

City of Medora
Minutes of Special Meeting of the Utilities Committee
November 15, 2018
(Subject to Council Review and Approval)

The Meeting was called to order at 10:00 am by Kinley Slauter. Present were Council Members Kinley Slauter, Tracy Sexton and Doug Ellison. Dell Beach, Mary Jean Brannum, Mary Schneider, Clarence Sitter, and Dennis Streitz were also present.

Special Meeting of the Utilities Committee: Review the current situation with Garbage, Sewer, and Water services and develop recommendations as needed.

Garbage

Mary Schneider presented her analysis of the garbage generation and use of dumpsters. Dennis Streitz added his comments. The information was very useful and helped to further understanding of how garbage services operate. The study validated the 60% City, 40% TRMF split is accurate. Mary also looked at the various accounts and provided comments on the current situation. We wish to thank Mary and Dennis for all the work to compile the information, it is very helpful. Various practices were discussed. We have many seasonal usage accounts, how they are charged and handled has evolved over the years and there are no consistent rules. One issue is that the account must be responsible for advising the Auditor on a timely basis of when they start and end usage, this is not a City responsibility. There also are no rules for determining if an account is high or low. We need to have a consistent set of rules for administering garbage fees.

The proposal is:

- look at a rate structure with new consistent categories: Commercial, Commercial Shared, and Residential. We will need to look at high end users to be sure they are charged accordingly.
 - if there is someone living on commercial premises there should be a commercial and a residential charge.
- Action: Categorize accounts into the categories for review so we can assess the impacts.

Water

Southwest Water rates are increasing 18% January 1. The Auditor has sent the information with rate change suggestions to the Council. We recommend that water rates be changed January 1 to recover the cost increase, the new rates being: \$17.00 base plus \$5.90/1000 gallons (currently \$17 base plus \$5.00/1000 gal). Bulk rates are recommended to be \$10.00/1000 gal (currently \$7.00/1000 gal), we sell little bulk water and only do so to accommodate contractors, we do not want to expand this business.

Sewer

We need an estimate of operating costs after lagoon expansion is completed. Most cities are charging sewer charges based on water usage. We will look at what others are doing to determine proposed rates that will help to recover more of our costs.

Recycling

Recycling has reduced the amount of garbage and it is putting material into the recycle stream. Many of our accounts recycle and it is obvious who doesn't. We need to look at how to encourage everyone to participate. The Auditor should add a message to the utility bills encouraging people to recycle. We also should look at sending out a marketing piece on recycling twice a year. We will ask Wally give an update at the next meeting.

Other

Auditor Ridenhower reviewed the revenue and cost for our utilities for the last 4 years as requested. We will schedule the next meeting for November 29 at 9:30am to review action items and determine the recommendations to take to the December 4 Council Meeting.

Everyone recognized Dennis Streitz for his diligence and commitment to delivering excellent service. Meeting was adjourned at 11:35 am.

Attest: _____ Kinley Slauter, Chair

Attest: _____ Gary Ridenhower, City Auditor