



City of Madison
Meeting Minutes - Final
BOARD OF WATER
COMMISSIONERS

City of Madison
Madison, WI 53703
www.cityofmadison.com

Tuesday, April 18, 2006

4:35 PM

119 E. Olin Avenue

CALL TO ORDER

ROLL CALL

Present: Ald. Lauren Cnare, Priscilla B. Mather, Larry L. Studesville, Jonathan H. Standridge and Gregory W. Harrington

1. Demonstration of Large Meter Testing.

Board members and staff proceeded to the meter shop to observe the new large meter testing area. Ken Key stated the PSC puts meters in three categories: small meters are considered 5/8, 3/4 and 1" size meters. Medium are 1 1/2" and 2". Large are 3", 4" 6" 8" and 10". The large meters are more difficult to test and usually are tested in place in the field. We have a truck that has equipment to test them. Tom Trieloff, our Meter Mechanic 3, will demonstrate how we can now be test the large meters in the shop. Ken said we are the only utility in the nation that has this testing set up.

PUBLIC COMMENT

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

2. Approval of the Minutes of the meeting of March 21, 2006.

Jon Standridge made a motion to approve the minutes. Lauren Cnare seconded; unanimously passed.

INFORMATIONAL REPORTS

3. March 2006 Water Quality Report.

Dave Denig-Chakroff said that everything on the report is what we would expect, and we are progressing on our water quality monitoring.

4. April Staffing Report.

Gail Glasser stated that Tim Nelson was selected for the Water Hydrant Inspector position and has begun work in the position. Lori Kief was selected for the Administrative Clerk 2 position; she was previously employed with the Parks Department for some time. Doug Grueneberg is retiring on April 24. Hourly hiring in progress, and we have hired Engineering Assistants, hourly positions and Hourly Engineers, Judy Moran and Joe Grande have started work. Jon asked what the new Water Quality Supervisors are going to be doing and what their backgrounds are. Gail said Al is their supervisor. Al said technically, they are not the Water Quality Supervisor. They are hourlies working in the water quality area. We are still in the process of recruiting for the position of supervisor. Al said they will be doing routine sampling, manganese sampling, and quality control work on the manganese. Al said at some point we'd like to get out to schools and so some public education. Jon asked if they have a time schedule for picking John Marchewka's position. Gail said we are reviewing the position as we assign duties to the hourly staff. As we regroup on what we expect the duties will be, we will announce the fulltime position and if it will be two positions. Jon said he thinks that that position, water quality, is one of the most important in the Utility. He said we need a communicator and someone who really knows the system. Dave said we are looking at the qualifications of the hourlies we hired.

5. March Operations Report.

Dave noted that main leaks have dropped with the arrival of spring.

6. Engineering Report.

Al said a lot of time is being spent on unidirectional flushing, presently in the Well 3, 10 and 29 areas. He discussed the Master Plan with Black & Veatch, and they will present it at the May board meeting. We have a lot of water main replacement projects currently in progress. Al said bids will be received April 21 and opened April 28 for the Felland Road Reservoir. Well 30 construction continues and they hope to have it finished by May 15. Wells 7 and 8 were started in April for the summer; they are normally off during the winter. We have cleaned the reservoirs at Wells 10 and 17 in preparation for restarting the wells. Al stated that we continue to take manganese samples on the east side to investigate the extent of the problems around wells 3,8 and 29.

Al then distributed several handouts including one showing manganese by well area, another showing pre-flushing turbidity, information about water sample results and manganese sampling summary. Percy Mather asked how samples are collected. Al said the protocol was established by Abigail Cantor. We had 195 volunteers on the east side that would have their water tested. We have contacted 160 of them, sampled 68 and have an additional 15 appointments for sampling. He said 77 dropped out upon finding out more about the requirements. Al said the Health Department is coming up with a program of tap samples; we meet weekly with them to coordinate and plan.

Al also handed out a sample on how we notify people of the results of sampling, plus an explanation of the results. Jon said he is a little concerned about making decisions based on the results of in-house testing since it is not a certified lab. The DNR could come along and say you must have all of your testing done in a certified lab and what we've done so far wouldn't count. Jon said he knows we are saving money by doing it in-house, but he's a little worried about the results. He wants that on the record. He says he's been there, where he didn't have proper quality assurance and he had to throw them out.

Al said he wants to take the time to recognize Doug DeMaster who has been doing the majority of the manganese sampling and data processing work, noting that Doug has been doing a great job.

Lauren asked if we've had many calls from people in response to a letter, and Al said no one has called him. Jon thought it would be good to put a brochure from the Health Department in with the letters as we send them out.

7. Customer Service/Billing Report.

Ken Key reported that he and Robin completed the informational reporting that was needed for a customer review project with our software vendor, and they will be doing some follow up for us. He said in the next month or so we hope to begin the customer survey, which will go to a sampling of approximately 1100 customers.

8. Report on Flushing Operations.

Al distributed handouts regarding the progress of the unidirectional flushing. He stated that we started flushing operations on Monday, March 27, and have flushed in the areas of Wells 10, 3 and 29. Due to some dirty water, we did a routine flush from the capitol east, and now we've restarted the unidirectional flushing in that area. Jon asked about schools and Al said they are given the option of turning the water off, but they said that is not possible in the high schools. They put up signs on fountains to not drink the water. A lot of people have asked about turbidity, Al said. It is a measurement of how much light is scattered. Basically the turbidimeter projects a beam of light through a sample, and there is a sensor 90 degrees off that that measures how much light it is scattered. The turbidity we see in Madison is more brown or black. Jon the aesthetic standard is 50 ppb and the health standard is 300 ppb. Al said there is no health standard. Jon said the Health Department put some significance on 300 . Dave said that was a published report that gave a lifetime health advisory level for drinking water should be 300 ppm. Jon said he's concerned that we are selling people water that comes out at 150 all of the time, even based on the aesthetic standard. Al said he was interviewed by the Isthmus this week and there will be something in Thursday's edition regarding manganese.

Al said, from an engineering standpoint, he would recommend a filter for Well 29, saying that it has to be budgeted for and \$2 million found to build it. Jon asked about 3 and 10. Al said they are more complicated as they are much older. Three was built in 1928 so would you want to invest \$2 million in something that might have a life span of 20 years. Ten was built in 1951, so that is 50-some years old, and again, would you want to invest \$2 million in a well that is that old. Jon asked what \$2 million would do to someone's rate. Robin said when he looked at it, it was somewhere around ½% per million, if we had to borrow.

Al said they are trying to determine what frequency of flushing is required to maintain low levels of manganese. Lauren asked what it costs to flush the entire system one time. Robin said \$150,000 for the whole system citywide. Percy asked if that is the unidirectional flushing, and Al replied it is. He said we have over 820 miles of pipe. Larry said it seems like flushing would be more cost effective than having a filter installed. Jon said he thinks we need to filter UW 29 or quit using it.

Al's handouts included a graph recap of service line flushing where we actually went into some houses and flushed their service line out. We tested pre and post -flushing for manganese levels, and those are on the graph. Jon asked what they think happened on the ones that went up after flushing, and Al said they don't know. Jon asked if this was after the unidirectional flushing that was done last fall, and Al replied yes. Doug DeMaster said these sites were selected because the turbidity level in the main was relatively high. We took some of the dirtiest mains to see the results of unidirectional flushing at the tap.

Al presented a monthly flushing report. Al said our goal is to flush to a turbidity of less than one. This is typically achieved in 30 to 90 minutes.

Jon asked if you could conclude from this that turbidity doesn't necessarily predict the manganese level. Al said turbidity is caused by both oxidized manganese and iron. Jon said, looking at the graph, you have manganese of 600 and a turbidity of just over one, so it wouldn't be visibly cloudy water to most people, and Al agreed. Jon said we've been telling people they only have to worry if the water is cloudy. He asked if we should be telling everyone to flush their water line before drinking it. Al said we are working with the Health Department on this issue. Lauren suggested someone from Health come to a board meeting.

Jon asked what we tell people about whether they should use the water when flushing is taking place in their area. He said it seems to him that we should be telling everyone to clear their taps. He said that is his interpretation of it. Dave said we just got this information. The Health Department made the decision to make the statement regarding not drinking discolored water based on the data we had at the time. We then decided to collect more data to analyze the correlation between manganese and turbidity. He said it's new information that the Health Department just received, and they will reevaluate this situation now. Jon voiced concern that we are not very good at communicating with the public, and said this is an opportunity to improve how we do things. Jon said he is also a little concerned that we are abdicating a public health responsibility to the Health Department. He thinks the Utility also has some responsibility to protect public health. Dave said he wouldn't say we are abdicating it to the Health Department. They are the health professionals and they need to tell us what the standards are, and it's up to us to inform the people of the health implications. Dave said we don't have medical doctors on staff or the medical researchers that the Health Department does. Jon said so we need to lean on the Health Department to give us the information we need so we can do our job. Percy said it's not clear what the health impact is. Larry asked that the information be emailed the board members when they get it. Lauren said she wants people to know we are working hard on this issue, and they aren't going to want to wait a year to find out if there is a health issue. Al said the EPA will flat out say it's not a health risk. If the standard were 350 or 400 ppb and you drink an average of two liters a day for a lifetime, you'd still only get 800 micrograms per day. Obviously there are other issues such as infants and people with liver problems, but Al said he is confused because the EPA is saying there is no health risk. Dave said the recommended limit of 300 is the total manganese intake from their water source because the main manganese source for people is diet. For a healthy adult, the upper intake level is 11,000 micrograms per day. If they are getting 300 from their water source that means 10,700 ppb is what they could get from their diet, which is a huge amount. Dave said some of your multiple vitamins have 5,000 micrograms in a single vitamin pill. California and Connecticut have a standard for drinking water of 500 ppb, but there is a large safety factor built into those numbers. Al said he looked at UW 29 and the tap samples in the neighborhood are all under 150. Lauren said so we are still shooting for something less than that. Jon said the perception of the people who drink the water is that they want water with no risk. Jon said there are journal articles that show manganese can be harmful. Dave said if the Health Department said there is a significant risk by drinking this water, he doubts you'd have an argument about people paying another \$10 on their bill, but if it's a matter of getting a load of dirty laundry once a year, you might get an argument from people. Greg said the only people who supported replacement of lead service lines were the people who were affected, and the rest of Madison didn't want to pay for it. Percy said, to sum it up, we'll wait to hear the Health Department's response. Al said we are testing and learning every day. Lauren said she'd like John Hausbeck of the Health Department to come to the May meeting. Dave said that is a great idea and he will invite him or Dr. Schlenker to attend May's meeting.

Dave said he has been working on the schedule for restarting of UW 10. Our tentative plan is to send a letter to everyone potentially served by UW 10. We'll send the letters early next week explaining that we are starting UW 10 up for flushing purposes, that we will be running it during the day for about a month, and we will then put it in standby mode and run it twice a week to keep it in standby mode in case we need it for fire protection or other emergencies. He said

we'll invite residents around Well 10 to a meeting on May 8, and we'll explain at the meeting what we are doing and why. We will then begin flushing in conjunction with the sampling program. Jon said at the meeting at Nakoma School, didn't we tell them we were only going to run the well if there was a fire or drought? Dave said he doesn't know if that came up in particular. He said we've talked about it and had it on our website. In order to have it on standby, it has to be run about 10% of the time. Ken Key said to look at the samples taken by address, they are 1/2 block apart and you get a 286 in a pre-flush on one and a 64 on another. If either one of those hadn't participated, you'd make different assumptions based on what you see.

Greg said he thinks this Water Utility is collecting far more information about flushing and manganese and all of these other things, than he has seen in his experience anywhere else. He said he thinks by the time the year is over, we will have a lot of information to share with customers, but will have a lot of information to share with other water utilities. Greg said he thinks valuable information will come from this for the City of Madison and on a national level. Al said there is a manganese report from AWWARF being finished right now. It clearly states in the executive summary that manganese is not a health issue. Jon asked who did this report. Doug said Philadelphia did the report, that he talked to them and flushing isn't the solution. Al said they might recommend that they lower the secondary standard to .20 ppb.

FINANCE REPORTS

9. Fund Balance Report.

Robin said balances are as they should be.

10. Capital Project Statement.

Robin said \$250,000 was spent on construction of UW 30, and additional money was spent on lead service replacements. Percy asked if expenses for the manganese testing are coming out of the regularly budgeted items. Robin said through February, we spent almost \$1400 on the unidirectional flushing program. Most of that is material to do the flushing.

11. Status of Water Utility Borrowing.

Robin reported that they have been working with Springsted and at the next board meeting; they will have a bid opening for your approval. We will sell approximately \$14 million in bonds, which covers our 2005 and 2006 capital budgets. We are probably going to have to borrow a little money to fund our reserve fund, so it may be close to \$15 million. We've borrowed a little less than \$ 5 million, and we can borrow up to \$6 million from the City. Percy asked about funding for infrastructure replacement. Al said the budget was done last summer and we didn't have the information until last fall. He said we'll be starting the next capital budget process in May.

12. Presentation of PSC Annual Report.

Robin said we had a staff of four working for two months on this report. The report is posted on the PSC website. The report includes financial and information on equipment, etc. He said power was up 20%, that part of that was due to increased pumping. We pumped 7.58% more water, and we used 6.74% more kilowatts to pump that water.

Greg Harrington made a motion to accept the informational reports. Jon Standridge seconded; unanimously passed.

ADMINISTRATION

13. City Benchmarks Strategic Plan

Dave reported that the City is asking each agency to come up with several benchmarks that they can use as part of a budgeting process. He said he will have more on this at the next meeting.

Dave said he has been looking at initiating a Strategic Plan based on Board conversations from last month. He talked to EMA, a company that has provided broad evaluation tools and strategic planning for utilities in the past. They do a very good job. He has talked to other water utilities that have been very pleased with the outcome after using EMA. He talked with them about working with us to get more information, go through a process of looking to the future of the utility, and the 30,000-foot vision type of thing. Dave said he is meeting with them next month, and he would like staff to meet with them on Tuesday so they could give a presentation at the board meeting. He's not sure if it will work for May because we're going to have the Black & Veatch presentation. The idea is to get a feel for what we are looking for. They would come in and work with the staff to put together a facilitated self-assessment whereby there are meetings at every level of the Utility, every level of employee to get their input on how things are done and what things can be done better, and what things we can include for the future. Larry said he thinks there should also be significant contributions from customers as to what they'd like to see. Dave said he thinks this process would incorporate all of that. The end result of this would be a strategic business plan for the utility and an action plan on how to go about doing it. Dave said we've discussed the retirement impact, and that is part of what they normally plug into this type of analysis. He said he'd see if he could get them to attend a board meeting within the next month or two.

OLD BUSINESS

14. Approval of the Operating Rules for the Board of Water Commissioners.

Greg Harrington made a motion to approve the operating rules. Larry Studesville seconded. Lauren Cnare and Percy Mather voted for approval, and Jon Standridge abstained from voting.

NEW BUSINESS ITEMS

15. [03208](#) Determining a public purpose and necessity and adopting a relocation order for the City of Madison to acquire the land interests required for the planned public water lateral needed for the Goodman Park Maintenance Facility. 13th Ald. Dist

A motion was made by Standridge, seconded by Harrington, to Return to Lead with the Recommendation for Approval to the BOARD OF PARK COMMISSIONERS Unanimously passed. Jon Standridge made a motion to approve the resolution. Greg Harrington seconded; unanimously passed.

The motion passed by acclamation.

Return to Lead with the Recommendation for Approval to the BOARD OF PARK COMMISSIONERS Unanimously passed. Jon Standridge made a motion to approve the resolution. Greg Harrington seconded; unanimously passed.

Present: Ald. Lauren Cnare, Priscilla B. Mather, Larry L. Studesville, Jonathan H. Standridge and Gregory W. Harrington

CORRESPONDENCE AND SPECIAL INTEREST ITEMS

16. Letter from Public Service Commission of WI regarding Madison Water Utility Complaint Records.

This is a response from the PSC after they investigated our complaint record process, which is now automated. Under the new system, every call will be recorded. Dave said after Nakoma issues were brought to our attention, it became clear that we should keep track of all of those calls.

After the call is recorded, response is recorded, follow up requirement and deadline, etc. The PSC came in to inspect our record keeping process because of a complaint they got from a customer. We explained to them what we had done in the past and what we are doing now, and this is their response. Jon asked how the computer-based system is working, and Dave said it's working very well.

17. Memo to the Board of Water Commissioners from Lynn Williamson regarding topics for discussion.

Percy said this is a memo from Lynn Williamson regarding topics for discussion at future board meetings.

18. Recognition of Doug Grueneberg on his retirement after 38 years of Water Utility employment.

Percy asked that Dave give Doug our thanks for his years of service. Dave said he would be missed, as he knows a lot about the system, having been here for 38 years.

APPROVAL OF NEXT MEETING DATE

19. Approval of the next meeting date of May 16, 2006.

ADJOURNMENT

Larry Studesville made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Jon Standridge seconded; unanimously passed.

The meeting adjourned at 6:40 p.m.