

# STOUGHTON UTILITIES COMMITTEE REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

Monday, February 15, 2021 – 5:30 p.m.

Stoughton, WI

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**Location:** Online Attendance: GoToMeeting ID 443-556-925.

**Members Present:** Citizen Member David Erdman (Chair), Alderperson Ben Heili (Vice-Chair), Alderperson Regina Hirsch, Alderperson Greg Jenson, Citizen Member John Kallas, Mayor Tim Swadley, Citizen Member Dustin Thoren

**Excused:** None

**Absent:** None

**Others Present:** Stoughton Director of Finance & Comptroller Jamin Friedl, Stoughton Utilities Assistant Director Brian Hoops, Stoughton Utilities and WPPI Energy Services Manager Amy Wanek, Stoughton Utilities Director Jill Weiss

**Call to Order:** Utilities Committee Chairperson David Erdman called the regular Stoughton Utilities Committee Meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

**Utilities Committee Consent Agenda:** Stoughton Utilities staff presented and discussed the Stoughton Utilities Committee consent agenda items.

Staff highlighted ongoing sustainability efforts, including working with City of Stoughton staff to review the Office of Energy Innovation Grant Program. It was ultimately decided by staff that a grant application was unlikely to be awarded due to insufficient funding available for some projects, or lengthy returns on investment for others.

Staff highlighted a recent cyber security breach at a Florida water utility, where a malicious actor was able to access the utilities supervisory control and data acquisition (SCADA) system through an unsecured remote access. Staff discussed SU's cyber security efforts.

Staff highlighted the success of the December curbside donation drive, which collected 2,400 pounds of nonperishable food items for Stoughton area food pantries.

Motion by Hirsch, the motion seconded by Jenson, to approve the following consent agenda items as presented:

- a. Draft Minutes of the November 16, 2020 Regular Utilities Committee Meeting
- b. Stoughton Utilities November Payments Due List Report
- c. Stoughton Utilities December Payments Due List Report
- d. Stoughton Utilities January Payments Due List Report
- e. Stoughton Utilities October Financial Summary
- f. Stoughton Utilities November Financial Summary
- g. Stoughton Utilities October Statistical Report
- h. Stoughton Utilities November Statistical Report
- i. Stoughton Utilities December Statistical Report
- j. Stoughton Utilities December Statistical Report
- k. Stoughton Utilities November Activities Report
- l. Stoughton Utilities December Activities Report
- m. Communications

The motion carried unanimously 7 to 0.

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**Status of the Utilities Committee recommendation(s) to the Stoughton Common Council:** Stoughton Utilities staff presented and discussed the following items from the Stoughton Utilities Committee that were approved and/or placed on file by the Stoughton Common Council:

**Consent Agenda:**

1. Draft Minutes of the October 19, 2020 Regular Utilities Committee Meeting
2. Stoughton Utilities October Payments Due List Report
3. Stoughton Utilities September Financial Summary
4. Stoughton Utilities September Statistical Report

**Business:**

1. None

Discussion followed.

**Ordinance to Create Sections 74-2 (h) and (i) of the City of Stoughton Code of Ordinances, Relating to the Replacement of Indirect Sanitary Sewer Service Lateral Connections:** Stoughton Utilities staff presented and discussed a draft ordinance that would require privately-owned sanitary sewer service connection lines be connected directly to the public system, and where any indirect service connections are discovered, provides a method to require such indirect connections be relocated to directly connect to the public system. This ordinance is intended to address scenarios where a home or building on one parcel has a sanitary sewer service line that connects to service line that provides service to a home or building on a neighboring parcel. Utilities staff is aware of several locations where such connections exist, and examples of the issues that can arise from such indirect connections were given. Discussion followed.

Motion by Hirsch, the motion seconded by Thoren, to approve creating Sections 74-2 (h) and (i) of the City of Stoughton Code of Ordinances, relating to the replacement of indirect sanitary sewer service lateral connections, and recommend approval of the adopting ordinance to the Stoughton Common Council. The motion carried unanimously 7 to 0.

**Approval of the Fiber Optic Agreement and Grant of Indefeasible Right of Use (IRU) Between the City of Stoughton and TDS Metrocom:** Stoughton Utilities staff presented and discussed a draft agreement in which TDS Metrocom has agreed to provide Stoughton Utilities with dedicated, unlit strands of fiber optic cable to all Stoughton Utilities facilities for a negotiated, reduced up-front cost. Staff further explained that the document provided in the meeting pack was a draft that was believed to be nearly final, however continued discussions with legal counsel indicate that there may be revisions required. Discussion followed.

Motion by Erdman, the motion seconded by Heili, to table this item until an upcoming special meeting to be scheduled upon recommendation of approval by legal counsel. The motion carried unanimously 7 to 0.

**Stoughton Utilities Round-Up Program:** Stoughton Utilities staff presented and discussed the Stoughton Utilities Round-Up Program. A brief description and history of staff's efforts to recruit new organizations to apply for funding was provided to the committee. This is the second of two donations to be made using 2020 program funding, with an applicant pool of 18 local non-profit organizations. Discussion followed.

Motion by Jenson to donate \$1,000 from the Stoughton Utilities Round-Up Program fund to the Stoughton Village Players. The motion failed due to the lack of a second.

Motion by Hirsch, the motion seconded by Thoren, to donate \$500 to Folks Wagons, Inc. and \$500 to Society of St. Vincent de Paul St. Ann Conference from the Stoughton Utilities Round-Up Program fund. The motion carried unanimously 7 to 0.

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## **Approval of the Common Facilities Agreement Between the City of Stoughton and American Transmission Company LLC:**

Stoughton Utilities staff presented and discussed the Common Facilities Agreement (CFA) between the City of Stoughton and American Transmission Company, LLC (ATCLLC). Staff explained that the Stoughton Electric Utility shares common facilities with ATCLLC at our East Substation and West Substation, and that the CFA specifies a method of requesting, performing, and compensating for improvements and replacements of common facilities at joint use substations. The current CFA was last updated on December 12, 2007. Discussion followed.

Motion by Hirsch, the motion seconded by Kallas, to approve the Common Facilities Agreement between the City of Stoughton and American Transmission Company LLC, and authorize the execution of the revised agreement. The motion carried unanimously 7 to 0.

## **Notice of Potential Audit Deficiency Findings During 2020 Financial Audit:**

Stoughton Utilities and City of Stoughton staff presented and discussed several ongoing issues that would likely result in deficiency findings from our financial auditors. These potential deficiencies were related to inventory management and reconciliation due to the ongoing systemwide pole replacement project, and accounts payable approvals and routing delays at year-end. Staff discussed the memo included in the meeting packet that described the causes of these issues and how they are being addressed going forward. Staff stated that the financial auditors found staff's explanations satisfactory and that staff does not expect these issues to rise to the level of a significant deficiency or a material weakness in the audit management letter. Staff explained that the utility did not incur any interest or penalties due to these issues. Discussion followed.

## **Wisconsin Public Service Commission Electric Billing Audit:**

Stoughton Utilities staff presented and discussed the recent billing audit of the electric utility conducted by the Wisconsin Public Service Commission (WPSC). The WPSC conducts these audits to ensure that proper billing and collections procedures are in place and being followed so that customers' bills are accurate and processes are consistent with the WPSC Administrative Code and Wisconsin State Statutes.

Staff informed the committee that the WPSC billing audit of Stoughton Utilities began in February 2019 and concluded in May 2020. One billing requirement required a corrective action plan to be submitted to the WPSC and modifications made to municipal street lighting customers' billing statements. In February 2021, the WPSC reviewed the corrective actions taken, determined that all audit findings had been resolved, and officially closed out the billing audit. Discussion followed.

## **Lead Service Line Replacement Program Status Update:**

Stoughton Utilities staff presented and discussed efforts that have occurred in the 18 months since the utility was notified of the lead action exceedance. Many efforts have been completed or are currently underway as staff proceeds with the planned program to replace lead service lines throughout the City of Stoughton. Staff presented and discussed the continuation of our public education program to the community on lead service lines and the upcoming systemwide lead replacement project being undertaken in 2021, discussed the grant application submitted to the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources for funding to replace customer-owned lead service lines, discussed the upcoming 2021 lead service line replacement project and the status of project design and bidding, and discussed current efforts being taken by staff to identify lead service lines and provide homeowners with the required notice of mandatory replacement. Discussion followed.

## **Utilities Committee Future Agenda Items:**

Staff informed the committee that upcoming regular meeting topics will include lead service line replacement program status updates and bid award, updates to the status of SU's Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR) grant application, a collections status update,

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and a presentation on utility, city, and community sustainability efforts. The dark fiber agreement will be brought forward for approval at a future special meeting. Discussion followed.

**Adjournment:** Being no further business before the committee, the Chair adjourned the regular Stoughton Utilities Committee Meeting at 6:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted

Brian R. Hoops  
Stoughton Utilities Assistant Director