



City Hall, 1st Floor Conference Room
401 S. Johnstone Avenue
Bartlesville, OK 74003

**MINUTES OF
SPECIAL "WORKSHOP" MEETING
OF THE BARTLESVILLE CITY COUNCIL**

**Monday, March 21, 2022
7:00 p.m.**

**Mayor Dale Copeland
918-338-4282**

MINUTES

(The Notice of Meeting and the Agenda was posted Thursday, March 17, 2022 at 5:00 p.m.)

Present were Mayor Dale Copeland, Vice Mayor Jim Curd, Jr., Councilmembers Trevor Dorsey, Paul Stuart and Billie Roane.

City staff present were Mike Bailey, City Manager; Jess Kane, City Attorney; Jason Muninger, CFO/City Clerk; Lisa Beeman, Director of Community Development; Terry Lauritsen, Director of Water Utilities; Keith Henry, Director of Public Works; Greg Collins, Assistant Community Development Director; Kelli Williams, Chief Communications Officer; Captain Jay Hastings, Security; and Elaine Baner, Executive Assistant.

- 1. The business meeting of the Bartlesville City Council was called to order a 7:00 p.m. by Mayor Copeland.**
- 2. Roll call was held and a quorum established.**
- 3. The Invocation was provided by Ms. Roane.**
- 4. Citizens to be heard.**

Jason Ramsey asked that sidewalks be repaired and completed throughout town, as well as down Highway 75 for people who do not own a car or who may be disabled. He also addressed flood zone areas in neighborhoods northwest of downtown where he resides.

Jim King was in attendance to listen to the sidewalk proposal, and to inquire about bicycle and scooter laws regarding riding on the sidewalk.

Mr. Bailey explained that per the Oklahoma Open Meeting, responses to questions and inquiries brought forward in the citizens to be heard portion of the meeting were not allowed. He invited Mr. Ramsey and Mr. King to stay so that their concerns could be discussed with staff after the meeting adjourned.

- 5. Presentation and discussion of City of Bartlesville Sidewalk Regulations. Presented by Greg Collins, Assistant Director of Community Development.**

Mr. Collins reported that City staff has researched and drafted a proposed amendment to the municipal code providing clarification on the process by which landowners and developers are responsible for construction of sidewalk during the land subdivision and building permit process. The proposed municipal code provisions are based on a City of Tulsa model that was enacted in 2013. The proposed code clarifies that sidewalk construction is required for properties whenever there is (a) a subdivision of land, or (b)

development for which a building permit and a certificate of occupancy or certificate of compliance are required. The proposed code allows landowners to pay a fee in lieu of sidewalk construction, for those properties that are not in "critical sidewalk areas." For those properties in "critical sidewalk areas," the land owner /developer would be required to install sidewalk, and would not be eligible for the fee-in-lieu option, unless they qualified for a deferment under specific circumstances, granted by the Community Development Director. "Critical sidewalk areas" are defined as (1) properties abutting or connecting to an existing sidewalk; (2) properties abutting arterial or collector streets; or (3) new subdivisions or replats of existing subdivisions. A landowner could appeal the Community Development Director's denial of a deferment / fee-in-lieu application to the Streets and Traffic Committee.

City staff is also considering drafting and implementing a policy for a cost-sharing program whereby landowners not falling within the categories discussed above may voluntarily enter into an agreement with the City to split the costs of sidewalk construction to fill gaps in the sidewalk network. One example of such a program, in Stephenville, Texas. This program would not be mandated by ordinance, but rather, would be implemented by policy and funded by City Council through the budget process.

Discussion covered how sidewalk maintenance was the responsibility of the property owners whose property abuts the sidewalk; a map of all sidewalks is underway in order to find gaps and develop connectivity throughout town; highway sidewalk plans is under the authority of the State; how the Mayor would like to see sidewalk repairs by property owners less difficult by minimizing the permit process and cost required to make repairs; how the permit and fees in place allow for repairs to meet safety guidelines/bonding, and to cover the cost of staff processing and inspections. Mr. Bailey encouraged the Council to forward their and their constituent's concerns and questions to staff for their consideration when planning and preparing this policy.

6. Presentation and discussion on the performance of the Automated Water Meter System. Presented by Terry Lauritsen, Director of Water Utilities.

Mr. Lauritsen reported that in 2013, the City of Bartlesville installed an automated meter infrastructure (AMI) system for the water meters. This system replaced all the existing manually read meters with meters that automatically read and reported data, at predetermined intervals, to the City. At the time of the conversion, the projected benefits of the AMI system included; quicker response to customer inquiries (questions could be answered at the time of the call instead of sending a technician out to the property to investigate, report back to City staff and then City staff would call the customer back); proactive leak detection; and reassignment of 3 of the 4 meter readers to vacant positions within the water department. The City contracted with Mueller for this AMI conversion. Mueller was the only bidder that met all the specifications for the project, which included the following: Guaranteed 99% meter reading success; Fixed base type of system to automatically report data to the City without a drive by system to transmit data; Two-way communication with the meter to allow for updates to be pushed out to the system as well as the ability to capture an on-demand read; Remote meter shut off; Ability to set leak detection through the system software with notifications via email or text; Customer portal with real time consumption comparisons, high and low flow leak detection notification via email and weather/precipitation history; and 20 year warranty, with the first 10 years being a full warranty and years 11-20 prorated. The cost of the Mueller system was \$3,817,093.67, and the install was complete in December 2013. The City is now at the 10-year mark with this system.

Continuing, using a PowerPoint, Mr. Lauritsen reported that the customer portal was not as presented by Mueller. It was sold with integration with the E-care payment portal which was not provided as presented; leak detection notifications were unreliable; required customer to manually calculate usage to match monthly bill; and was discontinued by Mueller in August 2021. Continuing the customer portal would have to be through a 3rd party software company at approximately \$0,000 increase in costs per year. Mueller guaranteed a 99 % meter reading success with a 10% failure rate over a 10 year period. To-date, the City has experienced a 98% failure rate and has replaced components on 16,086 out of 16,403 meters installed in 2013. City staff has replaced 18,925 nodes which were all fully warrantied. There are large delays in receiving warranty parts, and the City is now entering into the pro-rated portion of the warranty. Between 2023-2028, it is anticipated the system will cost an additional \$300,000 per year (the pro-rated cost of each component is set by Mueller each year).

In 2019 Mueller approached the City about upgrading the AMI system to their V4 system from the existing V3 system. It was presented that the upgrade would include repeaters and collectors; the V4 system would fully back compatible with the V3 meters; and in July 2020 the City budgeted \$350,000 for this potential upgrade. Mr. Lauritsen reported that the V4 system is not backward compatible as presented by Mueller. The City would have to pay for any V4 node, even if the V3 failed, and due to Mueller not yet addressing contract comments sent to them in early September 2021, contract negotiations have stalled.

Discussion covered options presented by Mr. Lauritsen as follows: Stay with Mueller, pay \$350,000 for the V4 upgrade with addition \$300,000 for component replacements; Go with another AMI system, replace system incrementally as nodes fail (pay as you go type approach) with an estimated cost of \$1.5MM per year; Go with another AMI system and replace the entire system through a contract of \$7.5MM; or abandon AMI and go back to manual meter reads, estimated cost \$250,000 with additional quotes needed for data recording software. Additional discussion covered the disappointing Mueller system; how Mr. Stuart's suggestion of possibly using a customer's WiFi to connect meters as a backup may not be reliable; and how the City has a two to three year window to research and decide on how to proceed. Mr. Lauritsen stated that he would be providing a performance summary at the next regular City Council meeting.

7. Presentation and discussion of water, wastewater, and sanitation cost of services and rates design. Presented by Jason Muninger, CFO/City Clerk.

Mr. Muninger reported that in March of 2021, the City engaged with NewGen Strategies and Solutions for a comprehensive cost of service and rate design for utilities. While year one of the plan was adopted and went into effect for FY 2021-2022, the remaining 4 years are still to be determined. Using a PowerPoint, Mr. Muninger provided information on Water and Wastewater Rates reporting on significant assumptions of inflationary factors and volumetric assumptions; project costs; and utility rates scenarios. He added that another ordinance will be necessary to implement future phases of the new proposed water rate plan; consideration must be taken into account for AMI options as set out by Mr. Lauritsen in the previous item; and all scenarios will continue implementation of inclining block rate structure and capital improvement fees. Mr. Muninger provided the initial proposed five year rate plan; charts with the AMI funding options; and a summary of cost changes with the impact to customers. Included in the report was Solid Waste rate increases where Mr. Muninger again utilized the same inflation factors and capital projects. Solid Waste capital projects are not infrastructure driven, but equipment driven and based on needs for the remaining 4 fiscal years. He provided charts showing the impact of increases for residential service, additional cart collection, and commercial cart and roll-off services.

Discussion covered the pros and cons of spacing the increases out instead of implementing all on July 1; explanation of how increases are to begin on the first day of the fiscal year; how customers are steadily increasing the number of polycarts per household; and how the proposed increases are generally the same as what was proposed last year. Mr. Muninger stated that any Council input will be appreciated as it comes time to start the Budget process for FY 2022-2023 very soon.

Prior to adjourning the meeting, Mr. Bailey reminded the Council that Strategic Plan Kick-off meetings will begin Monday, March 28 through Tuesday, March 29. The public meetings will be held at the Bartlesville Community Center at 7 p.m. on Monday, and at 2:30 p.m. on Tuesday. The City Council Kick-off meeting will be at 1 p.m. Monday at City Hall. Employee meetings will be held Tuesday morning.

8. **There being no further business to discuss, Mayor Copeland adjourned the meeting at 9:03 p.m.**




Dale W. Copeland, Mayor


Jason Muninger, CFO/City Clerk