



MINUTES Water Board

4:00 PM - Tuesday, November 14, 2023
Water Department, 3050 5th Avenue

The Water Board of the City of Marion, Linn County, Iowa met on Tuesday, November 14, 2023, at 4:00 PM, at Water Department, 3050 5th Avenue, with the following members present:

PRESENT: John Bender, Amy Olson, William Kling, John McIntosh, and Terry Chew

ABSENT:

STAFF PRESENT: Todd Steigerwaldt and Curt Huhndorf

CALL TO ORDER

Motion to approve the October 10, 2023 minutes and October 2023 payable invoices for \$1,606,325.93.

Moved by Chew, seconded by Kling, to approve above referenced items. Bender asked if there were some water main leaks last month as there was some additional overtime shown. Steigerwaldt stated there were two main breaks that the crew repaired last month. Approved unanimously

Motion to receive and file the October 2023 revenue, expense and financial reports.

Moved by Kling, seconded by McIntosh, to approve the above referenced items. Steigerwaldt mentioned to the board about investing some more money in another CD as CDs are paying more interest than the checking accounts. Bender asked if we had any big expenses coming up. Steigerwaldt stated there were no large bills coming due soon and some of the other investments will be maturing too. The board was in favor of investing more money.

Approved unanimously

Motion to approve Resolution 23-20 accepting improvements and extensions of water main for Silver Ridge Estates 1st Addition to the city of Marion.

Moved by Bender, seconded by McIntosh, to approve above referenced item. Steigerwaldt stated there are 18-single family lots in this addition which is west of the Oak Ridge Linn Mar school off of Alburnett Road. The developer is Kent Backen of Marion. Bender asked if the water main would be looped. Steigerwaldt stated it would eventually be connected to the subdivision northeast of this addition which has access onto Echo Hill Road.

Approved by the following votes:

Ayes: Bender, Olson, Kling, McIntosh, and Chew

Motion approving three Change Orders for the 2023 27th Street Water Main Relay Project.

Moved by McIntosh, seconded by Kling, to approve above mentioned items. Steigerwaldt explained the three change orders to the board. Change order 1 is to replace some poor curb and gutter sections that are crumbling when the new water main is being installed. Change order 2 is for the removal and replacement of a 8" x 8" cross that was not anticipated to be replaced with the project but ended up needing to be replaced. Change order 3 is to replace some existing 6" perforated drain tile that is at the back of curb and some locations were in conflict with the new water main replacement.

Approved unanimously

Motion approving two amendments with Lively for the establishment of the Health Savings Account to manage funds for the High Deductible Health Care plan.

Moved by Olson, seconded by Chew, to approve above mentioned items. Steigerwaldt stated the city attorney has reviewed this agreement and amendments. Since the Water Department has a separate Federal ID number we also had to sign up as a member with Lively who will manage the financial needs of employees who elect to sign up for the alternative High Deductible Health Care option. Kling inquired about the fees that were being charged by Lively. Steigerwaldt shared the fees and Kling stated the fees seemed reasonable.

Approved unanimously

Motion to approve financial pledge to the Marion Leadership in Action committee to increase the height of the Peace Tree and add a decorative base under the tree.

Moved by Olson, seconded by Bender, to approve the referenced item above. Steigerwaldt stated the board has supported the Marion Leadership in Action committee in the past at a \$500 contribution amount. The project the committee is raising money for this year will be to increase the height of the Peace Tree and place a decorative base under the tree. Funds raised this year will be used to purchase these additions for the 2024 holiday season. Steigerwaldt stated there is money in this year's budget to pledge towards this project if the board elects to support the Marion Leadership in Action committee. The board was comfortable with the \$500 donation amount.

Approved by the following votes:

Ayes: Bender, Olson, Kling, and Chew

Nays: McIntosh

Motion approving cash rent agreement with Blackford Farms for 8.9 acres at 6301 Lucore Road, Marion.

Moved by McIntosh, seconded by Olson, to approve above referenced item. Steigerwaldt told the board there are 8.9 acres of crop land on the easterly side of the 20 acre parcel of ground we purchased with the city for a future park and elevated water tower. The farmer was agreeable to the cash rent of \$308.00 per acre based on the ISU Extension Cash Rent Survey for 2023 for Linn County. Steigerwaldt had checked with the Parks Department to see if they wanted to plant native prairie on this parcel or tree seedlings. They did not want to do this next year.

Approved unanimously

Motion approving cash rent agreement with Greg Carson and Picket Fence Family Farms for 3 acres in the WaterLinn Park 1st Addition to Marion.

Moved by Bender, seconded by Olson, to approve above referenced item. Steigerwaldt told the board the 3 acre parcel we purchased south of Fernow Road is for our next Silurian Well #11. The farmer was agreeable to the cash rent of \$308.00 per acre based on the ISU Extension Cash Rent Survey for 2023 for Linn County.

Approved unanimously

Motion to receive and file email from Mr. Andrew Shifflett regarding Seasonal Utility Shutoff policy adopted by the board last fall.

Moved by Chew, seconded by McIntosh, to receive and file Mr. Shifflett's email.

Approved unanimously

The matter was discussed as follows: Steigerwaldt explained to the board that Mr. Shifflett sent his email originally to the Marion City Council who received and filed it at their October 19th meeting. Councilman Grant Harper visited with Mr. Shifflett and explained the decision to stop the practice of shutting water for customers who leave for the winter was made by the Marion Water Board. Steigerwaldt revisited the reasons for why this decision was made by the board last fall. The number of shut off requests was increasing and becoming a tracking challenge for staff. Some customers would come back for the holidays and want their water turned back on and then off again when they left for a second time during the winter. Our fee to do this service does not really cover our staff's time that is involved. Our water rates have a fixed charged that covers daily operating expenses so by allowing customers to pick and choose when they want services can cause rates to increase for others whom do not leave for the winter. It was mentioned by the board too that customers do not stop their electric and gas services when they leave nor do the taxes owed on the property get reduced. An idea one board member shared was to triple the cost of the water shut off service to recoup our cost for this service, but this idea did not have any further discussion by the board. The board members were content with their decision to stop this practice for those that leave for the winter.

Motion to receive and file employee's FY25 employee wage and benefit request.

Moved by Olson, seconded by Kling, to receive and file the above referenced items. Steigerwaldt shared the employee's wage/benefit request with the board for the next fiscal year starting July 1, 2024. The board asked a few questions regarding the requests. Steigerwaldt told the board he would prepare several wage requests options that show the financial impacts and also show comparable salaries for other city employees and recent job offers from various communities that are looking for new employees and what they are offering.

Approved unanimously

Discussion regarding Field Operations Reports.

Steigerwaldt reviewed last month's projects that staff worked on. He stated the pump in our 29th Avenue Booster Station was pulled for maintenance and repairs. Staff winterized Site #6 at Gill Park. They also did some directional fire hydrant flushing around the southeast side of town. The distribution crew finished the Armar Drive new water main installation and made water service taps in several subdivisions.

Secretary Report

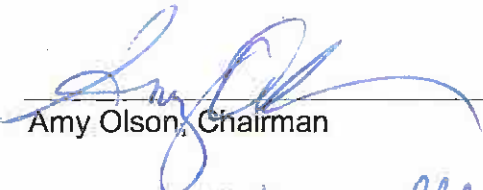
October Building Permits

Lien paid from 1107 7th Avenue
Insurance pay out Well #4
Insurance pay out Well #6 350 HP motor
Alliant rate increase - FYI
Fire Department Summary Report - FYI
Possible legislator meet and greet event in Marion discussing water topics


Steigerwaldt shared the above information with the board. He stated we have two payments coming from insurance claims and a large lien was finally paid. In the fire report the consultant evaluated our water supply system. We got a score of 37.78 out of 40. One of the purposes of this report is to hopefully get lower insurance premiums for Marion residents.

ADJOURN 5:20 PM

The next Marion Water board meeting will be held on December 12, 2023 with a special work session starting at 4 pm followed by the regular public meeting beginning at 4:45 pm at 3050 5th Avenue, Marion.



Amy Olson, Chairman



Todd Steigerwaldt, Secretary