Utilities Advisory Board
Regular Meeting Minutes

June 25, 2024 at 12:00 PM

City Hall Commission Chambers
401 S. Park Avenue

Present
Kathryn Sutton, Mary Dipboye, Michael Poole, Paul W. Smith Jr., Paul Conway, Alison Yurko, Leon Huffman (virtual)

Absent

Staff Present
Director of Water and Wastewater Utilities David Zusi, Electric Utility Operations Manager Miguel Cruz, Assistant Director of Water and Wastewater Utilities Tara Lamoureux, Electric Utility Engineer Manager Mourad Belfakih, Integrated Resources Program Manager Lisa Vedder

1. Call to Order

Michael Poole called the meeting to order at 12:00 p.m. and welcomed new board members.

2. Consent Agenda

a. Approve the minutes of May 28, 2024

Motion made by Paul Smith to approve the minutes, seconded by Paul Conway Motion carried unanimously with a 7-0 vote.

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

4. Action Items

a. Proposed budgets for FY 2025

Mr. Hamil presented the Proposed Budget for FY 2025. The fiscal year begins on October 1. The Board reviews the budgets for the electric fund and the water and sewer funds. The proposed utility budget will be presented to the City Commission on July 10th.

By city ordinance, water and wastewater rates increase each year based on the PSC index unless the Commission takes action. This year, the PSC index increase is 3.24%. Mr. Hamil displayed a chart comparing nearby water and wastewater communities. The comparison chart showed Winter Park's rates are lower than most of its neighbors.

Electrical sales have trended consistently over a 6-month period between October and March for the last 3 years. A projected decrease of 16% is expected in cost of non-fuel bulk power as a result of the expiration of the Covanta bulk power agreement effective December 31, 2024. Mr. Hamil presented and explained several charts from the agenda packet and noted that personnel costs are increasing, and the City has not had to increase non-fuel electric rates since October 2019. The decorative lighting budget will include $100,000 for the Dark Sky project.

Motion made by Mr. Smith to approve FY 2025 Budget; seconded by Ms. Dipboye. Motion carried unanimously with a 7-0 vote.

5. Non-Action Items

a. OUC proposing to Modernize Electric Pricing Structures - Lisa Vedder

Ms.Vedder presented Orlando Utility Commission’s recent proposal to modernize its electric rate structures. Mr. Poole suggested using a comparative company that is a distribution-only utility like Winter Park. Mr. Poole stated he is looking forward to hearing what the city is doing to help support and encourage solar and battery storage.

6. Staff Updates

Mr. Poole advised that at the next meeting there will be a vote for the Chair and Vice Chair.

a. Electric Utility - Mourad Belfakih

Mr. Belfakih presented the status of the undergrounding conversion and advised Ms. Dipboye the projected end date should be 2030. Ms. Sutton asked if the undergrounding completion numbers included the new residential plan. Mr. Poole explained the original undergrounding did not include the service lines. The completion numbers are for the primary lines and the service lines could go past 2030.
Mr. Belfakih verified that undergrounding does not hit water pipes, but may interfere with irrigation systems. When this occurs, it is corrected immediately.
Moved to item f. - the Dark Sky presentation.

f. Discussion of streetlight modernization program - Mourad Belfakih

Mr. Belfakih reviewed the DarkSky project. He offered two ways of implementation: create the pole and a new head or just use the existing pole and add the head. The price is $1K for existing or $3K for new. Ms. Dipboye asked if safety has ever been discussed. Mr. Belfakih responded that is currently not an issue. Board members suggested staff use more descriptive terminology for decorative lighting, Dark Sky and streetlight modernization. Ms. Yurko advised that Dark sky is confusing. The explanation of Dark Sky is to reduce reflected lighting and create a more environmentally friendly night sky. Mr. Poole advised Staff to come up with prioritization on where the lighting should be updated. Mr. Belfakih explained the decorative light estimate chart was created to allow for discussion. Ms. Yurko advised there should be connection with the undergrounding and the decorative lighting installation.

b. Water & Wastewater Utility – David Zusi

David Zusi advised that the Water/Wastewater department:

- Will self-perform the directional drilling for the force main, which is approximately 7K feet of 12" water main. This will probably save $2M in construction costs.
- Value engineering on two lift stations 3 months before having a contractor on board.
- A contractor/consultant will start this week on the AMI upgrade, working with the Water/Wastewater department, Finance, Customer Service Billing, IT and field representatives.
- Strategic plan flow chart through December 2024.

c. Performance Measurement – Wes Hamil

Mr. Hamil explained the monthly performance measurement tracks certain measurements pertinent to electric and water/wastewater operations. Board members discussed with Ms. Vedder the recently-added production data for the City's Solar Arrays. This discussion ended with Ms. Dipboye requesting a comparison to forecasted production and Mr. Poole moving on to the next agenda item. Mr. Poole and staff discussed the advancing of the customer service call system.

d. Educational Campaign – Clarissa Howard

e. Launch of Water & Wastewater Strategic Plan - Dave Zusi

David Zusi explained the Strategic plan located in the packet. Need a representative from the Advisory Board to attend planning meetings. Paul Conway volunteered.

g. Search for a new Electric Director

The new director was hired.

7. Board Comments

Ms. Dipboye noticed a new pool installed by the Cady Way pool and questioned if it should be metered. The question will be left for the new director to answer. Mr. Conway inquired of the EV parking space strategy. Mr. Poole advised the Board approved it and now it's working its way to the Commission.

8. Upcoming Agenda Items

Mr. Conway inquired about the Salary study. The salary survey was completed. Mr. Zusi explained the increase in the hourly and job vacancies are significantly lower. Mr. Poole eliminated the salary study from the next meeting's agenda. Election of the Chair and Vice-Chair will be added to the next agenda. Mr. Poole requested an update on the Sustainability Action Plan and IRP roadmap at the next meeting. Board Members briefly discussed the high energy requirements for AI datacenters.

a. Solar & Net metering Policy

Ms. Vedder noted that the Solar Net Metering policy analysis will be presented at the September Board meeting.

9. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 1:39 p.m.

Approved by the board on August 27, 2024
/s/ Bahiyyah Layton, Board Coordinator