

**CITY OF HERMANTOWN
UTILITY COMMISSION MEETING SUMMARY**

March 18, 2021

5:30 PM

This meeting was conducted via zoom by all participants

ROLL CALL Jim Samberg, William Berg, Doug Kerfeld, Rob McLachlan, Howard Jacobson, Councilor Grant Hauschild

ABSENT: Doug Kerfeld

VISITORS Kevin Orme, Director of Finance and Administration; Paul Senst, Director of Public Work; Lindsay Townsend, Utility Billing Clerk; John Mulder, City Administrator

MINUTES

Motion by Jim Samberg to correct wording of Cable TV Extension notes, seconded by Howard Jacobson to correct and approve the minutes of February 18, 2021 regular meeting. All ayes, motions carried 4-0.

PUBLIC DISCUSSION: There were no members of the public present.

COMMUNICATIONS (items of information only – any communication requiring action is provided under that item on the agenda)

The following communications were read and placed on file:

- a. FROM: WLSSD
TO: City of Hermantown
RE: Discharge Monitoring Report

- b. FROM: WLSSD
TO: City of Hermantown
RE: 2021 Grant Application

Paul Senst spoke about the grant application. Grant is for a maximum of \$10,000 if approved. Funds would go towards hiring a UMD student to collect GIS data for the City of Hermantown. Motion to approve grant application made by Howard Jacobson, seconded by Rob McLachlan. All ayes, motion carried 4-0.

OLD BUSINESS – none

NEW BUSINESS

a. Paperless Bill / Autopay Sign Up Incentive:

Incentive program was presented by Kevin Orme. Howard asked if the incentive would include citizens that had already signed up for these services. Kevin responded, stating that the goal of the incentive program is to entice citizens that normally would not sign up for these services, so no it would only be for new sign ups during the month of April 2021. William asked how long it would take the City to recoup the cost of this incentive. Kevin estimated between 6 to 12 months. Jim brought up the possibility of doing this again in the future if it is successful. Motion by Jim Samberg to approve the Paperless Bill / Autopay Sign Up Incentive, seconded by Rob McLachlan. All ayes, motion carried 4-0.

b. Proposed Past Due Process

Process presented by Kevin Orme. Howard asked about the \$50 reconnection fee as it seems to be low. It was recommended to increase this fee to \$150 next fall when the fee schedule is discussed. Commission agrees a process needs to be in place and followed, they look forward to hear about the success of this process. All members agree that shut offs should not happen on a Friday or the day before a holiday. Commission supports process. No action taken.

REPORTS

- a. Budget to Actual Expenditure Report – Report was attached.
- b. Public Works Utility Maintenance & Project Update Report - Report was attached. Howard asked Paul about a large dip on Hermantown Rd. east of the Beacon Bar. Paul informed Howard that there is a water line that is under the road and that is why there is a dip. Howard also brought up to Paul that it would be good to be proactive and start checking on curb stops around properties that are delinquent to verify that service could be shut of easily if need be.
- c. Water Loss Report – Report was attached
- d. WLSSD Monthly Flow, Rain Fall & Flow – Report was attached
- e. New Connections Report – Report was attached
- f. Utility Billing Happenings – Memo attached

COMMISSION MEMBERS REPORT

- a. Jim Samberg: No report.
- b. William Berg: William brought up issue with broadband – John informed commission about possibility of starting a broadband task force to work on this issue.
- c. Robert McLachlan: No report.
- d. Doug Kerfeld: Absent.
- e. Howard Jacobson: No report
- f. Councilor Grant Hauschild: Grant informed commission that the broadband issue is a top tier issue and that the City Council is actively working on improvements.

RECESS Motion by Jim Samberg, second by Rob McLachlan to adjourn. All ayes, motion carried 4-0. The meeting recessed at approximately 6:15pm.

Minutes prepared by:
Lindsay Townsend, Utility Billing Clerk