MEETING MINUTES

UTILITIES COMMISSION
Friday, March 13, 2020, 7:15 A.M.
Water Treatment Plant, 555 Lincoln St.
Large Conference Room

Members Absent:  D. Everhart, E. Rosenberg
Guests Present:  J. Freeman
Staff Present:  K. Jensen, A. Price, D. Stoneback
Presiding Member:  J. Nieuwsma

1. DECLARATION OF QUORUM
   A quorum being present, Chair Nieuwsma called the meeting to order at 7:20 a.m.

2. APPROVAL OF THE FEBRUARY 14, 2020 MEETING MINUTES
   Mr. Shure moved to approve the amended minutes, seconded by Mr. Bova, all approved.

3. UNFINISHED BUSINESS
   a. Net Zero Energy Resolution
      Mr. Jensen reported that the City Council approved the contract with Elevate Energy to move forward with the development of a comprehensive Net Zero Emissions Strategy. He said the contract award covers base bid services and Alternate 1, which is the development or analysis of the City’s fleet, and how to transition the current operations to carbon neutrality by 2035. Once the contract is signed early next week he will begin looking at what the actual timeline will be, and develop language that would be used in a resolution. He will keep the Commission updated on the process. There will be public meetings related to it, staff will be receiving technical assistance from Elevate Energy on a variety of these topics, and then additionally the base bid service will be developing up to three different strategies or pathways on how the City gets to carbon neutrality by 2035 for municipal operations.

   b. Municipal Electricity Supply
      Mr. Jensen reported that the City Council approved a six-month extension to the existing alternative electric supply agreement. He said there are three things happening with this six-month extension:

1. Effective on the June 2020 meter read date all accounts served under the agreement will be switched to the rate provided by Dynegy on March 9, 2020 and will represent a significant reduction from the current rate of $0.05637 per kWh.
2. The extension agreement will also add the new Robert Crown Center to the existing rate (through June 2020) of $0.05637 per kWh which is substantially lower than the current ComEd Price-to-Compare of $0.07175 per kWh.

3. The extension will add 45 of the City’s existing electric accounts that are currently paying ComEd’s Price-to-Compare rate to this alternative supply agreement both reducing their electric rate and switching them to 100% renewable energy.

He said the short-term extension will allow the City to delay issuing an RFP for a new supplier until late summer 2020 when electric supply rates tend to be the lowest. This additional time will also allow the City to more deeply explore longer term direct investments in renewable energy both in and outside of Evanston. Mr. Jensen is recommending using the projected cost savings from the supply agreement to pay for an Energy Advisor.

c. **Aggregation Contract**

Mr. Jensen said since the Plan of Government does not explicitly say that the City can enter into a six-month extension, he believes that would bar the City from being able to do so but it is a little unclear. Therefore, the City has notified Dynegy that it is taking a quick pause to bring in an Energy Advisor to help figure out what the aggregation legislation says and whether or not to add an amendment to the Plan of Government. Mr. Jensen will invite the Energy Advisor to join a Utilities Commission meeting in either May or June.

d. **ComEd Franchise Negotiations**

Mr. Partel reported that the sub-committee consisting of Mr. Skey, Mr. Jensen and himself had a meeting on February 10th with the City of Chicago which they reported on at the February 14th Utilities Commission meeting. On February 26th the sub-committee had a conference call where they discussed where they are on this process; particularly issues about what type of community engagement tends to come up more. Also, the question about beginning to identify with whom they would speak with at ComEd about this, and the third thing they talked about was hiring a consultant. Mr. Jensen reached out to ComEd and was provided with the negotiating team list of names which consists of the new Account Manager, Edith Ruiz, Melissa Washington, Vice President of Government and External Affairs, and Rommel Noguera, Director of External Affairs. Mr. Jensen has requested that the Mayor establish a negotiating committee, and he would like the Utilities Commission to nominate two members to be nominated to that body. The negotiating committee would consist of two Aldermen, two Utilities Commission members, and three staff members.

e. **Storm Water Management Plan**

Mr. Stoneback said the City received nine proposals from different engineering firms. City staff has met with and short listed two firms that will be interviewed on Monday, after which a recommendation to hire one of those firms will be made to City Council at the first meeting in April.
f. **Street Lighting Study**
   Mr. Stoneback reported that the City received the street light pole for approval. However, he was not able to give approval because the design on the collar that sits just above the base is inaccurate. A new street light pole is being made at this time.

g. **Historic District Solar Permitting**
   Mr. Bova reported that a draft of the guidelines will be circulated at the Preservation Commission retreat which will be held on the last Saturday in March for their review and then possibly go back to the Task Force to make any small changes, after which it would then go to City Council. Mr. Jensen said that he reached out to some solar installers and developers to give the Task Force a better understanding of what the process looks like, and he hopes to have a representative at the Preservation Commission retreat.

h. **CARP Implementation**
   Chair Nieuwsma said there are a number of community groups and different City Boards and Commissions including the Environment Board and their sub-committees, and Citizens’ Greener Evanston that are continuing to meet and figure out strategies for getting the broader community engaged in CARP implementation. The next significant item on the agenda is a meeting on March 25\(^{th}\) which will probably be postponed due to COVID-19. Mr. Jensen said there was talk at the Environment Board meeting last night about how to continue work even when not able to meet in person due to meetings being postponed. Chair Nieuwsma said that he had a request from the community groups to the city groups to stay in touch and coordinate so everyone will know what everyone else is doing and advance the cause in an efficient and effective manner.

4. **NEW BUSINESS**
   a. **Nomination of Utilities Commission Members to ComEd Franchise Negotiating Committee**
      Mr. Shure moved to nominate Mr. Skey and Mr. Tucker to the ComEd Franchise Negotiating Committee, seconded by Mr. Bova, all approved.

5. **STAFF REPORTS**
   Mr. Stoneback reported the following:

   a. **Monthly utility reliability report (electric system outages, basement backups, water main breaks, service repairs)**
      Due to the mild weather this winter, the number of water main breaks have been significantly lower. There was one City basement backup in February. Mr. Stoneback does not know the cause at this time, but he will find out and report back to the Commission at next month’s meeting.

   b. **Water & sewer fund capital improvement project status 30” Downtown Feeder Main Rehabilitation**
      On February 24\(^{th}\), the Consultant was approved to proceed with final design.
Water Main Replacement
The 2020 Water Main Improvements Project was advertised for bid on March 5th. Construction is expected to start in May.

Howard Street Corridor
The bid was opened on March 6th. Construction is expected to start after July 4th.

Sewer CIPP Rehabilitation
2019-B is complete, pending minor restoration at three manholes. The 2020 contract was opened on March 3rd, with a recommendation to City Council planned for March 23rd.

Lyons/Darrow Relief Sewer Extension
The Darrow/Lyons Relief Sewer Extension will be bid with the 2020 Water Main Improvements Project which was advertised on March 5th.

Treated Water Storage Replacement
Work is continuing in preparation for the next major pour of the Zone 4 and 5 Deck the week of March 23rd, over Northwestern University’s spring break.

36/42 Intake Replacement – Engineering Services
Staff has received the Preliminary Design Report and is reviewing for a meeting at the end of March.

Laboratory Expansion
MIA is proceeding with final design to bid at the end of April.

Security Improvements
Staff is reviewing the Risk and Resilience Assessment to define work to be completed this year.

Electrical Reliability Improvements
Staff met with a consultant on February 13th to better define the scope of this project. The RFP will include a study to be completed by the end of this year, with design completed in early 2021, with construction complete 2021 and 2022.

c. Skokie rate litigation status
There is no news to report, litigation remains ongoing.

d. Lincolnwood water project status
The transmission main and master water meter should be ready to connect to Lincolnwood’s main by the end of March, and ready to flow metered water by the end of April. Final restoration will occur as soon as the asphalt plants reopen this spring.
e. Morton Grove/Niles water main/pumping station status
Morton Grove/Niles Water Commission is now receiving their fully daily water demand from Evanston.

6. ANNOUNCEMENTS / COMMUNICATIONS
a. Forthcoming Public Works Agency activities relative to the Utilities Commission
Mr. Stoneback announced that Darrell King, Water Production Bureau Chief, will provide a presentation of the Non-Revenue Water Report at the April 10th Commission meeting.

7. ADJOURNMENT
The meeting was adjourned at 8:33 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Angela Price
Administrative Lead
Public Works Agency