

**CITY OF NEWBERG
CITIZENS' RATE REVIEW COMMITTEE
THURSDAY, OCTOBER 15, 2015
6:00 PM MEETING
PUBLIC SAFETY BUILDING TRAINING ROOM (401 EAST THIRD STREET)**

I. CALL MEETING TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 PM.

II. ROLL CALL

Members Present:	Rick Rogers, Chair Nick Morace Holly Bradford	Blair Didway, Vice Chair Sarah Grider	Marilynn van Grunsven Bill Rourke, Secretary
Staff Present:	Steve Rhodes, City Manager Pro Tem Jay Harris, Public Works Director Truman Stone, City Attorney	Matt Zook, Finance Director Kaaren Hofmann, City Engineer Caleb Lippard, Assistant Finance Director	
Others Present:	??		

III. COMMITTEE BUSINESS

1. Election of Chair, Vice Chair, and Secretary

The Committee unanimously appointed Rick Rogers as Chair, Blair Didway as Vice Chair, and Bill Rourke as Secretary.

There was discussion regarding the duties of Secretary.

2. Review of the Newberg Municipal Code regarding Committee

Mr. Rourke said regulations stated family members could not serve on the same committee. He acknowledged that his son was a City Councilor and wanted to make sure it was not a problem.

City Attorney Truman Stone said the Council appointed him to the Committee, and Mr. Stone could bring the issue forward to get input from the Council. His opinion was Mr. Rourke was on the Committee and fully serving as a Committee member.

Finance Director Matt Zook reviewed the Municipal Code regarding the Committee's organization, purpose, and duties.

3. Public Comment Procedure

FD Zook discussed the public comment procedure forms.

4. Membership Roster and Terms

Chair Rogers had each Committee member and staff person introduce themselves.

Mr. Didway arrived at 6:15 PM.

5. Meeting Schedule

Chair Rogers reviewed the meeting schedule.

Public Works Director Jay Harris said the schedule did not include a review of the Springs rates. The Council was discussing transfer of ownership to a non-profit user group and negotiations were bumpy right now. A meeting might need to be added to the schedule if the system remained in City ownership.

Mr. Rourke requested the meetings start at 6:30 instead of 6 PM.

There was consensus to start the meetings at 6:30 PM.

6. Roberts Rules of Order

FD Zook described the Roberts Rules of Order in general. CA Stone recommended using Roberts Rules as a guide on how to get issues before the Committee for a vote, but not to get hung up on procedures.

7. Committee Ethics

CA Stone discussed Oregon ethics law, public meetings law, public records law, potential and actual conflict of interest, government ethics violations, and ex parte contact.

IV. PUBLIC COMMENTS – None.

V. CONSENT CALENDAR – None.

VI. NEW BUSINESS

1. Review/Recap Financial Information

A. Utility Bill Overview

Assistant Finance Director Caleb Lippard presented information on “Understanding your Utility Bill.” He explained the charges shown on customers’ bills. The City assumed the average water usage of 200 cubic feet per person.

There was discussion regarding the possibility of a \$10 fee applied to meter charges for transportation improvements.

B. FY 2015-16 Budget Overview

PWD Harris gave an overview of the wastewater, water, and storm water budget including the facilities in each system, where the funding came from, projects in the Capital Improvement Plan, employees, and how much was in each fund. He suggested the Committee take tours of some of these facilities. Wastewater rates increased 5.75% on January 1, 2015, and the Wastewater SDC was increased 2.3%. Water rates increased 7% on January 1 and Water SDCs were increased 2.3%. Storm water rates increased 9% on January 1 and Storm Water SDCs increased 2.3%.

There was discussion regarding the capital improvement projects, the 2.3 CPI used for rate increases, SDCs, and inflow and infiltration.

C. Utility Debt Overview

FD Zook gave an overview of the City's debt. He explained the approaches of pay as you go and long term debt as well as how several projects were being paid for. The City had recently rolled six debt loans into one, of which five loans were from the State, and he discussed the savings the City would receive from the consolidation. There were some projects that were not yet completed but would be included in the City debt when done. The total current debt and pending debt was about 42 million dollars for water/wastewater projects.

2. Capital Improvement Projects Plan Basics

City Engineer Kaaren Hofmann gave a background on the capital improvement program. This program was for projects that were identified to fill the needs of the City. She explained how the needs were identified, reasons for the program, and then reviewed the projects listed for storm water, wastewater, and water.

Mr. Rourke would like to get comparisons on benchmarks around the State and neighboring cities.

FD Zook said staff would be presenting that information at a later meeting. There was a new tool being developed for rate comparisons that could be useful as well.

Ms. Grider reported for the record that her husband was on the Traffic Safety Committee.

Mr. Didway suggested seasoned members of the Committee pass on valuable information to new members. CMPT Rhodes said members could meet one on one, but cautioned to not have a quorum or talk about substantive decisions the Committee would be making.

Chair Rogers encouraged new members to ask questions. FD Zook said questions could be emailed to Chair Rogers to coordinate answers back from staff.

Chair Rogers also encouraged the Committee to keep the meetings to the two hours, 6:30 to 8:30 PM, when possible.

Ms. van Grunsven requested in the comparisons with other cities that similar geological conditions be included.

Mr. Rourke thought it would be helpful to get advice on how to handle questions and comments from the public.

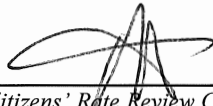
Chair Rogers disclosed that he originally came on the Committee as the Springs representative. He had since moved into town, but still owned a house in the Springs.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 7:50 PM.

Approved by the Citizen's Rate Review Committee on this 5th day of November, 2015.

 11-25-15
Citizens' Rate Review Committee Recording Secretary

 11-25-15
Citizens' Rate Review Committee Chair

