

**CITY OF TRUTH OR CONSEQUENCES
PUBLIC UTILITY ADVISORY BOARD
MONDAY, JULY 15, 2024**

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

Regular meeting of the Public Utility Advisory Board of the City of Truth or Consequences, New Mexico to be held in the City Commission Chambers, 405 W. Third, Truth or Consequences, New Mexico, on Monday, July 15, 2024, at 3:30 pm.

CALL TO ORDER:

The meeting was called to order by Vice-Chairman Dornbusch.

ROLL CALL:

Jeff Dornbusch, Vice-Chairman
Gil Avelar, Member
Don Armijo, Member
Chris Sisney, Member

ALSO PRESENT:

Angie Gonzales, City Manager
Traci Alvarez, Assistant City Manager
Katy Martinez, Admin Assistant
Sonya Renfro, Utility Office Manager
Bo Easley, Electric Department Head

1. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Member Don Armijo made a motion to approve the agenda.
Member Gil Avelar seconded the motion.
Motion carried unanimously.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

- a. Regular meeting of June 17, 2024.

Member Don Armijo made a motion to approve the minutes.
Member Gil Avelar seconded the motion.
Motion carried unanimously.

3. COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC: (3 Minute rule applies)

There were no comments at this time.

4. NEW BUSINESS:

- a. Discussion/Action: Recommendation for re-organization of Chairman and Vice Chairman.

Member Chris Sisney made a motion to recommend the appointment of Jeff Dornbusch as Chairman to the Public Utility Advisory Board. Member Don Armijo seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

Member Chris Sisney made a motion to recommend the appointment of Don Armijo as Vice-Chairman to the Public Utility Advisory Board. Chairman Jeff Dornbusch seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

b. Discussion/Update: Utility Billing Procedures

Sonya Renfro Utility Office Manager: Good afternoon, what you have before you are the billing procedures that are in the code if ordinances it's kind of a rough draft. I'm bringing this before you guys because I would like you to go over it and look at it. I would like some input.

Chairman Dornbusch: Do we have a deadline for this input?

Sonya Renfro Utility Office Manager: The next meeting. If you guys, see anything you would like to change or add. Some of the changes I made were for (N) I put in there about the budget billing its basically any customer that is current with payments after 12 months at the location is eligible to sign up for budget billing which is readjusted every March. If a customer cancels Budget Billing, they can be eligible again one year from termination. I made a couple other changes, and I took out all the prices on here because it easier to change those if they are not in ordinance. They are going to be by resolution. I also took out the deposits \$100 for electric \$100 for water because since the rates have changed those deposits of course the bills are higher so we need to make the deposits higher also again it won't be in the code, but it will be in the draft I bring you next month.

Assistant City Manager Traci Alvarez: You might want to make a reference on your ordinance somewhere that all fees and charges will be set by resolution. That way if people look up your ordinance they know.

Sonya Renfro Utility Office Manager: Ok. I want you guys to know I am going to be working on all the utility ordinances so you will probably have a lot of that stuff coming your way.

Member Avilar: (G) the letter g on the second page.

Sonya Renfro Utility Office Manager: What about it? You don't want that in there?

Member Avilar: You want to clarify that for me?

Sonya Renfro Utility Office Manager: Repealer. All ordinances or resolutions, or part thereof, inconsistent therewith are hereby repealed to the extent only of such inconsistency. This repealer shall not be construed to revive any ordinance or resolution, or part thereof, heretofore repealed.

City Manager Angie Gonzales: Legalities. If this gets approved and then you go back and you find 1985 oh wait a minute there is something right there, no this is the ordinance the most current one repeals everything under that.

5. REPORTS FROM THE BOARD:

There were no reports from the board at this time.

6. REPORTS FROM STAFF:

Assistant City Manager Traci Alvarez: The ICIP has been submitted. It was submitted Thursday so now we just wait for DFA to do their review. Then it will be open and available to the public by September, October time frame. If anybody wants a copy of the draft that we submitted just reach out to the clerk's office, they have a copy of it with the resolution per approval by the commission. We have awarded the CBDG water meter replacement project and the agreement with the engineering firm Wilso and Company has been approved by DFA so we are sending that approved signed agreement out to them this afternoon and then we will start the engineering portion which in essence means that they will be working close with the utility office to find a program that will work well with the water meters for automatic meter reading this will only address about a third of the meters maybe a little less. Right now, it is a small grant amount, but we will reapply again, and we will be doing water meters updates to AMI over the next few years. Every one of the water projects that we have been awarded we are automatically putting in automatic meters that are right now being read but when we switch over to AMI, they will go over to automatic meter readings.

Chairman Jeff Dornbusch: Are these the newer generation of water meters or are they mechanical?

Assistant City Manager Traci Alvarez: That's what the wastewater/ water director and engineer will work on. We have not picked one. The ones that were put in on some of these current projects that where have we are going to be working with the same system that the electric works through, but we found some hangups with that and so those will be replaced once we figure out what we are going with, and everything will be the same.

Chairman Jeff Dornbusch: What I'm trying to get at is that these new generations of water meters are just basically a straight pipe with some ultrasound pickups on it so there is no tampering, you can turn them around backwards and they will still read properly, and they will read down to like a quart a minute.

Assistant City Manager Traci Alvarez: We are going to do a lot of good research on it. So, we can account for all our water that we are not billing for on the low flows and make sure that we also account for any water that we may be servicing that may not look as though it's connected.

Chairman Jeff Dornbusch: Swamp coolers do not read on the meters that we have today.

Assistant City Manager Traci Alvarez: Correct.

Member Gil Avelar: Are we going to include business meters also?

Assistant City Manager Traci Alvarez: Yes, everybody will go AMI. They will probably address the most troublesome meters in this first phase weather that be ones that we have as frequent flyers, rental units where they come and go, or consistent nonpayment disconnects or maybe some that are just more difficult to get at and read. That will all be determined when the engineers stuff.

Vice Chairman Don Armijo: What is the life expectancy of the meters?

Assistant City Manager Traci Alvarez: I don't know until we chose a meter, but I think its roughly right around 20 to 25 years they say longer but 20 to 25 years is really.

Chairman Jeff Dornbusch: No moving parts it can last a long time if the electronic are up.

Assistant City Manager Traci Alvarez: There are a lot of different meters out there. I'm sure we will be getting hit hard by vendors once they get word that we are going out. We will have to go out to RFP on that. It's just the beginning stages we just got the engineering agreement, so we start our kickoff meeting with them probably in the next few weeks. The first thing is determining what program that we want to use that works well with the billing office as well.

Chairman Jeff Dornbusch: Tyler Technologies is going to soak us put that on there and make any changes?

Assistant City Manager Traci Alvarez: Any program that we choose is going to have to be intergraded with Tyler Technologies. Yes, and that is where working with Sonya comes in. Luckily, she has a great relationship with our engineering firm.

Sonya Renfro Utility Office Manager: Tyler Technologies is actually made to work for water/ wastewater. I don't foresee any issues with the billing for that. That is their main thing is water/wastewater.

Chairman Jeff Dornbusch: On this meter replacement program is there any plans to replace the larger compound meters like the veteran's center, the hospital and other large users?

Assistant City Manager Traci Alvarez: I'm sure at some point yes. That will all come in this first phase of engineering.

Chairman Jeff Dornbush: Ok, because those meters are really expensive, and they are not that accurate.

Assistant City Manager Traci Alvarez: All that will be addressed and discussed during the engineering portion.

I have one more totally unrelated to utilities but I'm going to put it out there anyway. Our animal shelter is having a huge fundraiser a live Facebook fundraiser starting tomorrow at 10 till 1 they have Jordan's Way it's a big group that came in last year that's coming in again this year. We are hoping to raise \$3,000 to keep our animal shelter manager from shaving her head. We are hoping to raise at least \$4,000 so we can dunk the chief of police in the dunk tank. You can get online and make donations that way if you want to participate that have all sorts of activities going on to help raise money. Encouraging if nothing else to get on Facebook to watch.

Member Gil Avelar: Was it advertised in the newspaper?

Assistant City Manager Traci Alvarez: Yes, it was as well as all over Facebook.

City Manager Angie Gonzales: I don't have anything. Do you have any questions for us.

Chairman Jeff Dornbusch: I do but I can save it for the next meeting. Basically, concerned about the low water pressure in town. I had some complaints myself this morning, but I understand that there was a leak in my neighborhood, so the water was probably shut down for that leak. I checked the water takes they have sufficient storage up north; the south one is a little bit low but it's still close to 50% which is great. There are leaks all over town, but it seems we are holding our own and our storage tanks are full of water.

City Manager Angie Gonzales: We will have Arnie at the next meeting so he can address lots of stuff.

Vice Chairman Don Armijo: Bo how is everything going?

Bo Easley Electric Department Head: Everything is going well we have been busy. Last week we finished the line we built for Jose Rios down there going towards Bartoo we are just waiting for the permit to come in so we can hookup the service. It's a new commercial property that we will be selling power too. The elementary schools next week we will be replacing the pad mount transformer to the 500 KBA they wanted the bigger transformer there. They are redoing their air conditioners they wanted 277-490 instead of 122-208. We have been replacing a lot of poles. We replaced all the poles on Broadway from Steel to Copper. The guy's got that done. Bixby was here they replaced 15 poles on east Riverside that needed to be replaced. The roundabout project is done. In Williamsburg the on and off ramp is done we have 5 poles out there. Dan Root is doing some more complexes on Morgan; we got them temp already. Other than that, we are busy replacing poles and doing services.

Chairman Jeff Dornbush: I know it's not your purview, but do you know when they are going to open that freeway on, off ramp for both directions?

Bo Easley Electric Department Head: I think they still got another 6 to 8 months. They are still doing all the landscaping.

Member Gil Avelar: You put a single phase down there for Rios?

Bo Easley Electric Department Head: Yes, we built it in case John Richardson which is the property in between the church and Jose Rios. If we wanted to all we have to do is go in a put in fiber glass cross arms and build the outside phases. It's hot and we are selling a lot of power. Sonya was looking at the Co-op deal for June and it was 320.

Chairman Jeff Dornbush: How's WAPA are they producing enough?

Bo Easley Electric Department Head: We don't buy as much from them.

Sonya Renfro Utility Office Manager: It's like 37 thousand.

Bo Easley Electric Department Head: Somewhere around there. I think it's 47. The solar array is still down hopefully later this year. They are having a hard time finding parts.

Chairman Jeff Dornbush: Is that the tracking mechanism?

Bo Easley Electric Department Head: No, that's where the CT and PT burned up in that one cabinet.

Vice Chairman Don Armijo: Over charged?

Bo Easley Electric Department Head: I don't know what happened.

Member Gil Avelar: Was it on their side?

Bo Easley Electric Department Head: Yes, it's been down since last May.

Member Gil Avelar: Are they paying the city for the power they have to buy?

Bo Easley Electric Department Head: We are talking about that right now.

Member Chris Sisney: Over all what is the capacity of our grid and what is a normal load on it? Are there any fears of us out growing our grid in town?

Bo Easley Electric Department Head: Not right now no. If we have T&D coming and doing another study for us like they did back in 2015 its going to tell us but being the two substation transformers we have right now we still have a long way to go before they are over loaded but that was one of the studies that they said back in 2015 if we do start adding more to our grid then we will need to build another substation out in Williamsburg.

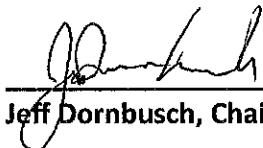
7. ADJOURNMENT: 3:53

Vice-Chairman Don Armijo made a motion to adjourn the meeting.

Member Gil Avelar seconded the motion.

Motion carried unanimously.

PASSED AND APPROVED ON THIS 19th DAY OF AUGUST 2024.



Jeff Dornbusch, Chairman