

Board of Municipal Utilities
Work Session Minutes
January 16, 2018
201 Miller Road
Avon Lake, Ohio

Call to Order – Roll Call

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 PM.

Present: Mr. Dzwonczyk, Mr. Abram, Mr. Rush, Mr. Phillips, and Mrs. Schnabel.

Also present: CUE Danielson, Community Outreach Specialist Arnold, and Bryan Stubbs.

Cleveland Water Alliance

At the request of the Board, Bryan Stubbs, Executive Director of the Cleveland Water Alliance (CWA), gave a 30-minute presentation about his organization and our partnership with them. CWA is a Cleveland-based 501(c)3 economic development agency with a focus on water. Their interests include: (1) investing in our water ecosystem to spur research, innovation, and technology; (2) launching, retaining, and attracting companies to grow an industry based upon an abundance of water; and (3) attracting new venture capital from investors interested in water. The CUE is one of CWA's Board members and works closely with Mr. Stubbs to help promote Item 2 above. Mr. Stubbs talked about the variety of initiatives CWA has undertaken and is undertaking.

Board members expressed support for the priorities of CWA and noted that economic development is very important to this utility and the City. Even if the state of Ohio has not yet embraced the importance of water for economic development, this Board understands it and wants to help CWA promote that Avon Lake and Lorain County is "open for business." Members indicated that they would like Mr. Stubbs to regularly update the Board and, possibly, partner with the Board on these items.

Mr. Stubbs left the meeting at 6:40 PM.

Outside Watering Adjustment

The CUE presented information to the Board indicating that average billed residential wastewater consumption was approximately 3,500 gallons higher in December than in September due to the fact that the Summer Billing Adjustment is only in effect for the summer quarter. Avon Lake Regional Water gets a significant number of phone calls each year after December bills are issued expressing concern that the customer might have a leak or expressing frustration about being billed for wastewater usage when much of the increased usage was likely due to irrigation.

The CUE presented to the Board an option for extending the Summer Billing Adjustment into the fall. Board members generally supported the idea of not charging customers for wastewater usage for outside water usage. However, some members suggested that the

CUE consider whether Avon Lake Regional Water should once-again consider sub-metering, rather than extending the Summer Billing Adjustment. The CUE commented that there are several important factors to consider such as assuring residents do not connect wastewater generating uses after the sub-meter. Some Board members indicated that they would want an option to take into account, if possible, that not all residents use irrigation systems.

Affordability Program

At the previous work session, the CUE indicated to the Board that, before implementing new rates, he would like to investigate options for affordability programs—a concept Board members have expressed interest in considering. The Board provided guidance that they would like him to investigate minimum service fees and affordability programs in partnership with Community Resource Services. The CUE presented information on these two options. Members indicated they would like to see more analysis on the cost impacts, provide thoughts about options for how these might be impacted by an eventual switch to monthly billing (and whether we should consider monthly billing), and further develop the concept of minimum billing.

Future Organizational Structure

The CUE presented a potential path forward for the best Board involvement with respect to future organizational structure by facilitating that discussion only after completing the next strategic plan, and hosting a session on trends in the utility sector. Members further indicated that the CUE should consider hiring a temporary employee to assist with finances and other tasks required by the CUE until such time as the future organizational structure discussion has been completed and a clear path forward is determined.

Having concluded the agenda items, the work session adjourned at 7:30 PM.

Approved February 6, 2018

John G. Dzwonczyk, Chairman

Todd A. Danielson, Clerk