

BRYAN BOARD OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS

APRIL 5, 2022

Board of Public Affairs Chairman Jim Salsbury opened the meeting of the Bryan Board of Public Affairs at 5:00 p.m. with the following members present: Karen Ford, Tom Sprow, and Annette Schreiner. Richard Long was absent. Also present were: Mayor Carrie Schlade, Director of Utilities Nathan Gardner, City Attorney Rhonda Fisher, Operations Manager Derek Schultz, Power Production Superintendent Jim Coressel, Human Resource Director Jacqueline Schlachter, Communications Superintendent Joe Ferrell, and Clerk-Treasurer Laura Rode.

Mr. Sprow moved, Ms. Schreiner seconded, to approve the minutes of the Regular Meeting held on March 15, 2022, as written. Roll call vote: all ayes; nays, none. Motion carried. Long absent.

Ms. Anita Brandeberry of the Autumn Chase Homeowners Association addressed the Board regarding the possible loss of cable television services provided by Bryan Municipal Utilities. She informed the Board that Spectrum deemed the subdivision unserviceable without an excessive installation fee. She added that she was hoping for clear direction this evening including the possible timing so alternative options could be explored. Mr. Jim Paule added that he felt losing cable when the possibility of outsourcing of refuse is also being considered is a double whammy to Bryan residents and the additional billing is inconvenient.

Director of Utilities Gardner then spoke regarding the dilemma surrounding Bryan Municipal Utilities cable television service reiterating that technology advances, a steep decline in the number of subscribers, rising programming costs, and competition have all contributed to the need to consider discontinuing the service. He shared that to just cover the rising programming costs would increase bills for the extended basic service by 49% - and added that the Utility is losing approximately \$25,000 each month on a system that is 24 years old and would require extensive capital improvements to continue.

The options were laid out for the Board to consider: stay on the same path depleting the fund, increase rates, invest in cable television with capital improvements which could exceed \$600,000, or discontinue the cable television service while maintaining the fiber and Internet services.

Bryan citizen Sandy Cramer announced that if Bryan Municipal Utilities cable service were to discontinue, she would drop her Internet service as well to which Director of Utilities Gardner replied that he and Communications Superintendent Ferrell would reach out to Spectrum in the event discontinuing cable television were the course to aid in the transition.

Further discussion was held with Board Chairman Salsbury stating the increases for programming are beyond the Board's control. To raise the rates to try to cover costs temporarily is to kick the can down the road. Communications Superintendent Ferrell added that the expected life of our system was 15 years. It is now 24 years old and would require rates to cover more than programming costs as extensive capital would be required. He added that Deerfield residents can get Spectrum. For Autumn Chase residents, it is possible that Spectrum would negotiate a bulk rate and work with them including deploying additional technicians if necessary.

Further discussion was held with Board members sharing that this issue had been looming as programming costs had increased drastically. They also shared that streaming via the Internet was also an option as Bryan Municipal Utilities appreciates their customer loyalty and hopes they stay on the City Internet service. Residents then inquired if assistance could be given if they stayed on Bryan Municipal Utilities Internet service and tried to stream to which Director of Utilities Gardner gave a possible option.

Board members continued to discuss their options noting that should cable television service be discontinued. Communications Superintendent Ferrell was clear that the effective date would be May 31, 2022, if that were the course they chose. He added that notice must be provided to subscribers quickly should they Board decide to discontinue the cable television service offered. Board Chairman Salsbury requested that a resolution be read to discontinue the cable television service.

Resolution No. 17, 2022, titled,

TO DISCONTINUE BRYAN MUNICIPAL UTILITIES (“BMU”) CABLE TV SERVICES

was presented and read by title only.

Mr. Sprow moved, Ms. Ford seconded, to pass with regret Resolution No. 17, 2022. Roll call vote: all ayes; nays, none. Motion carried. Long absent.

Mayor Schlade addressed the public stating that increased costs, employment challenges and laws restricting some areas for municipalities are placing City officials in a difficult position for both refuse service and cable television. She wanted to assure the public of the efforts made in attempting to maintain services.

Resolution No. 18, 2022, titled,

AUTHORIZING THE DIRECTOR OF UTILITIES TO EXECUTE AGREEMENTS FOR THE POWER PLANT SUBSTATION PHASE 1-MAJOR EQUIPMENT

was presented and read by title only. Power Production Superintendent Coressel informed the Board that competitive bids were received for the Power Plant Substation

Phase 1 – Major Equipment project and that the bids were below the estimate. He noted the following lowest and or best bids: GE Grid Solutions for four (4) 72.5 kV circuit breakers at a cost of \$169,320; SEL Engineering Services, Inc. for the relay and control panels at a cost of \$108,892; Power Line Supply for the major equipment including switches, insulators, voltage transformers, conductors, etc. at a total cost of \$192,640.97; and, Alum-Elec Structures, Inc for all required steel structures at a total cost of \$78,559.86. Combined, the total bid is \$549,412.83. He further requested the Board approve the bids as presented in an effort to secure items as quickly as possible for the project. Further discussion was held.

Mr. Sprow moved, Mr. Salsbury seconded, to pass Resolution No. 18, 2022. Roll call vote: all ayes; nays, none. Motion carried. Long absent.

Operations Manager Schultz gave a presentation to update the Board on the Advanced Metering Infrastructure project including meter replacements. He noted that while 35% of the electric meters were in and installation would begin shortly; however, as no water nodes will likely be available until late summer, water meter installation will be delayed. When installed, electric meters may require clocks or electronic devices to be reset. Water meters, when installed, may require a faucet to run to remove any air.

He continued that per the Ohio Administrative Code 4901, customers are to be notified in advance of the meter replacement; so, notices are currently being sent to customers via bill insert. In addition, door hangers notifying customer will be utilized when meters are replaced at each residence.

The Ohio Administrative Code 4901 also requires the Utility to provide customers with the option to remove an installed advanced meter and/or the option to decline the installation of an advanced meter and retain a traditional meter. An application process would be required to do so. Should eligible residential customers choose to opt-out of an advanced meter, the Utility may establish a one-time fee to recover the cost of removing an existing advanced meter and installing a traditional meter. Bryan Municipal Utilities will propose a \$75 one-time fee for this action.

In addition, the Utility may establish a recurring monthly fee to recover costs associated with providing meter reading and billing services associated with a traditional meter. Bryan Municipal Utilities will propose a \$25 recurring monthly fee for the manual reading and billing services required with a traditional meter. Further discussion was held.

Resolution No. 19, 2022, titled,

MODIFYING THE ELECTRIC DEPARTMENT GENERAL RULES AND REGULATIONS EXHIBIT “A” SPECIAL SERVICE CHARGES

was presented and read by title only. Director of Utilities Gardner requested the Board approve changes to the Electric Department General Rules and Regulations Exhibit A for

special service charges related to the advanced metering infrastructure project. Customers choosing to not have the new automated meter installed at their home would pay a \$75 service charge and a recurring monthly service fee of \$25 for the manual reading and billing services required. Further discussion was held with Director of Utilities Gardner noting that he hopes few exercise the opt-out option.

Mr. Salsbury moved, Ms. Ford seconded, to pass Resolution No. 19, 2022. Roll call vote: all ayes; nays, none. Motion carried. Long absent.

Human Resource Director Schlachter requested permission to move Water Plant Supervisor Jimmy Dunning from probationary status to regular employment status effective April 6, 2022.

Ms. Ford moved, Ms. Schreiner seconded, to move Water Plant Supervisor Jimmy Dunning from probationary status to regular employment status effective April 6, 2022. Roll call vote: all ayes; nays, none. Motion carried. Long absent.

Human Resource Director Schlachter informed the Board of the resignation of Lineworker Bradley Plummer effective April 8, 2022. Further discussion was held.

Mr. Salsbury moved, Ms. Schreiner seconded, to accept the resignation of Lineworker Bradley Plummer effective April 8, 2022. Roll call vote: all ayes; nays, none. Motion carried. Long absent.

Ms. Ford moved, Mr. Sprow seconded, to pay the bills. Roll call vote: all ayes; nays, none. Motion carried. Long absent.

Director of Utilities Gardner noted that recent bid openings have been favorable when compare to estimates. In addition, he informed the Board that Bryan Municipal Utilities had again achieved Diamond Level RP3 designation.

Mayor Schlade informed the Board that the City of Bryan was recognized as a 2021 Tree City USA. In addition, the City received the Tree City USA Growth Award from the Arbor Day Foundation.

Human Resource Director Schlachter informed the Board that Bryan Municipal Utilities received an outstanding safety award as well from the American Public Power Association. In addition, she requested the Board's permission to post for a Lineworker position.

Mr. Salsbury moved, Mr. Sprow seconded, to allow the posting for a Lineworker position. Roll call vote: all ayes; nays, none. Motion carried. Long absent.

Board members thanked citizens for attending the meeting and acknowledged that the decision to discontinue the cable television offering was a difficult one.

Mr. Sprow moved, Ms. Schreiner seconded, to adjourn the meeting. Roll call vote: all ayes; nays, none. Motion carried. Long absent.

Chairman of the Board

Clerk-Treasurer