

City of Bishop

WATER AND SEWER COMMISSION AGENDA

Date: September 11, 2007
7:00 P.M.

NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC:

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, if you need Special assistance to participate in this meeting, please contact the City Clerk (760) 873-5863. Notification 48 hours prior to the meeting will enable the City to make reasonable arrangements to ensure accessibility to this meeting. (28 CFR 35.102-35.104 ADA Title II).

CALL TO ORDER

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

ROLL CALL

PUBLIC COMMENT: NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC: This time is set aside to receive public comment on matters not calendared on the agenda.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- (1) Minutes of the Water and Sewer Commission meeting held on July 10, 2007 subject for approval.

NEW BUSINESS

- (2) Report on meter reading placed on Wash Tub
- (3) Discussion relating to multi-family facilities qualifying for low income rates

OLD BUSINESS

- (4) Rate study - Cost to hire a consultant
- (5) SCE 2006-2007 billing comparison
- (6) Public Works Report for July and August

STAFF AND COMMISSION REPORTS

ADJOURNMENT: The next regularly scheduled meeting will be November 13, 2007 at 7:00 P.M. in the City Council Chambers, 301 West Line Street, Bishop.

MINUTES
Water and Sewer Commission
July 10, 2007

CALL TO ORDER:

Chairman Martin called the meeting to order at 7:01 P.M.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Chairman Martin

COMMISSISONERS PRESENT:

Martin, Cross, Mathieu and Bhakta

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT:

Underhill

OTHERS PRESENT:

Dave Grah, Public Works Director
Deston Dishion, Public Works Superintendent
Kathy Lehr, Secretary

PUBLIC COMMENT: NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC: This time is set aside to receive public comment on matters not calendared on the agenda.

Mr. Sam Reighard, former owner of the Wash Tub and owner of the Sierra Suds Laundromat, said that he had come to the City Council meeting with his concerns regarding his water and sewer charges and the City Council requested he come to our next Water and Sewer Commission meeting. He said he was requesting some consideration for relief on his water bill at the laundromats. He said that he paid over \$1,000 a month for water at the Wash Tub and \$700 or \$800 a month at Sierra Suds Laundromat. It has been greatly increased over the past few years. He said that 20 or so years ago they came up with a plan that it should be so much for each washer and that maybe it's time to look at the formula that was used. He felt that the cost for each washer is getting a little extreme. He said that he would like to have a meter installed to see how much water he actually uses. He also suggested looking at other cities and see how they charge Laundromats.

Chairman Martin said that the former owner of Sierra Suds had come to the Water and Sewer Commission 2 years ago with the same concerns. He had even replaced old machines with more efficient ones. Mr. Dishion said that in the next couple of months they would be installing meters at the Laundromats to get a better idea of how much water the laundromats are using in terms of single family residential unit and compare to see if we are in line with how they are being charged. Chairman Martin said that it would take 3 to 4 months before we would really have any kind of numbers that will be meaningful to us. Chairman Martin said that he hated to put Mr. Reinghard off for so long, but it would take that long to get a good reading on how usage compares to SFRUE. Even after a meter is installed we don't really have a mechanism to bill the metered rate. In the future we would have to look at an equitable way to assess the bills and bill accordingly.

Mr. Grah said that there are a couple of approaches we can take. After an approximate 6 month period we can determine how much a laundry uses compared to a single family and make the proper adjustments. Or, in the future, perhaps going to a meter system for those who are interested.

Commissioner Mathieu asked how many washers are involved and Mr. Reinghard said 35 at the Wash Tub and 19 at Sierra Suds. Chairman Martin said that he's guessing that it would cost approximately \$1,000 to install a meter and Mr. Dishion said that is correct, with materials and labor included. Commissioner Mathieu said that she felt any high volume user should have a meter. Mr. Dishion said that it would be nice to be able to talk to the people that came up with the rate structure. He said that perhaps one of the factors in determining the formula is that a laundry (with heavy use of detergent) is very taxing on the sewer system.

CORRESPONDENCE: Letter from Katherine Little, dated July 9, 2007.

Chairman Martin said that Ms. Little was concerned that she was being charged too much for water and sewer as she has a small yard and small house. He said that in this case she may want to opt for a meter rather than a flat rate. However, again we do not have the means to bill that way. Mr. Grah stated that any sort of billing cannot be perfect and our "forefathers" came up with their best idea. Probably the closest to being fair would be installing a meter. The biggest water users would probably not opt to be metered.

Chairman Martin said that a letter should be prepared to Ms. Little and an option stated that in the future she may want to have a meter installed. Mr. Grah said that he would be happy to send a letter. Commissioner Mathieu said that they need to address the financial responsibility to installing the meter.

(1) APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES:

MOTION:

Vice Chairman Cross moved to approve the minutes of the May 8, 2007 meeting as written.

MOTION CARRIED.

NEW BUSINESS:

(2) Discussion on rate study – Using a consultant or doing it internally

Chairman Martin agreed that the study can be done “in house” considerably cheaper, but then what about the normal duties of the department. In his opinion, an independent study and analysis would be more unbiased. Commissioner Mathieu said she would like to see it done “in house” if possible. She feels it would be more cost effective and worth looking into. Vice Chairman Cross said that it’s not just the time it takes for the study, but you are taking away time from other projects that need to be done if it were done in house. Public works staff is small as it is. Mr. Grah said that City of Bishop is staffed very leanly and generally any sort of larger effort requires a consultant or contractor. It is likely it will cost more to hire consultants, but that’s not the whole story; we are supporting the private sector and keeping city staff small. James Owens, Nolte Consultant, estimated about \$20,000 to do the study, however he thinks that is high. If we move ahead and get proposals, we can always turn back at any point. He feels that around \$6,000 is probably reasonable.

Vice Chairman Cross asked what it costs the City to put out an RFP and Mr. Grah said several thousand dollars just to get the consultant on board.

Commissioner Mathieu asked how involved it is to do the study and Mr. Grah said that the scope of the project is “In 2008 provide a comprehensive water and sewer rate review, including engineering, capital improvement program and progress to meeting capital funding programs.” Mr. Grah said what this means is looking back to see if with these increases, are we where we want to be. Commissioner Mathieu asked if the study is a project where we could get volunteers and community members involved? Mr. Dishion said it was a great idea and we did have a volunteer board before the rate increase. However, it was hard to get enough people and after they get together and made their suggestions to City Council, they felt that nobody really listened to them. It’s hard to find people that want to spend that much time and have the financial understanding as far as time value of money and looking at assets over a long period of time. In addition, the Water and Sewer Commission is the body created to take on much of the role. Vice Chairman Cross said if you use an advisory board, you won’t get the expertise you need as you would hiring a consultant, and as a resident in the City of Bishop, he would like to know he can trust the decisions made by people with expertise in their field. Commissioner Mathieu said she understood, but it was a suggestion. She doesn’t feel

government is frugal enough and had hoped to look at more cost effective ways to do the rate study. Chairman Martin said that he understands what Commissioner Mathieu is saying, but he also feels that you should do what you do best and is there somebody else out there that has more expertise and in his opinion, if you need the expertise, you hire someone. Commissioner Mathieu asked if this is something we can tag on to someone we are already working with. Mr. Grah said that Nolte is interested and does this sort of thing all the time. Mr. Dishion said that we have started working with RCAC and talked to them about their input on a rate study, but haven't had any feedback yet. Depending on the interpretation of the City Council's direction for the rate study, the study may not need to be completed before the end of 2008.

Mr. Grah said that a year ago we did a brief rate review with the conclusion that we are not collecting way too much or too little money and it appears we can get the important projects done eventually with existing rates and assuming there are increases for inflation. Maybe in 3 to 5 years we may need to think about making adjustments in the rates. Chairman Martin asked about funding available through grants and Mr. Grah we are pursuing this. We have made an amendment to the Nolte Contract which includes applying for grants. Chairman Martin feels we should go back to Nolte and ask for a formal bid. Vice Chairman Cross said he would like to see the City pursue this without further consultation from the Water and Sewer Commission, since we will not be meeting again until September.

(3) Billing property owners rather than tenants for water and sewer

Mr. Dishion stated that some water and sewer bills are sent to tenants rather than to the landlord and if a bill becomes delinquent, it's much harder to collect. There is a lot of time involved in collecting past due accounts. Commissioner Mathieu said it was her impression that all bills should go to the property owner. It was agreed by all the commissioners that the property owners should be responsible for paying the bill. Mr. Grah said that he would put together a public works policy stating so.

OLD BUSINESS

(4) Public Works Reports for May and June

Mr. Dishion highlighted the public works reports for May and June. He reported that they have installed 8 new Mueller fire hydrants on Main Street. They have continued with the backflow valves and main line valve exercising. Completed the Consumer Confidence Report for 2007.

Chairman Martin asked about fire safety near our wells and tank site. Mr. Dishion said we will look into clearing trees and brush from around the sites.

STAFF AND COMMISSION REPORTS:

Mr. Grah stated that we had our rate increase of July 1st. Commissioners Cross and Mathieu attended the hearing and all went well.

We are about to begin our street projects and need to do the water and sewer work before they begin.

We talked last meeting about the Brown Act and it appears it does apply to the Water and Sewer Commission.

We will be adding a part-time clerical person to our staff.

ADJOURNMENT:

Chairman Martin adjourned the meeting at 8:25 P.M. The next regularly scheduled meeting will be Tuesday, September 11, 2007 at 7:00 P.M. in the City Council Chambers.

Clarence Martin, Chairman

Kathy Lehr, Secretary



CITY OF BISHOP

377 West Line Street - Bishop, California 93514
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www.ca-bishop.us

PUBLIC WORKS REPORT

July 2007

WATER

1. Installed Water Meters at the following locations:

Sierra Suds Laundromat

Wash Tub Laundromat

2. Installed the last of 8 new Fire Hydrants on Main Street.
3. Repaired water leaks at the following locations:
 - Church Street (2' Galvanized Main line)
 - 200 Block of Willow Street (4' Cast Iron Main line)
 - 469 Short Street (5/8" Copper Service line)
4. Took weekly Bacteria Samples.
5. Continued with the Water Master Plan efforts.
6. Took monthly readings of all water meters.
7. Pressured tested and took Bacteria samples from the new 8" Main line at the Fire Training Tower Facility.
8. Replace leaking Curb stop valve at 536 North Third Street and installed Valve box.
9. Removed and replaced failed 4" Main line valve at the intersection of South First and South Street.
10. Installed new water services at 286 North Fowler, and 301 Willow Street. Existing services were Galvanized.
11. Installed Water meters at Sierra Suds Laundromat and the Wash Tub Laundromat.
12. Completed Bi-Annual Lead and Copper Testing.
13. Made contact with various customers about wasting water.

SEWER

1. Constructed a new Sewer Manhole on Grove Street between Home Street and Elm Street School .
2. Made routine inspections of Grease Interceptors.
3. Cleaned Grit Drying Beds.
4. Irrigated the 40 acre Pasture south of the Sewer Ponds.
5. Constructed new sewer later at 286 North Third Street.
6. Changed Leach material in the Grit Drying beds.

STREETS

1. Swept all City streets and alleys.
2. Samrod Constuction began work on the South Street Curb&Gutter Project.
3. Repaired and or replaced various Street Signs.
4. Patched Potholes on various streets.
5. Provided Weed control on city streets and alleys.
6. Replaced failing Culvert under Kelso Steet.

MISCELLANEOUS.

1. Performed maintenance on Sweepers and Light Trucks.
2. Cleaned trash and debris from Shop planters.
3. Hauled off trash and debris from the Fowler Street trash pit.
4. Performed inspections with Caltrans on Valve boxes and Manholes during the Main Street Rehabilitation Project.



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PUBLIC WORKS REPORT

August 2007

WATER

1. Installed new 3/4" Curb Stop valve at 287 East Elm Street.
2. Replaced a failed 5/8" copper water service with a new 3/4" Poly service at 386 West Elm Street
3. Poured back sidewalk around all new Fire Hydrants on Main Street.
4. Took monthly readings of all water meters.
5. Took routine Bacteria Samples.
6. Performed grounds maintenance at Wells 2 and 4.

SEWER

1. Repaired broken 15" Sewer Main under the Bishop Creek Canal, and filed all appropriate reports.
2. Constructed a new Manhole on the sewer main at the 600 block of Grove Street.
3. Cleaned Grit Drying Beds.
4. Irrigated the 40 acre Pasture south of the Sewer Ponds.
5. Installed One Way Check valves on sewer laterals at 563 Home Street and 295 East Elm Street. This work was done to prevent future sewer back-ups from entering these properties.
6. Cleaned plugged sewers at the following locations:
 - North Main at Yaney Street
 - Mac Iver Street
7. Disked Pond 6 in preparation for winter flows to the pond.

STREETS

1. Swept all City streets and alleys.
2. Samrod Constuction completed work on the South Street Curb&Gutter Project.
3. Repaired and or replaced various Street Signs.
4. Patched Potholes on various streets.
5. Provided Weed control on city streets and alleys.
6. Painted additional Red Curb on Home Street on either side of the Cross Walk in front of The Home Street School.
7. AC patched along the new gutter on South Street.
8. Backfilled behind sidewalks and along shoulders with DG.
9. Trimmed trees that conflicted with Street Signs and Line of Sight at intersections.

MISCELLANEOUS.

1. Assisted the Tri-County Fairgrounds to prepare for Fair by sweeping parking lot..
2. Cleaned trash and debris from Shop planters.
3. Hauled off trash and debris from the Fowler Street trash pit.
4. Made minor repairs and performed maintenance to Light Trucks and Heavy Equipment.