rates for the month of January are lower than that of the Orlando Utilities Commission (OUC). Mr. Hamil also noted that staff will look into removing electric utilities that are not similar in size to Winter Park which will improve the legibility of the bill comparison chart. The same utilities will be included each month for consistency in the comparisons.

7) Board Comments

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

Mr. Conway shared a brief update regarding the February 16 meeting, highlighting the continuing work/collaboration with Magellan.

A brief note was made by Ms. Dipboye about the March 21 joint work session with Keep Winter Park Beautiful & Sustainable Advisory Board, encouraging her fellow board members to attend.

The board held a brief discussion regarding solar panels companies and the vetting process for said companies.

Mr. Hamil presented on a detailed Fuel Adjustment Policy (requested by the board at the last meeting). He handed out copies of the policy, and explained the proposed modifications to the existing policy. The proposed policy provides for a higher balance to account for extreme changes in fuel costs and highlights 10% of the fuel budget rounded up to the next $100,000 as the target. There is now a bottom trigger point of 5% of the fuel budget, and a top trigger point (to reduce fuel rates) of 15% of the fuel budget. In the cases where fuel rates need to be increased, the difference will be spread over six months. Conversely, when fuel rates need to be reduced, the difference will be spread over four months.

The board asked questions about the details of the proposal, and Mr. Hamil made the necessary clarifications. Staff was asked to provide a model with visual data for the next meeting to show hypotheticals of the proposal. Once the board approves the proposal, it will be presented before the City Commission in April. A brief discussion ensued.

City Manager, Randy Knight, gave quick comment on the Fuel Adjustment Policy proposal, and staff attendance to this board's monthly meetings.

8) Upcoming Agenda Items

Under action items:

- Electric, Sewer & Water Strategic Plan
- Septic to Sewer Conversion
- Fuel Adjustment Policy Draft

Under non-action item:

- Private Lift Station Policy
- Discussion of joint work session with Keep Winter Park Beautiful & Sustainable Advisory Board

Staff updates/board comments will carry over for every month.

9) Adjournment

Date of next meeting- March 28, 2023.
The meeting adjourned at 1:14 p.m.

Minutes approved by the board on March 28, 2023.
/s/ Tatia Ghviniashvili, Board Coordinator.