

CWEP BOARD MEETING MINUTES

The Carthage Water & Electric Plant Board met in regular session April 16, 2025, 12:30 p.m. at the CWEP Office, 627 W Centennial, Carthage, MO.

Board:

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| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Brian Schmidt -Secretary | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sid Teel - Member |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Ron Ross- President | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Tom Garrison – Member |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Darren Collier -Vice President | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Mark Gier - Member |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Lori Leece -Liaison | |

Staff:

- | | |
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| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Chuck Bryant-General Manager | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Jason Choate-Director of Water Services |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Cassandra Ludwig-General Counsel | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Kelli Nugent/CFO |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Jason Peterson-Director of IT & Broadband | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Kevin Emery-Director of Power Services |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Megan Kirby- Executive Assistant | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Stephanie Howard-Economic Development Manager |

Others present: Accountant Ben Schwarting and Accountant Mandy Bates

President Ross called the meeting to order at 12:34 p.m.

ADDITIONS/CHANGES TO THE AGENDA:

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

A motion by Collier and seconded by Gier to approve the minutes as presented of the regular meeting of March 26, 2025, passed unanimously.

APPROVAL OF DISBURSEMENTS:

A motion by Schmidt and seconded by Teel to approve disbursements for March in the amount of \$4,599,442.79, passed unanimously.

FINANCIAL STATEMENT:

CFO Nugent presented the March 2025 financials to the Board, noting that combined operating revenues were below budget for the month and year to date, combined operating expenses were over budget for the month..

A motion by Gier and seconded by Garrison to approve the March 2025 financials passed unanimously.

COMMITTEE REPORTS: None.

CITIZENS PARTICIPATION PERIOD: None.

OLD BUSINESS: None.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. Consideration of Fiscal Year 2025-2026 Budget

General Manager Bryant and staff presented a budget draft for fiscal year 2025-2026. Board members discussed major items including revenues, operating expenses, capital expenditures, cash reserve projections, ongoing infrastructure needs, rate adjustments, wages/staffing, procurement issues, and cost of service models.

A motion by Schmidt and seconded by Garrison to approve the proposed CWEP Fiscal Year 2025-2026 budget as presented, for presentation to the Carthage City Council, passed unanimously.

2. Consideration of Utility Rate Adjustments

General Manager Bryant and staff presented the Utility Rate Adjustments for the 2025-2026 fiscal year budget with an overall revenue increase of 1% for Electric service, 1% for Wastewater service, and 3% for Water service.

A motion by Gier and seconded by Garrison to approve the utility rate adjustments as presented in the FY2026 budget, passed unanimously.

3. Consideration of revisions to CWEP's Salary Administration Guidelines Policy

The Board discussed wage increase projections and cost-of-living figures. Based on data received from CWEP's compensation consultants, the Board discussed providing salary adjustments for up to 3.6% for those employees not eligible for promotions to new positions. This increase is comprised of a 2% cost-of-living adjustment and 1.6% potential merit-based adjustment. The Board also discussed aging the salary structure 2% based off data and recommendations received. General Manager Bryant presented the revisions to CWEP's Salary Administration Guidelines Policy, explaining that the policy will need revised in order to age the salary scale.

A motion by Schmidt and seconded by Collier to approve adjusting salaries for FY26 up to 3.6%, to include a 2% cost-of-living adjustment and 1.6% merit-based adjustment, and to amend the Salary Administration Guidelines Policy to age the salary scale by 2%, passed unanimously.

STAFF REPORTS:

GM Bryant noted June is the month to renew Board leadership roles and asked the Board to be thinking about recommendations for that. He commended Accountants Ben Schwarting and Mandy Bates for all their efforts during the budget process. He noted that he and the five directors attended the MPUA roundtable event in Nixa last week and it was great seeing all the interactions with the other utilities.

CFO Nugent thanked all staff for their efforts in the budget process.

General Counsel and Director of Customer Relations Ludwig reported the workers' compensation plan renews on June 1 and the EMOD (experience modification rate/factor) will increase from 0.70 to 0.74. However, the premium is decreasing by approximately \$3,000.

Director of Power Services Emery noted that some of CWEP's lineworkers visited the Capitol in Jefferson City this week to celebrate Lineworker Appreciation Day. He thanked Jill Carter for taking the time to meet with our employees and introduce them on the Senate floor.

Executive Assistant Kirby announced the CWEP Company Picnic will be held on Saturday, May 31st at Municipal Park.

BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS:

Board Member Gier commended staff on a great job with the budget presentation.

Board Member Ross echoed Board Member Gier's comments.

At 4:51 pm a motion by Schmidt and seconded by Collier to adjourn the meeting passed unanimously.

President – Ron Ross

Secretary – Brian Schmidt