



## Marion Utilities

1540 N Washington St.  
Marion, IN 46952  
[www.marionutilities.com](http://www.marionutilities.com)

## Service Board

### BOARD MINUTES OF THE JANUARY 7, 2021 MEETING

The Marion Utility Service Board held their meeting on Thursday, January 7, 2021 at 5:30 p.m. in the L.E.A.D. Center, Building 101, at Marion Utilities, 1540 N. Washington Street, Marion, Indiana. A Zoom option was also available.

Roll was called and those board members present were: Bob Logan, Chairman; Doug Carl; Mia Erickson; Al Green; Von Jackson; and Herschel Lewis. Bill Dorsey was absent.

Also present at the meeting were: Chuck Binkerd, Director; Pat Pinkerton, Assistant Director for Engineering and Solid Waste; Robin Shrader, Assistant Director for Operations and Maintenance; Mike Conner, Attorney; Tiffany Snyder, Accounting Billing Coordinator; and Misty Humphries, Secretary.

#### **CONSIDERATION OF AGENDA ADDITIONS OR DELETIONS**

There were none.

#### **ELECTION OF 2021 CHAIRMAN & VICE-CHAIRMAN APPOINTMENT**

Mr. Carl moved to elect Mr. Logan as Chairman for 2021. Mr. Lewis seconded the motion. All members present voted aye. Motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Logan appointed Mr. Carl Vice Chairman for 2021.

#### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Mr. Lewis moved, seconded by Mr. Carl, to approve the regular meeting of December 3, 2020 meeting. All members present voted aye. Motion carried unanimously.

#### **FINANCIALS**

Mrs. Snyder presented the financials for November 2020. Three of the Utilities saw a loss. The Water Utility purchased a dump truck that contributed to the loss. The Wastewater Utility was the only Utility that saw a gain. The Storm Water Utility paid several contractor project claims that led to the loss. Solid Waste has a very tight budget and also had a loss. Mrs. Snyder said that the overall funds saw a decrease of approximately \$190,000 from October. Mr. Logan asked about the clearing account balances. He noted that they are all negative instead of seeing a corresponding positive to a negative entry. Mr. Binkerd said that some of them are for things like sales tax payments. He also noted that Jennifer Wilson had been consulted and much of the clear



account entries will be cleaned up for the December financials. Mr. Binkerd noted that the Solid Waste Utility is about \$95,000 at a deficit. Mr. Binkerd reminded the Board that at the time of the Solid Waste Utility creation, it was discussed that at about five years a rate increase would be needed. Mr. Binkerd remarked that this is the five year mark. Mr. Lewis moved, seconded by Mr. Green, to approve the financials as presented. All members present voted aye. Motion carried unanimously.

### **UPDATE ON PROJECTS**

Mr. Pinkerton reported that the major projects are done for the year. He said that staff was working on designs for the coming year.

### **COVID-19 UPDATE**

Mr. Binkerd said that the lobby continues to remain closed per the Mayor's Executive Order. This month the drive thru has been very busy. At times, lines have wrapped around the building. Currently, there are not any employees with COVID. Mr. Binkerd said that according to the CDC, Utilities are in the second round of those that the vaccine would be made available to. However, under Indiana guidelines, that is not the case. Mrs. Shrader added that the IWEA just a recommendation to the Governor requesting Utilities be moved to the second round of those that may receive the vaccine.

### **TRANSFERS & PAY REQUESTS**

Mr. Pinkerton presented the release of retainage and Certificate of Completion to Insight Pipe in the amount of \$6,184 for the cured-in-place project. Mr. Lewis moved, seconded by Mr. Carl, to approve the pay request. All members present voted aye. The motion carried unanimously.

### **POLICY TO EXTEND EFMLEA & FFCRA LEAVE**

Mr. Binkerd explained that the Emergency Family and Medical Leave Expansion Act (EFMLEA) and the Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA) expired as of December 31, 2020. Those laws allowed for extended employee leave related to COVID. The acts allowed for employees to receive additional leave for up to 80 hours with pay while taking care of someone with COVID. The Department of Labor has said that companies may voluntarily extend the policies. Mr. Binkerd said that he had to make use of the leave, and it was very helpful. Mr. Binkerd said that in talking with Mr. Pinkerton today and reviewing numbers, if the numbers were what they were at this time last year, it would seem that the pandemic was over. Mr. Binkerd asked for the Board to extend application of the EFMLEA and FFCRA to June 30, 2021. He clarified that if an employee had already used 80 hours the employee would have nothing left to use. If an employee had used 40 hours of the 80 hours, they would have 40 hours left to use. Mr. Binkerd said this was being requested for fairness. Mr. Logan discussed some payroll tax benefits on the 941 form as well as the 7200 and 8900 that the Utility would qualify for. Mr. Lewis moved, seconded by Mr. Green, to extend the EFMLEA and the FFCRA until June 30, 2021. All members present voted aye. The motion carried unanimously.

## **RENEWAL OF CLELAND ENGINEERING CONTRACT**

Mrs. Shrader explained that Judy Cleland of Cleland Engineering has been the go to contractor for engineering. She has offered a renewal for the next year at the same rates with a rate of \$130 per hour with a not to exceed amount of \$60,000. Mrs. Shrader said that it would be crucial to have her on board as the next phase of the Long Term Control Plan is entered. Mr. Lewis moved, seconded by Mr. Carl, to approve the contract. All members present voted aye. The motion carried unanimously.

## **SENIOR LEADERSHIP REPORTS**

### **P. Pinkerton, Assistant Director for Engineering & Solid Waste**

Mr. Pinkerton reported that the average daily intake for Solid Waste from 2016 to 2020 experienced an almost 10 ton per day increase. The annual intake increased from 2019 to 2020 by about 240-250 tons. This would have been more had the Transfer station not been shut down due to COVID for a while. This equated to about 133 more trips to the landfill. For recycling, from 2016 through the first half of 2020 when blue bags were still being used, \$123,000 was spent for 170 tons of recycling. This results in \$724 per ton for recycling. Mr. Pinkerton said it averaged to \$27,300 and about 38 tons per year. Since switching to the drop off, the expenses for seven months was \$10,500 and about 45 tons has been averaged. The expense number also included the part-time employees' wages. Mr. Pinkerton pointed out that if this was looked at on a yearly basis, recycling was more than doubling and almost tripling. He continued that Pam Kirklin had worked very hard getting things set up, and it shows. Mr. Green asked if the baler had resulted in an improvement in cost. Mr. Binkerd answered that it had been a significant improvement. Mr. Pinkerton added that if the product was baled, the fee to switch the trailer would be waived which would result in another \$2,000 saving.

### **R. Shrader, Assistant Director for Operations & Maintenance**

Mrs. Shrader reported that groups were mostly working on inside projects such as prepping the lime room for the new slaker and an office for IT. On January 18, 2021, the new Customer Service drive thru will be installed. This was going to be done on an observed holiday so that customers wouldn't be disturbed.

### **C. Binkerd, Utility Director**

Mr. Binkerd stated that the City Council passed General Ordinance 18-2020 which allowed the Board to issue bonds in an amount not to exceed \$11 million. Mr. Binkerd thanked Councilman Luzadder as he was very supportive. The projects in terms of plans and specifications were being finalized. The bids will be brought to the Board for final approval on March 18<sup>th</sup>. Mr. Binkerd said there are some issues with the finances of the Drinking Water Division. There are many substantial projects that are not able to be done. Operating costs are being covered fine, but we are not able to move into the system for some much needed projects. The Water Committee will be contacted for meeting dates and times for further discussion. Mr. Binkerd added that he had been contacted by the IURC several times asking how the Water Utility is surviving on the current fee structure. Mr. Binkerd concluded by thanking the Christmas Party Committee for their hard work and putting together the holiday baskets. Mr. Binkerd had received several compliments on them from retirees and leaders in the community that received the baskets.

**BOARD MEMBERS' COMMENTS**

Mr. Lewis thanked the committee for the Christmas basket.

Mrs. Erickson shared news that her firm, which was based in Chicago, had just been officially acquired March 1<sup>st</sup> by Rockefeller Capital Management which is part of the Rockefeller Family Office. The firm was quite excited.

**CHAIRMAN'S REMARKS**

Mr. Logan thanked the Christmas Party Committee for the basket. He then thanked everyone for their vote of confidence in leading the board during the coming year as well as their attendance.

The next meeting was scheduled for Thursday, January 21, 2021.

There being no further business before the Board, Mr. Lewis moved, seconded by Mr. Carl, to adjourn the meeting. All board members in attendance voted aye. Motion carried unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 6:04 p.m.

Robert Logan, Chairman  
Marion Utilities Service Board

ATTEST



Misty Humphries

Its Secretary