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Utilities Committee Meeting Minutes September 16, 2026, at 5:00pm

- 1. Call to order:** John Hurtley called the meeting to order at 5 pm.
- 2. Roll call:** Members present were John Hurtley, Mike Michaud, Dale Fayerweather, Greg Sandstrom, Kelsey Gilmore. Also present were Dave Vosen and Ron Goeldner.
- 3. Public Comments:** There were no public comments.
- 4. Review and approval of 8-5-26 meeting minutes:** Greg Sandstrom pointed out that he was not present for that meeting. Dale Fayerweather made a motion to approve the minutes from July 9th with the correction that Greg Sandstrom was not present. Motion seconded by Mike Michaud. Motion passes.
- 5. Utility Plant Staff Update/Report:** Ron Goldner reported that he is studying for two tests coming up, distribution and groundwater. The test date is September 22nd. We did ask Rural Water to come to do training with Ron for both water and wastewater. We have been leaning on rural water for a lot of different things here. The report has many details about our activities.
- 6. Discussion / Actions on Water System Issues:**
 - a. **Water Meter bill errors update and discussion:** Mike reported that the PSC has accepted all three of our proposals for recalculating the bills on the three complaints. They are in the process of writing a letter to close out the complaints that they intend to send to the people who filed the complaints. They're apparently very busy there and have asked for our patience while they compose the letters.
 - b. **Update on DNR requirement regarding PH control:** John stated we did get a response from the DNR today regarding our previous proposal to do additional testing before proceeding to install another new system. They are asking more

Approved: 10/21/2026

Posted: 10/22/2026

questions. A response is due in 30 days. We will meet with Eric Martin from Cedar Corp to discuss a response.

- c. **Backflow prevention devices inspection update:** No word from Hydro Corp. Dave will talk to Tracy about additional contact information.
- d. **Update on search for water sample locations:** We have found enough volunteer locations for now. We have submitted 20 locations to the DNR for approval.
- e. **Water meter replacement, Inventory, future needs:** We're working on putting together a spreadsheet that identifies How many we have left and what our needs are going forward and what the costs associated with that are. When we get our numbers together we will make a reasonable request on what we want to get. There are four reading routes. One of the routes is just the condos. Route 1 is just about completed. We've probably done about 50 in the last month or so.
- f. **Wood manhole cover concerns, repair/replacement:** These are wooden covers over pits containing customer outside water meters. There was some discussion of who's responsibility it is to replace/repair rotting wood covers. Service lines are the homeowner's responsibility. They're the only ones getting advantage of that service line. It was decided to find a way to send property owners a letter with a deadline for repairs and a possible fine for non-compliance.
- g. **Decommissioning unused irrigation water meters:** There are concerns about just removing a meter when an irrigation system is taken out of service as it is real easy to put a short pipe in there to bypass having to pay for the water. The consensus is to get something in writing that warns people of the consequences of trying to bypass the rules.
- h. **Meter access issues at the Eastside Appts.** We have new water meters that need to be installed at this location. The working clearances with the existing plumbing are limited. It was determined that the property owners should have their plumber come on site to inspect the situation and also be on hand for the meter replacement.

7. Discussion / Action on Wastewater Treatment Plant Issues:

- a. **Update on bypass gate, bar screen, and conveyor status:** No schedule change update at this time. It was decided to make efforts to get pricing on possibly replacing the bypass screen before the conveyor installation.
- b. **Update on dissolved oxygen meter replacement:** Rural water came out with

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their probe and found that their meter showed twice as much oxygen in our system as we need. This is an energy saving issue. There will be some energy savings for controlling this operating point better. The price for replacing our probe is \$6,934. After verifying the installed cost price, we will request funds to replace the existing meter.

- c. **Centrate Valve replacement:** We have a quote for the centrate valve and the installation that shows a lead time of 18 to 22 weeks. We also have quote for the electrician to wire it up for \$350. Right now we cannot regulate how quickly the centrate loads we receive enters into our system. The phosphorus upsets our system; it takes days to recover. In another week, you're getting it again in another load. This situation has existed for a long time. The total installed cost would be \$11,036. Greg Sandstrom made a motion to approve the replacement of the centrate valve for the amount of \$11,036. Motion seconded by Mike Michaud. Motion passes.
- d. **Laundromat sump pump concern:** Dave reported that he was able to inspect the sump pump that was of concern and has now verified that the installation complies with our rules. We can close this item out.
- e. **Electronic Sludge Judge quote:** Dave reported that our existing sludge depth measuring device is completely manual. We use it every day. In the wintertime it freezes up and it becomes unusable. We don't want to keep buying new ones all the time. This is something the DNR requires us to use to measure and report sludge depth. We would like to purchase an electronic one that we would not need to worry about freeze ups. The cost is in the range that is something that Randy could approve. John Hurtley will talk to Randy about getting approval to order this device.

8. Discussion/action on project lists.

The Wastewater project list discussion.

The sludge Blower project, **#1** is complete.

Item **#2**, rebuilding the old blower has no path forward as yet.

Item **#3**, the Blower motor is also complete.

No change to **#4**. Dave Vosen will reach out to the contractor for an update on **#5**, the bypass screen replacement for price and schedule.

The security camera system, **#6**, is on hold pending office action on a larger system.

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Item **#7** is still on hold pending further definition of scope and cost.

Item **#8** on hold along with item #7.

No change to item **#9**.

Item **#10**, waste valve replacement is complete.

Item **#11** is to be changed to show in process.

Item **#12**, Centrate tank valve actuator is changed to in process, will keep as a #1 priority.

No change to item **#13**.

Item **#14** is changed to in process; price is reduced to \$10,000.

Item **#15** is in the hands of the finance group.

Item **#16**, RAS pumps, is complete.

The Water system project list discussion.

Item **#1**, water meter replacement, change status to In process..

Item **#2**, PH control system on hold while we discuss with the DNR.

Item **#3**, Well #2 inspection and packing gland will work on getting actual quotes. quotes.

Item **#4**, Well #2 building upgrade needs quotes, no changes to status.

Item #5 includes SCADA costs and some engineering costs, status is on hold.

Item **#6** is regarding a fire hall issue with backflow device. No change.

Item **#7** status is changed to complete.

Item **#8** is in process, Signing the agreement to get the portable one done, the portable generator for water system. The cost is \$1525.

Item **#9** includes a cost for inspecting all three wells. Keep status the same.

Item **#10**, for building repairs is primarily for roof repairs. Need quotes. There was some discussion about where the money should come from for this work.

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Item **#11** is a proposed three year project at \$10,000/yr. Many hydrants need work. An itemized list of hydrant locations and estimated costs will be developed. On hold. No changes.

9. Rate case progress report. Bauman & Associates has been contracted to do both water and sewer rate analysis. There was a meeting with them last week. They have started the official process with the PSC for a water rate increase. That process will take some time into 2027 to complete. The sewer rate study will take some time also. This will be a late 2026 or early 2027 item.

10. Set the next meeting date. The next meeting date was set to be October 21, 2026 at 5 pm.

11. Adjournment. **Greg Sandstrom** made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Dale Fayerweather. Motion passes.

Mike Michaud