

CWEP BOARD MEETING MINUTES

The Carthage Water & Electric Plant Board met in regular session November 21, 2024, 3:00 p.m. at the CWEP Office, 627 W Centennial, Carthage, MO.

Board:

- Brian Schmidt -Secretary
- Ron Ross- President*
- Darren Collier -Vice President
- Lori Leece -Liaison

- Sid Teel - Member
- Tom Garrison – Member
- Mark Gier - Member

*Attended via videoconference

Staff:

- Chuck Bryant-General Manager
- Cassandra Ludwig-General Counsel
- Jason Peterson-Director of IT & Broadband
- Megan Kirby- Executive Assistant

- Jason Choate-Director of Water Services
- Kelli Nugent/CFO
- Kevin Emery-Director of Power Services
- Stephanie Howard-Economic Development Manager

Others present: Jana Schramm, Councilmember

Vice President Collier called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m.

ADDITIONS/CHANGES TO THE AGENDA:

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

A motion by Schmidt and seconded by Gier to approve the minutes as presented of the regular meeting of October 17th, 2024, passed unanimously.

APPROVAL OF DISBURSEMENTS:

A motion by Teel and seconded by Schmidt to approve disbursements for October in the amount of \$5,499,372.33, passed unanimously.

FINANCIAL STATEMENT:

CFO Nugent presented the October 2024 financials to the Board, noting that combined operating expenses were under budget for the month and year to date and combined operating revenues were below budget for the month but on track for the year to date. She noted October this year was a warmer month than last year resulting in electric's revenue being down. She noted power expenses for the month were stable. She gave an update on Dogwood noting \$700,000 is the net income to date received since June 1st.

A motion by Garrison and seconded by Teel to approve the October 2024 financials passed unanimously.

COMMITTEE REPORTS: None.

CITIZENS PARTICIPATION PERIOD:

Councilmember Jana Schramm announced she is a proud CWEP Customer Academy graduate. She reported the Customer Academy was a great experience to learn about the processes and checks and balances of the Utility. She commended staff for their passion and professionalism in what they do and noted the humor throughout the experience gave it a “family like” feel.

OLD BUSINESS: None.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. Presentation of the Fiscal Year 2024 Audit

Rebecca Baker, CPA with KPM CPAS & Advisors of Springfield, MO, presented the FY 2023-2024 audit report stating this was an unmodified clean opinion. It was also reported that KPM found no material weaknesses, no non-compliance issues, no significant control deficiencies. She commended CWEP staff for their great internal controls as well as their cooperation through the audit process. GM Bryant expressed appreciation for KPM’s professionalism and efficiency in the audit process as well as their guidance when needed throughout the year.

A motion by Gier and seconded by Schmidt to accept the audit for FY 2023-2024 as presented, passed unanimously.

2. Consideration of revisions to Article XLIV (travel and training expenditures management) of the personnel policy manual

General Manager Bryant reviewed the revisions to Article XLIV (travel and training expenditures management) of the personnel policy manual.

A motion by Ross and seconded by Schmidt to accept the revisions to Article XLIV (travel and training expenditures management) of the personnel policy manual, passed unanimously.

3. Consideration of Resolution 2024.15: 457(b) Plan Amendment

General Manager Bryant presented Resolution 2024.15: 457(b) Plan Amendment to the Board. He noted this resolution permits participants in the 457 plan to access funds from their plan and repay for borrowing those funds.

A motion by Ross and seconded by Schmidt to accept Resolution 2024.15: 457(b) Plan Amendment, passed unanimously.

STAFF REPORTS:

General Counsel and Director of Customer Relations Ludwig reported Liberty's rate request of a 19% increase will result in a \$20 increase monthly for the average residential Liberty customer while CWEP's rate increase stays at a 4.7% increase which includes ALL utility services. Ludwig announced Sparkle in the Park Lighting Ceremony will kick off on Monday, November 25th at 6:00pm.

Economic Development Manager Howard announced that Schreiber Food's is looking at bringing a new processing facility to Carthage. She noted that Carthage's EEZ Board has met and there was a unanimous vote to move forward with the project, and Jasper County was also in support of the EEZ resolution. She noted a public hearing is scheduled during the City Council meeting on December 10th and the project will go through the 1st and 2nd reading during that meeting as well.

Director of IT and Broadband Peterson reported CWEP Fiber had plenty of bandwidth still available during the Mike Tyson vs Jake Paul Netflix event. He noted his team attended a Cyber Training conference in Kansas City where at the end they competed in a friendly competition that included 50 teams from all over the world and the CWEP team placed 2nd.

Director of Power Services Emery gave an update on the Sub 2 project.

General Manager Bryant reported Sparkle in the Park lighting ceremony is on Monday, November 25th at 6:00 pm, sharp. He noted a total of about 40 trees have been lost in Central Park from the two storms that occurred in the Spring of this year. GM Bryant reported staff will start the strategic plan process in January. He announced the CWEP Christmas Party will be held on Tuesday, December 3rd at 11:30am-1:30pm. He noted there was a theft of wire at Sub 2, GM Bryant thanked The Carthage Police Department for their timely efforts in addressing this issue. He addressed the number of outages that have occurred lately, with wildlife and vehicle accidents being the force of the majority of the outages.

BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS:

Darren Collier noted when Rebecca Baker with KPM CPAS & Advisors of Springfield, MO was asked about her interactions with CWEP employees during the auditing process, her response was that CWEP employees were very transparent and forth coming on information. She was very complimentary to the staff at CWEP. Collier noted he is looking forward to the events coming up including the Christmas Party. He also noted with Thanksgiving upon us, as a board member, he wanted to express how thankful he is for a municipal utility.

Tom Garrison announced the Special Olympics will be at G3 on December 12th and 13th and they are currently looking for volunteers. He noted you can sign up on their website.

At 4:50 pm a motion by Schmidt and seconded by Gier to adjourn the meeting passed unanimously.

President – Ron Ross

Secretary – Brian Schmidt