

Utility Departments of Hildale/Colorado City

Utility Board Meeting Minutes
320 East Newel Ave, Hildale Utah
Tuesday, October 2, 2018 6:00 P.M.

Present: Utility Board

Board Members:	Present	Absent	Excused
Haven Barlow	X		
Sterling Jessop, Jr.	X		
Ralph Johnson	X		
Arvin Black	X		
Jason Black	X (by phone)		
Nathan Burnham	X		
JVar Dutson	X		
Stacy Seay	X		
Michael Cawley	X		

Staff Present: Mayor Joseph Allred, Vance Barlow, Harrison Johnson, Weston Barlow, John Barlow, Randy Barlow, Leonard Black, Christian Kesselring, Vincen Barlow, Mariah La Corti

Public Present: Joan Barlow, Savannah Adams, Jesse Hammon, Maha Layton, Jared Nicol, (this list may be incomplete)

#1 Call to Order

Arvin called the meeting to order at 6:04 p.m. Roll called, quorum present. Arvin thanked everybody involved in utilities and putting the meetings together for their hard work.

#2 Prayer and Pledge of Allegiance

Michael Cawley gave a prayer followed by the crowd joining in the pledge of allegiance.

#3. Approval of Minutes of Previous Meeting

JVar Dutson moved to approve the minutes of the 8/28/2018 meeting.

Stacy Seay seconded. Roll call vote:

Board Members:	Yes	No	Abstain
Haven Barlow	X		
Sterling Jessop, Jr.	X		
Ralph Johnson	X		
Arvin Black	X		
Jason Black	X		
Nathan Burnham	X		
JVar Dutson	X		
Stacy Seay	X		
Michael Cawley	X		

Motion carried.

#4. Public Comment

Vincen Barlow addressed the Board. He informed the Council that the cities are working together to provide the Board and Councils with tablets to reduce waste and cost of preparing paper packets.

#5. Consideration of Utility Waiver Requests

None

#6. Manager Report

Harrison Johnson reported. A new technician (Randy Barlow) and accounts payable clerk (Athena Cawley) have been hired. Harrison explained how these individuals came to be picked for the positions.

He is still working on getting security systems in place including cameras, door locks, a badge system, etc. He will be receiving a quote shortly and will report on that when it is received.

He discussed the propane tank dispute issue. Hildale and Colorado City administration are working with the Utility Department on a policy to avoid similar issues in the future. That will be presented in the next meeting. JVar expressed his concern regarding this issue. Arvin explained the need for policies and implementation of such vs. the way things have always been done in the community, which may create confusion and hard feelings. He feels that fairness, due process and education will ultimately be the answer.

There was a hydrant meter that did not belong to the utility department being used without authorization. The theft was reported to Mohave County.

The Twin City Water Works/UEP memorandum of understanding was presented to the Colorado City Town Council and they approved it. The next step is to try to get the tax lien removed. It is now in the hands of the UEP to finish. JVar asked Harrison to contact the tax commission to see if they need anything from the cities showing support. Arvin recommended that any communication go through the UEP, so as to not step on any toes.

A pump motor broke down this month which required the well to be shut down and pulled. Weston and Ralph worked very hard to get it back online.

The Department is still weighing its options on how best to proceed with reducing the sludge blanket and returning treatment pond to one service.

#7. Financial Report

Vincen Barlow presented. The Board was provided with the invoice register and financial statement for the month, he walked them through it in detail. He explained it is a little smaller than normal because of Athena learning the system.

JVar asked about the ADEQ charge and the cost for new sources. Weston explained. JVar further asked if the water sales are going in a downward trend. Harrison confirmed they are projecting a 9% decrease from last year. He feels that what happens with the impact fee will have an effect on this.

Funds are available to pay the bills as they become due.

#8. Consideration of Approval to Pay Bills

JVar Dutson moved to pay the bills as they become due and the funds become available.

Nathan Burnham seconded. Roll call vote:

Board Members:	Yes	No	Abstain
Haven Barlow	X		
Sterling Jessop, Jr.	X		
Ralph Johnson	X		
Arvin Black	X		
Jason Black	X		
Nathan Burnham	X		
JVar Dutson	X		
Stacy Seay	X		
Michael Cawley	X		

Motion carried.

#9. Consideration and Possible Action on Utility Business Manager Job Description
 Mayor Allred provided this to the Board, as requested. Harrison feels that it thoroughly encompasses the position.

Haven Barlow moved to adopt the proposed Utility Business Manager Job description and recommend it to the city councils for approval.

Michael Cawley seconded. Roll call vote:

Board Members:	Yes	No	Abstain
Haven Barlow	X		
Sterling Jessop, Jr.	X		
Ralph Johnson	X		
Arvin Black	X		
Jason Black	X		
Nathan Burnham	X		
JVar Dutson	X		
Stacy Seay	X		
Michael Cawley	X		

Motion carried.

#10. Consideration and Possible Action on Salary Approval for Operations Manager
 Harrison presented. In line with Weston’s years of service, dedication to duty and to the community Harrison is recommending moving him to an exempt, salaried employee at the rate of \$56,000 a year. A benefits packet will need to be further negotiated.

JVar asked to speak with John Barlow regarding this matter. John confirmed that this is within the budget. Arvin expressed that he concurs with Harrison, what Weston brings to the department is invaluable.

Michael asked for an explanation of what the cost of the benefits packet might be. Harrison explained that it should not exceed \$1,000.00.

JVar Dutson moved to pay Weston Barlow at the salary of \$56,000 a year, effective immediately, with the benefits that come with being exempt.

Michael Cawley seconded. Roll call vote:

Board Members:	Yes	No	Abstain
Haven Barlow	X		
Sterling Jessop, Jr.	X		
Ralph Johnson	X		
Arvin Black	X		
Jason Black	X		
Nathan Burnham	X		
JVar Dutson	X		
Stacy Seay	X		
Michael Cawley	X		

Motion carried.

#11. Consideration and Possible Action on Backflow Liability Policies

Harrison presented. He gave a description of cross-connection and backflow. Failure to protect the water system needs to be taken very seriously. Harrison purchased educational materials from the American Backflow Prevention Association to provide to the public which explains the dangers of backflow and backsiphonage and how to prevent it.

He is proposing an enforcement policy that outlines how Department officials will address the issues. He went through the proposed policy with the Board and welcomed discussion. He pointed out that ordinances already exist for this.

Mayor Allred addressed the Board regarding a few concerns with the proposed policy. He feels that the Colorado City code (which is the same as the Hildale code) regarding this already thoroughly covers the issue. He does not agree with the liability aspect; the Board should not micromanage who the Department can and cannot disconnect. He feels that the employees should be empowered and trusted to do the job that has been given to them. He also pointed out that in the event of an immediate threat, the back flow etc. would already have happened, which is why backflow protection needs to be in place.

There was brief discussion on “dual-check”.

Jason and Haven expressed their agreement with Mayor Allred. These decisions should not come before the Board, there needs to be a policy that allows the experts to deal with the problems. Jason requested an education campaign to go along with each policy.

John Barlow informed the Board of a specific event where Harrison went above and beyond for a customer. He explained that what the staff needs in order to do their job is the support of the Utility Board.

Arvin voiced that we cannot control customer's feelings or please everybody, we can only control policies.

Stacy expressed confusion as to why this is being discussed if policies are already in place. Ralph explained that it would be helpful for the Board to have a copy of the policy that is already in place in these types of discussions.

Harrison is looking for direction on how the Utility Board would like staff to proceed. Staff was encouraged to continue educating the public and to be kind.

Jason Black moved to leave the Enforcement as it is, following the Codes that are already in place.

JVar Dutson seconded. Roll call vote:

Board Members:	Yes	No	Abstain
Haven Barlow	X		
Sterling Jessop, Jr.	X		
Ralph Johnson	X		
Arvin Black	X		
Jason Black	X		
Nathan Burnham	X		
JVar Dutson	X		
Stacy Seay			X
Michael Cawley	X		

Motion carried.

#12. Consideration and Possible Action on Automatic Payment Discount

Harrison presented. Moving customers to automatic payments online would eliminate late payments and open up staff time previously spent processing payments.

Harrison is proposing giving customers a one-time \$25.00 credit to incentivize them to sign-up for automatic payments.

Michael asked if the software and training costs were calculated into the estimates. Harrison explained that it was a one-time cost of approximately \$7,000.00.

Michael Cawley moved to recommend the proposed Automatic Bill Pay and Late Fee Removal Credit Incentives to the city council for approval.

Nathan Burnham seconded. Roll call vote:

Board Members:	Yes	No	Abstain
Haven Barlow	X		
Sterling Jessop, Jr.	X		
Ralph Johnson	X		
Arvin Black	X		
Jason Black	X		
Nathan Burnham	X		
JVar Dutson	X		
Stacy Seay	X		
Michael Cawley	X		

Motion carried.

#13. Consideration and Possible Action on Delinquent Account Reduction Policy

Harrison presented. This policy is proposed as a way to standardize a program for individuals with accounts over 90 days overdue balances that exceed \$100.00 and are currently disconnected from water services who offer to pay off their balance either in full or on a payment plan.

There was brief discussion on only working with customers on the late fees, not usage or base rates.

A wording change from “individual” to “account” was requested by Michael so that each account is addressed separately. Discussion on this went on briefly.

Jason Black moved to recommend the proposed Delinquent Account Reduction Policy, as amended, to the city councils for consideration.

JVar Dutson seconded. Roll call vote:

Board Members:	Yes	No	Abstain
Haven Barlow	X		
Sterling Jessop, Jr.	X		
Ralph Johnson	X		
Arvin Black	X		
Jason Black	X		
Nathan Burnham	X		
JVar Dutson	X		
Stacy Seay	X		
Michael Cawley	X		

Motion carried.

#14. Discussion on Impact Fee Analysis and Progress

Harrison presented. As requested by the Board previously, he completed an analysis on the water service impact fee and its continued use. He first pointed out a change he would like to make in the draft provided regarding the data with which the water impact fee was based on; it is outdated and needs to be looked at again.

The decline in usage in the past three years has created a \$170,000 drop in revenue over the same time frame. He provided the projections provided by Sunrise and explained that they were far off.

The Water Service Impact Fee is designed to help fund projects outlined in a facilities plan. Only having received one payment of the \$11,820.00 fee since the implementation, it has not achieved its goal. The impact fee is only to build new infrastructure to meet the capacity needs for new customers. Harrison explained that the current infrastructure is vastly underutilized. He feels that the water service impact fee should be entirely removed from both Hildale and Colorado City in order to encourage growth and higher numbers of water customers.

JVar asked about the individuals that have already paid impact fees. Arvin explained that it is not their job to undo what the previous Board decided; they are here to make it better going forward.

Stacy stated that this would be brought up again next year because of the requirements that a study be done every 5 years. Harrison pointed out that the study does not have to be completed if the impact fee is \$0. Arvin further expressed his opinion on why the engineering firms like to do these studies.

John Barlow explained how this is fundamentally different than you may see in other cities. He believes that if growth happens customers will see a positive change in their utility bills.

Harrison is proposing adopting a “lack of use” ordinance be put in place along with the removal of the fee where connections installed must receive water service within an allotted time or the connection is uninstalled to prevent large numbers of applications and meter installs that then go unused for years and are brought online all at once, bringing the Department past capacity.

JVar Dutson moved to make the recommendation to the city councils that the water impact fee be completely removed.

Stacy Seay seconded. Roll call vote:

Board Members:	Yes	No	Abstain
Haven Barlow	X		
Sterling Jessop, Jr.	X		
Ralph Johnson		X	
Arvin Black	X		
Jason Black	X		
Nathan Burnham	X		
JVar Dutson	X		
Stacy Seay	X		
Michael Cawley	X		

Motion carried.

#15. Discussion on Water Quality Infrastructure Improvement

Harrison presented. One of the key political decisions that will need to be made will be on how to develop infrastructure to improve the overall water quality and also bring cost savings to the customer. There is currently manganese and iron contamination within the culinary system. Additionally, there has been presence of radium in the Power Plant well water. It is likely that the wells currently owned by TCWW have a similar contamination.

Jesse Hammon, acting District Manager for Centennial Park, was invited to address the Board regarding what Centennial Park is dealing with right now. Centennial Park does not have any spring water, it is all well water. They have radium in their wells and are working with ADEQ. Michael stated that they have been maxing out their wells; they are looking for another water source and would like to discuss an IGA to run a pipe across the highway and connect. Stacy asked if Centennial Park is privately owned or acting like a municipality. Jesse explained that they established in 1998 and with that Centennial Park was granted the ability to govern itself through its people. Lengthy discussion continued on this matter. Weston explained that as far as the Department goes it is very do able. He does not know how Colorado City feels about it. It was established that it is the directive of the Board to look into this.

Harrison met with Zach Renstrom regarding the water rights available for the spring water from Water Canyon. It would require a surface treatment facility to be built but would greatly increase the water quality. Harrison asked for direction from the Board on whether to provide an immediate reduction on utility bills or focus on providing higher quality water.

Stacy felt that it would be neat to have an initial cut with a growth over time. Weston has brought up some ideas on how to improve water quality by manipulating the current system which will be implemented. Jason pointed out that lowering rates and encouraging growth would increase sales and profit in the long run, which may fund the new facility.

#16. Adjournment

Arvin commended the Board for being committed, the staff for all they do, and the public for their participation. He welcomed Randy aboard.

Meeting adjourned at 8:56 p.m.

Minutes were approved at the Colorado City Council Meeting on October 25, 2018.
Minutes were approved at the Hildale City Council Meeting on ~~June 6, 2018~~.

November 7, 2018

Vincen Barlow
Vincen Barlow, Hildale City Recorder



Vance Barlow
Vance Barlow, Colorado City Town Clerk



Summary of Board Actions:

Minutes of 8/28/2018 Meeting Approved

Approval to Pay Bills

Utility Business Manager Job Description proposed to city councils

Weston made into a salaried employee

Automatic Bill Pay and Late Fee Removal Credit Incentives recommended to city councils

Delinquent Account Reduction Policy recommended to the city councils

Recommendation to the city councils that the impact fee be completely removed