

**UTILITY ADVISORY BOARD MEETING**  
**September 8, 2014**  
**CITY COUNCIL CONFERENCE ROOM**  
**5:30 P.M.**

**MEMBERS PRESENT**

Daniel Peterson  
Sharon Parshley  
Arthur Hoffman  
Shawn Libby

**STAFF PRESENT**

Blaine Cox, Deputy City Manager

**MEMBERS ABSENT**

Tom Willis

**OTHERS PRESENT**

Paul Brodzinski, Representing K. Picard  
Risa Kennedy, Briar Ridge

**MINUTES**

**1. Call to Order.**

Daniel Peterson called the meeting to order at 5:30 P.M. Tom Willis was absent; all other Board members were present.

**2. Acceptance of July, 2014 Minutes**

Arthur Hoffman **MOVED** to accept the July 14, 2014 minutes as written. The motion was seconded and was **ADOPTED** by a unanimous voice vote.

**3. Old Business**

**3.1 Minimum Usage Charges**

Deputy Finance Director Cox explained that this is an informational item only. Mr. Cox also indicated he was unable to determine how the dollar amounts were calculated to set the minimums. However, anecdotal information is that these were set by consulting engineers many years ago to capture the system's capital value that is present for customers even if they use little or no water.

**4. Appeals**

**4.1 Christadore Appeal**

The appellant seeks an abatement of 146 units of both water and sewer due to a frozen meter that broke causing excess water usage.

Deputy City Manager Cox's recommendation is to abate 39.25 units of sewer valued at \$244.92.

The above recommendation is based upon the following findings:

1. The higher than normal usage for the billing period 11-14-2013 through 02-12-2014 is the result of a leak.
2. There is no indication or evidence to suggest the meter readings are inaccurately high. No water abatement is needed.
3. The leaked usage did not enter the sewer system due to the location of the leak. Therefore, a sewer fees abatement is warranted.

The estimated leaked usage is 39.25 units.

12/12/14 Usage	50.00 units
Average Usage	<u>10.75 units</u>
Estimated Leaked Usage	39.25 units
	<u>x 6.24/unit</u>
	\$ 244.92

Daniel Peterson **MOVED** to abate 39.25 units of sewer valued at \$244.92. The motion received a second and the motion was **ADOPTED** on a unanimous voice vote.

#### 4.2 Picard Appeal

Paul Brodzinski, the brother-in-law of the appellant was present and he explained the basis of the appeal.

The customer seeks abatement due to a high water bill. There was no claim of a leak.

The recommendation of Deputy City Manager Cox is that no abatement be granted.

The above recommendation is based upon the following findings:

1. There were no leaks claimed or documented.
2. There is no indication of why usage is 16.5 units above the average of the previous four quarters.

Sharon Parshley **MOVED** to grant a hardship abatement of 16.5 units of water valued at \$77.06 and 16.5 units of sewer valued at \$107.96 for a total of \$180.02. The motion received a second and the motion was **ADOPTED** on a unanimous voice vote.

#### 4.3 Randolph Appeal

The appellant seeks an abatement of 300 units of both water and sewer and Water and Sewer administrative fees of \$120.00 for a total of \$3,393.00. The appellant advised

that copper pipes within the residence burst and water leaked into the crawl space and dirt floor.

Deputy City Manager Cox recommends denial of this request for abatement.

The above recommendation is based upon the following findings:

1. The City's General Ordinances, Chapter 16.18 (a) regarding water fee appeals and Chapter 17.20 (a) regarding sewer fee appeals, require the customer to request abatement prior to the next billing cycle.
2. The customer seeks abatement of fees for the billing period ending April 3, 2014. A subsequent billing occurred on July 3, 2014. The customer submitted this request for abatement on August 15, 2014.

Shawn Libby **MOVED** to deny an abatement. The motion received a second and the motion was **ADOPTED** on a unanimous voice vote.

#### 4.4. Nelson Appeal

The appellant seeks an abatement of 10 units of excess water and sewer fees due to a leak from a newly installed meter.

The recommendation of Deputy City Manager Cox is to abate 4.5 units of both water and sewer fees valued at \$49.10 for the billing period January 9, 2014 through April 3, 2014.

In addition, Mr. Cox recommends abatement of 35.5 units of both water and sewer fees valued at \$387.31 for the billing period April 3, 2014 through July 1, 2014.

Total abatement recommended is \$436.41.

The above recommendation is based upon the following findings:

1. The replacement meter installed by the City's contractor was defective in that it experienced a leak after being installed.
2. The average usage for the four billing periods prior to the installation of the replacement meter was 9.5 units.

The leaked usage for the April billing cycle is estimated as follows:

April Usage	14.0 Units
Average Usage	<u>- 9.5 Units</u>
Estimated Leaked Usage	4.5 Units

The leaked usage for the July billing cycle is estimated as follows:

July Usage	45.0 Units
Average Usage	<u>- 9.5 Units</u>
Estimated Leaked Usage	35.5 Units

Arthur Hoffman **MOVED** to abate 4.5 units of both water and sewer fees valued at \$49.10 for the billing period January 9, 2014 through April 3, 2014 and to abate 35.5 units of both water and sewer fees valued at \$387.31 for the billing period April 3, 2014 through July 1, 2014. The total abatement would be \$436.41. The motion received a second and the motion was **ADOPTED** on a unanimous voice vote.

## 5. Briar Ridge Elderly Exemptions

Ms. Risa Kennedy from Briar Ridge Management was present to explain how Briar Ridge seeks to avail its residents of the Elderly Exemption water rates.

Deputy City Manager Cox conveyed a staff recommendation that a system be set up whereby Briar Ridge residents who have been approved for Elderly Exemptions on their property taxes simply present their Briar Ridge water bill to the City for reimbursement.

Sharon Parshley **MOVED** to recommend to the Council's Finance Committee precisely what was recommended by staff. The motion received a second and was **ADOPTED** by a voice vote of 3 yes and 1 abstention. (Board member Arthur Hoffman abstained because he resides in Briar Ridge).

The UAB, after a brief discussion, suggested that Assessor Mullin attend a community meeting at Briar Ridge to explain how Elderly Exemptions work, deadlines, etc.

## 6. Abatement Request Form

The UAB was in unanimous agreement that the proposed revisions to the Abatement Request Form were very good.

One suggestion was to add to the section "Name the company or person who made the repairs" a request to attach copies of any repair invoices, materials purchased and/or photographs (before/after) of the repairs.

A second suggestion was to add a section requesting photographs of the affected plumbing/fixtures.

## 7. October Meeting Date

After a brief discussion, Mr. Cox determined the consensus of the UAB to be:

- 1st Choice - move the October UAB meeting to October 14th, if there are no meetings scheduled for Chambers that evening until after 7:00 P.M.

- 2nd Choice - October 20th if no meeting scheduled in Chambers before 7:00 P.M.
- 3rd Choice - October 6th.

## **8. Financial**

There was no discussion on the financial statements.

## **9. Other**

Sharon Parshley advised that she will be absent from the November UAB meeting.

## **10. Adjournment**

Dan Peterson **MOVED** to adjourn the meeting. The motion received a second and the motion was **ADOPTED** on a unanimous voice vote.

The meeting adjourned at 6:32 P.M.

Respectfully,

Blaine M. Cox  
Deputy City Manager

BMC: sam