

City of Woodland
Meeting Minutes – April 5, 2017
Water Utility Advisory Committee (WUAC)

1. Roll Call

Present: Phil Hogan, John McKean, Bob Schoech, Dean Simeroth

Absent: AK Khera

Staff Present: Lynn Johnson, Greg Meyer, Jordan Power, Tim Busch, Craig Locke, Kim McKinney

2. Public Comment – NONE

3. Committee and Staff Comments

Two new people were welcomed to the meeting, Michelle Bilodeau and Tony Buffinton. Michelle applied to join the Committee and Tony observed the meeting to determine possible participation.

Phil Hogan asked about Chrom 6 regulations being scaled back. Tim explained that there is a lawsuit against the new Chrom 6 standards, but he doesn't think the standards will change.

Bob had concerns about the Daily Democrat article on water rates and felt that the information was misleading. Additionally, he was concerned that Council chose not to implement the proposed drought rates.

Greg announced that the surface water plant was chosen as one of five finalists for a national award. The project has already won the American Council of Engineering Companies of California (ACEC) Honor Award for 2015 Engineering Excellence competition; 2016 Design-Build National Award of Merit; American Public Works Association, Sacramento Chapter, Project of the Year 2014 – Environment and Project of the Year 2016 – Environment for projects over \$100 million; American Society of Civil Engineers, Sacramento Section, 2016 Water Project of the Year; and a Commendation Certificate from Congressman John Garamendi of the 3rd District in California.

Tim discussed some of the episodic water quality issues that we are still experiencing, most related to legacy manganese in the pipes. We are doing a more aggressive cleaning of the pipes with “pigs”. We are also considering the possibility of switching from orthophosphate to polyphosphate. Additionally, we will be doing some selective ice pigging in key problem areas.

Jordan announced that we reduced water consumption by 31% in February from the same month in 2015.

4. Approval of Minutes

Minutes from January 11, 2017 were approved

5. 2016 Water Rate Study

The City held the Public Hearing on the proposed water rate increases on March 7th. Approximately 40 residents spoke at the hearing, most opposed to the rate increases. The Council chose not to take formal action and asked staff to do additional research on ways to reduce the rate increases, specifically 1.) look at water consumption assumptions and consider increasing, 2.) talk to the State about refunding surface water loan so that it can be paid back over a longer term to reduce annual debt service payments, 3.) look at the possibility of using general fund reserves to reduce rate increases, 4.) options to reduce utility fund expenses, and 5.) review status of efforts to roll-back regulations to Hexavalent Chromium.

Options were investigated and Council presented results on March 21st. After review and additional public comment, the City Council adopted the recommended five, 5.5% rate increases. Year one increases will show on May utility bills. Staff will continue to explore options that could reduce revenue requirements with a goal of implementing rate increases lower than those approved in future years.

6. Utility Assistance Program

For FY 2017 we served 346 customers with the Utility Assistance Program. There were at least 40 additional applications turned in after we depleted our funding. We don't know how many more customers meet the program criteria that didn't submit applications because of depleted funding. The City is researching other program guidelines that we might use to serve a broader group including tenants. This is a challenge for all water agencies. There is a constitutional amendment that may look at Proposition 218 that may allow subsidy in the water utility for low income customers. We will monitor this amendment. Additionally, in late 2015, AB401 was passed that requires the State Water Quality Control Board to have a program in place by January 2018 to provide statewide utility assistance. This does not mean it will be implemented by that date, but at least there should be a plan. Public Works staff will be attending the Association of California Water Agencies conference in May that includes a workshop on utility assistance programs. Staff will bring back information from the conference for consideration. Additionally, staff will continue to do research on this issue and bring the topic back to the WUAC for further discussion in June.

7. ASR Wells Update

We are currently doing cycle testing on Well 28 in Freeman Park and testing water quality. Although we have done a lot of previous testing, this is the first using surface water. This testing will continue for approximately 6 months. Well 29 in Christianson Park and Well 30 in Ferns Park are still in construction and are schedule to complete in October.

8. Recycled Water Project

The City began delivering recycled water to Biomass on February 1st. Construction is almost complete pending a few punch list items dependent on dry water. Once the weather warms up and park irrigation is needed, we will begin landscape irrigation at Klenhard Park and Pioneer Park with recycled water.

9. Next Meeting

June 7, 2017 – City Hall, 6:00 pm

10. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 7:41 p.m.