



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

## Service Board

### BOARD MINUTES OF THE NOVEMBER 6, 2025 MEETING

The Marion Utility Service Board held their meeting on Thursday, November 6, 2025 at 5:30 p.m. in the L.E.A.D. Center, Building 101, at Marion Utilities, 1540 N. Washington Street, Marion, Indiana.

Roll was called and those board members present were: Robert Logan, Chairman; Kristy Barney, Isaiah Fuller, Mike Graft, Herschel Lewis, and Jayda Monteiro. Al Green was absent.

Also present at the meeting were: Robin Shrader, Director; Pat Pinkerton, Assistant Director for Engineering & Solid Waste; Chad Guyer, Assistant Director for Operations & Maintenance; Kyle Persinger, Attorney; Tiffany Snyder, Accounting/Billing Coordinator; and Misty Humphries, Secretary.

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

There were no modifications, additions or deletions.

#### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Mr. Graft moved, seconded by Mr. Lewis, to approve the minutes of the October 16, 2025 meeting. All board members in attendance voted aye. Motion carried unanimously.

#### **FINANCIALS**

Mrs. Snyder presented the September, 2025 financials. In 2025, sales for all utilities but Stormwater have been above or consistent with prior years. Mrs. Snyder reported that on the expense side, operations and maintenance expenses were fairly consistent or below prior monthly expenses. Mrs. Snyder then called the Board's attention to the red ink on the first page and said it wasn't as bad as it looked. Mrs. Snyder reminded the Board that three months ago the Water Utility expended its depreciation funds to a \$0 balance, and the Water Utility operating balance was less than the desired two months of balance. In September, a \$1,800,000 loan was made from the Wastewater Utility, spread among three of its capital funds, to the Water Utility operating fund. Additionally, Mrs. Snyder said that Solid Waste paid back \$250,000 of its loan to the Wastewater Utility out of the depreciation fund. In summary, Mrs. Snyder stated that overall, all utilities had a positive operating net income. The negative cash flow for the Wastewater Utility occurred because of the loan to the Water Utility, and the negative cash flow for Solid Waste occurred because of the loan payback to the Wastewater Utility. There being no questions, Mr. Lewis moved, seconded by Ms. Barney, to approve the financials as presented. All board members in attendance voted aye. Motion carried unanimously.

#### **UPDATE ON PROJECTS**

Mr. Pinkerton did not have an update on projects.



## **TRANSFERS & PAY REQUESTS**

There were none.

## **CUSTOMER REQUESTS**

Mrs. Humphries said a customer had a question about the language in the water ordinance regarding where their responsibility lies and where the first turn off was. Mrs. Humphries asked for the request to be assigned to Water Committee for review. Mr. Logan assigned the request to the Water Committee for review and discussion.

## **JOB DESCRIPTIONS**

Mrs. Shrader said over the last several months, the Senior Leadership Team had been reviewing job descriptions. Having completed the review, the Senior Leadership Team presented the Personnel Committee with the changes recommended for seven of them. Mrs. Shrader said hopefully the Board had the chance to review the job descriptions prior to the meeting, but just in case, she gave you a brief summary. The current HR Specialist had announced her intent to retire next spring. Before her successor was hired, Mrs. Shrader said the Senior Leadership felt the necessity of making some adjustments to that job description, namely removing the responsibility for all elements associated with payroll and some elements related to new employee hiring and orientation. This would include changing the pay range from 17 to 16.

Mrs. Shrader said the responsibilities for the Safety Coordinator position had never been fully developed to match the pay range. As such, the Senior Leadership's recommendation was to add the elements related to new employee hiring and orientation being taken from the HR Specialist and other mandated reporting protocols such as the Risk and Resiliency Assessment. The pay range will remain the same.

Mrs. Shrader explained that previously, the person serving in the role of the Vehicular Maintenance Technician role had still been called a Water Maintenance Technician. The recommendation was to change the title and details of the job description to more accurately reflect current functionality. The pay range would not change.

Mrs. Shrader then reminded the Board that five years ago, the Program Support Coordinator was still responsible for certain elements that were passed along to the newly hired Safety Coordinator. However, the Program Support Coordinator job description was never adjusted to reflect the change. The proposal now was to make that adjustment now and as such the pay range would not be impacted.

Several years ago, when the Program Support Specialist position was created, the pay range was pointed to match what was then equivalent to the operations and maintenance staff. But over time, though the Senior Leadership Team felt the job description was still accurate, the importance of the position and accompanying responsibilities had increased tremendously. For that reason, the change proposed was to adjust the pay range from 10 to 15.

Mrs. Shrader then explained that in the normal course of operation, more had been asked of the Laboratory Services Coordinator, including an increase in the volume of tests conducted and a new level of customer interaction for some of the services the Lab provides. Only minor wording changes were made to the job description, but when reappointed, it became evident that the pay range should also be adjusted from 18 to 19.

Lastly, Mrs. Shrader suggested that what had previously been known as the Accounting/Billing Assistant should be retitled to the Accounting/Billing Specialist...in keeping with

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our Coordinator-Specialist wording used in other places. Additionally, this was where the Senior Leadership Team would like to reassign all elements associated with payroll. Mrs. Shrader said this would also warrant the pay range to be adjusted from 13 to 14. Mrs. Shrader then turned the subject over to the Personnel Committee for any comments or questions. Mr. Graft asked when these recommended changes would go into effect. Mrs. Shrader said immediately with the exception of the current HR Specialist who would stay in her current job description until she retired. Mr. Graft asked how the changes in wage ranges would affect this year's budgets. Mrs. Shrader said that the shifts were minor. The HR Specialist would be a decrease and the Accounting/Billing Specialist was a corresponding increase. The Laboratory Services Coordinator position had been receiving overtime wages. However, with the repointing the position would move to a salaried position. Mrs. Shrader said that the Program Support Specialist position was the only change that would need accounted for, and this year's budget should accommodate that due to some earlier changes in staffing. Mr. Logan added that the changes would also be reflected in the 2026 budgets. Dr. Monteiro added that the Personnel Committee had made some minor changes upon review. They had also ensured that the position pay ranges were parallel across similar positions. Mr. Graft moved, seconded by Mr. Lewis, to approve the changes to the job descriptions as described. All board members present voted aye. Motion carried unanimously.

### **CHEMICAL BID APPROVAL**

Mr. Guyer presented the chemical bids for approval. He noted that the Alum Sulfate came in with pretty much no change. Carbon Dioxide had a difference of \$10 per ton. The dry polymer had a decrease of \$0.30 per pound. Mr. Guyer said the polymer for the centrifuge was a first time bid. It had bought for \$1.80 and the bid was \$1.25. For chlorine, the low bid came in at \$1730 per ton which \$144.53 lower than last year. Conversely, the Sulfur Dioxide came in at \$1250 which was \$50 per ton higher than last year. Mr. Guyer noted that the lime bid was missing. He explained that while lime bids were accepted, none of the bids met the requirements. Mr. Guyer presented Resolution 4-2025 entitled Rejecting All Bids Received for Water and Wastewater Chemical Supplies and authorizing and Directing Staff to Re-advertise and Solicit New Bids for Suppliers. Mr. Lewis moved, seconded by Mr. Graft, to approve the chemical bids presented on the bid tabulation sheet. All board members present voted aye. Motion carried unanimously. Mr. Lewis then moved, seconded by Ms. Barney, to approve Resolution 4-2025 entitled Rejecting All Bids Received for Water and Wastewater Chemical Supplies and authorizing and Directing Staff to Re-advertise and Solicit New Bids for Suppliers. All board members present voted aye. Motion carried unanimously.

### **CSO 009 BID APPROVAL**

Mr. Pinkerton reported that on October 30th bids were opened on the next CSO project at Home Avenue. There were three bidders that responded. Engineer's estimate was \$9,822,690. Thieneman bid \$9,978,000; Ottenweller bid \$13,233,000; and Kokosing bid \$17,045,000. Mr. Pinkerton said this was a big spread. Commonwealth reviewed the bids. Mr. Pinkerton said that there was a follow up with Thieneman who was comfortable with their bid. Mr. Pinkerton said that given Thieneman's bid was just a little higher than the engineer's estimate, he would recommend awarding to the bid to Thieneman contingent upon bonding. Mrs. Shrader said the bond was scheduled with the Indiana Bond Bank. Mr. Lewis asked where the project was located. Mr. Pinkerton said it was actually on Clark Street between 20<sup>th</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup> Street just west of Home Avenue. Mr. Lewis moved, seconded by Mr. Graft, to approve awarding the bid to Thieneman. All board members present voted aye. Motion carried unanimously.

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## **LINCOLNSHIRE CIPP BID APPROVAL**

Mr. Pinkerton said this was a Cured-in-Place Pipe Lining Project on Lincolnshire between Branson and Wilno. There was a pipe causing some structural questioning. There were two bidders. Insituform bid \$111,554 and Inliner bid \$110,681. Mr. Pinkerton said the bids were very close, but he would recommend Inliner as the low bid. Mr. Pinkerton stated that it had been 30 or so years since Inliner was used. A company called Insight had been used. Mr. Pinkerton said he thought Inliner bought out Insight which was why there was not a bid from Insight. Mr. Logan asked when the project would take place. Mr. Pinkerton said they would be lucky to get to it in December. It would probably be next spring. Mr. Lewis asked if this was lining that would be sleeved in. Mr. Pinkerton said it was basically a felt tube that would be impregnated with an epoxy resin. This would be run through the sewer and then inflated with hot water which would then set it up. Mr. Graft asked if the laterals were underground or if there would be any open cuts. Mr. Pinkerton said the laterals would not be lined so there would be no digging. Mr. Lewis said it was amazing what could be done. Mr. Pinkerton agreed that it was impressive. Mr. Lewis moved, seconded by Mr. Graft, to approve the bid of Inliner as the low bid. All board members present voted aye. Motion carried unanimously.

## **RATE PROPOSAL RESOLUTION**

Mrs. Shrader said that the board was well aware of the financial situation with the Water Utility and its continued decline, despite the phased rate increase begun in 2023. Mrs. Shrader said that revenue had increased since that time, but not enough to keep pace with operating expenses and debt service. And as yet we have still not been able to even consider rebuilding our depreciation reserve for capital improvements. The \$1.8 million loan from Wastewater to Water was helpful, but temporary, as those funds would soon be needed to continue pursuing the Long Term Control Plan mandates. For these reasons, Crowe was asked to reevaluate our circumstances and provide their conclusions and recommendations.

Mrs. Shrader stated that were currently in Phase II of the 2023 rate increase, with subsequent phases to be implemented on January 1 of '26, '27, and '28 respectively. An acceleration of those phases would provide an increase of approximately 15.41%, while it is estimated that what we actually need is closer to 44.24%. Additionally, we run the risk of being penalized with a rate decrease by the IURC for our failure to secure additional bond funding by the end of 2025. This was a stipulation of the rate agreement in 2023. Given that we showed a deficit of \$1.6 million for our test year (12-month period ending June 2025), we are left in an impossible position.

For these reasons, Mrs. Shrader asked the Board to consider approving a resolution that would allow us to go before the City Council with a request to petition the IURC for a new rate case.

In anticipation of some logical questions that might arise, Mrs. Shrader presented the following additional information:

- There were a few reasons why the 2023 rate case was not sufficient: record-setting inflation rates that were not considered, operating costs that continue to rise, aging infrastructure that had been neglected and was now requiring more immediate attention, and a new rate structure that actually reduced water rates for many customers...at least at the onset.
- This 44.24% proposal does include consideration for PILOT which would result in our ability to contribute \$264,642 annually to the City's budget. This is one of the few selling points we may have given the timing and other economic factors currently at stake. Historically, we have wanted to shy away from PILOT, but with SB 1 we wanted to at least put it in

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consideration.

- Based on 2024 data, the newly proposed rate would still be lower than two-thirds of the rest of the state, and is likely to shift further downward by the time of actual implementation.
- The majority of our residential customers use between 3 and 4 units of water each month. That equates to the water portion of their bill being \$20 - \$25 (based on the 2026 rate). The proposed change would mean the water portion of their bill would likely range from \$26 - \$33. This equates to a trip to Starbucks.
- Our need for a rate increase is completely independent from any type of economic prospects which may be looming on the horizon. We have been drawing down our reserves for 10 years and have a long way to go to get caught back up. This is independent of anything else going on in the City.
- Our priority is and will continue to be providing safe, high-quality water to our community.

Mr. Graft asked how the percentage for PILOT was calculated. Mrs. Shrader said there was a formula used by Crowe to determine was affordable based upon the requested rate increase. Mrs. Shrader said there was a limit imposed of roughly 5%. Mr. Graft then asked if there was any reason to think that we would get something more than the requested increase. Mrs. Shrader said she didn't think so. Mrs. Shrader said that historically the IURC had looked for ways to cut the requested increase. Mr. Logan said as he remembered the rate increase last requested was very close to what was awarded. Mr. Graft said that a senate bill would probably require the City to pass a LIT and possibly taxes for public safety. He added that this would be a hard sell knowing that individual items would have to be looked at. It's not an election year so it's probably a good time to look at taxes. Mrs. Shrader said there was never a good time to ask for a rate increase. However, some hard choices need to be made given the financial situation. Mr. Graft recommended highlighting the minimal change of \$6. Mr. Logan asked if this was passed when would it be on the Council's agenda. Mrs. Shrader said if it was passed tonight, she would ask to be on the November 18th Council agenda. Mr. Lewis moved, seconded by Ms. Barney, to approve Resolution 5-2025 for a Water Rate Adjustment. All board members present voted aye. Motion carried unanimously.

## **SENIOR LEADERSHIP REPORTS**

### **M. Humphries, Executive Assistant**

Mrs. Humphries said that unfortunately, illegal usage had increased slightly. This was terribly unusual for the time of the year. Mrs. Humphries said there was one interesting case involving a landlord that was moving meters amongst several different rental properties and incurring illegal usage. Ms. Barney and Mr. Graft asked if there was a specific monetary amount that would be sought. Mrs. Humphries said that the landlord would be billed for the illegal usage, any damage to the meters that might have been incurred, and any meters that the landlord could not locate. Mrs. Humphries said attention was drawn to this particular landlord because a meter had been moved from one property to another and placed in backwards which resulted in a reverse flow code. Mrs. Humphries said that they would reach out to Mr. Persinger for guidance.

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

Mr. Pinkerton reported that 880 tons which was about 48 tons per day went through the Transfer Station in October. Mr. Pinkerton said anytime there was less than 50 tons per day going through the Transfer Station it was considered a light month.

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### **C. Guyer, Assistant Director for Operations & Maintenance**

Mr. Guyer had nothing further to report.

### **R Shrader, Director**

Mrs. Shrader shared that there was an excellent turnout for the Trunk-or-Treat event where our booth judges declared Mrs. Humphries to be the best trunk for her rendition of Sponge Bob, which featured a giant spatula for dispensing candy, a ridiculous laugh, and choreography to accompany her sound effects. At this point, Mrs. Shrader said the recommendation was to keep this on the schedule for next year. Mrs. Shrader said as far as budgets go, the next internal budget meeting would be November 14, which we anticipate will include accurate insurance projections for 2026. Mrs. Shrader asked the Board to be on the lookout for their invitation to committee meetings to review those budgets. Depending on when we can fit those in, we should be able to present the 2026 budgets to the full board no later than our meeting on December 4<sup>th</sup>. Mrs. Shrader then highlighted the following upcoming events:

- We will be participating in the Thanksgiving Parade on November 22. Our theme will be The Grinch once again and will feature one of our trash trucks lit up with green lights and plenty of empty packages to distribute.
- Our annual Christmas Luncheon will be held on December 18 over lunch. Jimmy's will be catering as usual, and we would love to see you all there. Invitations will be distributed a little closer to the event.

### **BOARD MEMBERS' COMMENTS**

Dr. Monteiro said that she appreciated all of the calls and work done especially associated with all of the tough calls that have to be made.

Mr. Graft thanked Mrs. Shrader for all of the informational meetings and discussions she has had.

### **CHAIRMAN'S REMARKS**

Mr. Logan thanked the Personnel Committee for all of their work on the job descriptions. He also thanked everyone for their attendance at tonight's board meeting.

The next meeting was scheduled for 5:30 p.m. on Thursday, November 20, 2025.

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

Meeting adjourned at 6:16 p.m.

Robert Logan, Chairman  
Marion Utilities Service Board

ATTEST



Misty Humphries, Its Secretary

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