

Board of Municipal Utilities
Work Session Minutes
February 19, 2019
201 Miller Road
Avon Lake, Ohio

Call to Order – Roll Call

The meeting was called to order at 6:03 PM.

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

Also present: CUE Danielson, CUO Munro, and Technical Support Specialist Collins.

Water Meter Replacements

The CUO presented to the Board a proposal for an advanced process of evaluating the meter reading performed by Avon Lake Regional Water. He presented the Advanced Metering Infrastructure (AMI) that is currently being evaluated by staff. In 2018 staff replaced 290 meters due to dead batteries. Based on the age of some encoders, 1,682 are reaching the 10-year expected life and will likely need to be replaced soon. The CUO explained the desire to enhance customer experience through AMI when addressing an aging meter infrastructure, rather than replacing with the existing class of meters.

The CUO informed the Board that the cost of a currently installed Orion Encoder is \$165/encoder. The cost for a new Orion Encoder with Cellular Endpoint is \$185/encoder plus a \$0.81/month cellular fee per encoder. The Board discussed the affordability of the program and the general usefulness to the customer. Mrs. Schnabel stated that the monthly billing and water meter portal would be beneficial based on budgeting and access to important data. Mrs. Schnabel also expressed her concern that she has heard from community members regarding the quarterly billing prices.

The CUO informed the Board that there is an option to pre-pay the monthly fee for the first 10 years. The benefit of this structure is that Avon Lake Regional Water would not see any cellular price increase for the first 10 years of the encoder. The total front-loaded cost per encoder would be \$282.22. Mr. Abram asked what the City of Avon paid for their Advanced Metering Infrastructure. The CUO stated he did not know what the overall investment was from Avon, but, once more concrete numbers were available, he would inform the Board.

Mr. Rush inquired about the number of person-hours involved to read meters and what the benefit would be to change to a cellular transmission of that data. The CUO detailed how the current hours required varied from 2 to 3 days involved for reading meters each quarter; and those meter reads could be inaccurate thus resulting in an additional few days of reading by two crew members. The benefit of the AMI would be an up-to-date reading every day of the month. This would also help staff and crew discover leaks, which are costly and, ultimately, the responsibility of the customer.

The Chairman had a number of questions involving the transmission of data in inclement weather and snow cover and how much that transmission would cost the customer. The

CUO informed the Board that the cellular broadcast has no issue in almost any weather. He also stated the cost would be negligible; but, since he did not know the precise cost, he would inform the Board once he had that information. The Board also discussed the concern of data security and the potential corruption of data. The CUO stated that the information would be on a cloud-based program, which helps ensure additional safety, and the data was secured by a large third-party company. The CUO also informed the Board that, if the data was corrupted, the meters could still be manually read.

Staff has installed 11 of these new units on residential and commercial services across the city and will evaluate their effectiveness and efficiency over the next three months. If implementation of this project moves forward it would be done in a five-year phased approach. The Board requested responses to the questions asked before staff requests moving forward with a contract.

ISO 9001/ Continual Improvement

The CUE presented the progress of the ISO 9001/Continual Improvement to the Board. He stated that on January 25, 2019, several staff members took part in a full-day introductory training, which is scheduled to be followed-up with the strategic partners visiting Avon Lake Regional Water facilities during mid-March to undertake a gap analysis. On February 6, leadership team members took part in a half-day training session introducing the concept of metrics. The CUE informed the Board that staff will establish metrics to help monitor progress regarding the strategic plan and continuous improvement.

Water Reclamation Facility Rehabilitation Plaque

The CUE presented to the Board the final draft of the rehabilitation dedication plaque for the Water Reclamation Facility. The Board concurred with the look of the plaque, and staff will proceed with ordering it and drafting similar plaques for other recently-completed projects.

Adjourn

With no other business before the Board, Mr. Dzwonczyk adjourned the work session at 7:14 PM.

Approved _____ 2019

John Dzwonczyk, Chairman

Todd Danielson, Clerk