



## Marion Utilities

1540 N Washington St.  
Marion, IN 46952  
[www.marionutilities.com](http://www.marionutilities.com)

## Service Board

### BOARD MINUTES OF THE APRIL 18, 2024 MEETING

The Marion Utility Service Board held their meeting on Thursday, April 18, 2024 at 5:30 p.m. in the L.E.A.D. Center, Building 101, at Marion Utilities, 1540 N. Washington Street, Marion, Indiana.

Roll was called and those board members present were: Robert Logan, Chairman; Bill Dorsey; Von Jackson; and Jayda Monteiro. Doug Carl, Reverend Al Green, and Herschel Lewis were absent.

Also present at the meeting were: Chuck Binkerd, Director; Pat Pinkerton, Assistant Director for Engineering & Solid Waste; Robin Shrader, Assistant Director for Operations & Maintenance; Mike Conner, Attorney; Erika Devine, Council Liaison; Tiffany Snyder, Accounting/Billing Coordinator; and Misty Humphries, Secretary.

#### **CONSIDERATION OF AGENDA ADDITIONS OR DELETIONS**

There were no additions or deletions.

#### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Dr. Monteiro moved, seconded by Mr. Jackson, to approve the minutes of the April 4, 2024 meeting. All board members present voted aye. Motion carried unanimously.

#### **FINANCIALS**

Mrs. Snyder began by thanking the Board for their patience concerning the February financials. Mrs. Snyder said that the SRF funding added a lot of red tape to the financial preparation. She also thanked those that had been involved with the work on the SRF. Mrs. Snyder reported that February was a busy month for Marion Utilities. The Water Utility closed on the SRF Loan. The SRF program required that the Water Utility keep a bank account separate from all other City funds so new processes were put in place to separate payments and receipts from what used to be all in one bank to now two banks.

Mrs. Snyder said the Board determined in February that the meter program would be split between Water and Wastewater so in February Wastewater contributed \$1.1 million to the Water Utility and forgave the \$1 million loan outstanding. Another \$400,000 had been contributed in April for a total of \$2.5 million contribution from Wastewater to Water for the meter project.

Mrs. Snyder stated that the Water and Wastewater sales showed growth over 2023, which was likely due to the rate increases experienced for both, the timing of billing with an additional day in the month, and an uptick in consumption due to a mild winter. While Solid Waste showed a marginal increase, Stormwater remained flat over 2022 (despite being higher than 2023 overall) supporting the necessity of the rate review just performed.



On the expense side, operations and maintenance expense was largely in line with 2023 for Water and Wastewater, with a slight decrease for Stormwater and Solid Waste. All-in-all, the data appears to be consistent compared with prior years. Overall, this resulted in net operating receipts in line with prior years. Water and Stormwater saw a positive cash in-flow as total receipts exceeded disbursements, while an increase in capital expenditures (meter expense) resulted in Wastewater having cash out-flow for the period. Lease payments also resulted in a cash out-flow for Solid Waste. Mr. Logan commented that it was nice to see green and black ink versus red ink. Mr. Jackson moved, seconded by Dr. Monteiro, to approve the February financials. All board members present voted aye. Motion carried unanimously.

### **UPDATE ON PROJECTS**

Mr. Pinkerton said that there had been some movement on the SRF projects. All of the documents were in and post award documents had been sent off to IFA for the Distribution projects. A preconstruction meeting was scheduled for Wednesday, April 24<sup>th</sup>. The post award documents for DTF should have been sent off as well. Mr. Pinkerton said everyone had been notified to get the necessary easements to replace lines on private property. From discussions with other communities, it seems as though this was the most difficult task. As far as the meter replacements, Core & Main was still working with on the Certificate of Insurance.

### **706 RIVER RD. CUSTOMER ADJUSTMENT REQUEST**

Mr. Binkerd reminded the Board that there was an adjustment request from 706 River Road that was assigned to the Water Committee. Mr. Binkerd asked that it be reassigned to the Wastewater Committee as there were some circumstances that were a little unusual. Mr. Logan reassigned the request to the Wastewater Committee for review.

### **TRANSFERS & PAY REQUESTS**

There was no transfer or pay requests presented.

### **CDL REIMBURSEMENT POLICY**

Mrs. Shrader explained that most positions for maintenance or technicians require a CDL. If an employee does not have a CDL upon hiring, there was an in-house training program. While there have been some savings of doing training in-house, it was still a significant cost to the Utility. External CDL training programs cost \$5,000 and upwards. There had been a couple of times when an employee was either in the middle of training or had recently completed the training and they left the Utility. Mrs. Shrader recommended the proposed policy as a deterrent to employees who only want to get the CDL training and then leave. Mrs. Shrader recommended a reimbursement policy. In the employee handbook, there is an education reimbursement policy for up to \$3,000 in the course of a year. The policy states that if an employee leaves within a year of obtaining the training, the employee must reimburse the Utility for a portion of the training. Mrs. Shrader proposed three things as a part of the CDL reimbursement policy. The first was a prorated amount of the total \$5,000 cost if an employee should leave while in the CDL training program. This would be calculated by the number of hours divided by 130 (which was the number of time commitment hours) as well as the fixed costs for a medical exam, permit, license, and testing. The second was 100% of the total cost reimbursement, if an employee leaves within the first year after receiving a CDL. The third was 50% of total cost reimbursement, if an employee leaves within the second year after receiving a CDL. Hopefully, this would deter applicants from applying to only receive CDL training and then leave Utility.

employment. Mr. Dorsey said he would like to discuss the policy with Mrs. Shrader. Mr. Logan tabled the policy until Mr. Dorsey had spoken with Mrs. Shrader.

### **SENIOR LEADERSHIP REPORTS**

#### **P. Pinkerton, Assistant Director for Engineering & Solid Waste**

Mr. Pinkerton reported that there was a meeting with the Council about the Solid Waste rate increase. It was a good meeting.

#### **R. Shrader, Assistant Director for Operations & Maintenance**

Mrs. Shrader said she was beginning to meet with City Council members and have conversations. She also reported that on Tuesday, the Utility hosted the LDI program. There were a little over 20 people from across the state that were in attendance and toured the plants.

#### **C. Binkerd, Utility Director**

Mr. Binkerd said that this was his last meeting. As of next Friday, he would be officially retired. He thanked everyone and all of the teams he has had the pleasure of working with in the past. Mr. Binkerd said he could not be prouder of how the organization had changed, evolved, and grew. Mr. Binkerd also thanked the Board for their support especially Mr. Logan, Mr. Carl, and Mr. Dorsey as he had worked with them for a number of years. Mr. Binkerd closed by thanking the board and encouraging them to continue to take care of families.

### **BOARD MEMBERS' COMMENTS**

There were no Board comments.

### **CHAIRMAN'S REMARKS**

Mr. Logan thanked Mr. Binkerd for his achievements and leadership over the years.

The next meeting was scheduled for 5:30 p.m. on Thursday, May 2, 2024.

There being no further business before the Board, Mr. Dorsey moved, seconded by Mr. Jackson, to adjourn the meeting. All board members present voted aye. Motion carried unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 5:49 p.m.

Robert Logan, Chairman  
Marion Utilities Service Board

ATTEST



Misty Humphries  
Its Secretary