

**MINUTES**  
**PIQUA CITY COMMISSION WORK SESSION**  
**January 15, 2010**  
**11:00 A.M.**  
**201 WEST WATER STREET**  
**PIQUA, OHIO 45356**

Piqua City Commission met in a Special Work Session in the Administrative Conference Room in the Municipal Government Complex, 201 W. Water Street for a work session. Mayor Fess called the meeting to order at 11:00 A.M. Also present were Commissioners Wilson, Martin, Terry, and Vogt. Absent: None. Also in attendance: City Manager Fred Enderle, Finance Director Cynthia Holtzapple, Law Director Stacy Wall, Power Systems Director Ed Krieger, Health & Sanitation Director Amy Welker, Utility Office Manager Robin Hungerford, and Utility Director Dave Burtner.

Purpose of the Special Meeting is to discuss the Utility Billing

City Manager Enderle gave a brief overview of the current rate structure and the possibility of adding programs to help defray some of the costs to the customers. But sometimes what saves one customer group costs another customer group, said Mr. Enderle.

Cynthia Holtzapple gave a brief review of the Programs and Charges the city is considering at this time which include: Electric, Water, Wastewater and Refuse.

Power Systems Director Ed Krieger went over the 2010 Budget costs stating it was very positive, the type of customers that are using the power which include, Residential, Commercial, and Industrial, and how they are billed. Mr. Krieger explained the Demand Charge and how it affects each customer. The demand fee covers fixed costs, while the energy usage fees cover variable costs. Mr. Krieger stated that two-thirds of the expenses of the power system are the cost of the power supply, and the remainder comes from such areas as personnel, capital and maintenance. The rate structure is currently in line with DP & L's allowing for a direct comparison of the rates between that utility company and Piqua Power, and that Piqua's said Mr. Krieger.

There was discussion on the concern of the small business owners with the higher rates. City Manager Enderle stated there are ways to cut down on peak power usage. Mr. Krieger explained how business owners could adjust their peak usage, and stated the Power System has staff available to provide energy audits to businesses. There are energy tips available on the Website at [piquaoh.org/power](http://piquaoh.org/power), said Mr. Krieger. City Manager Enderle stated it takes the business owner to be pro-active and look for ways to cut costs. There was discussion on ways to get more information on the demand charges, peak usages and other pertinent information out the citizens and business through flyers, public service announcements, and the use of APTA. Mr. Krieger stated they have spoken to the Piqua Schools and AMP Ohio has been a big help in supplying information also. Mayor Fess stated businesses should call for energy edits and more information on the peak and demand usage, and take advantage of the help the city is offering. Mayor Fess thanked Mr. Krieger for his presentation.

Utility Director Dave Burtner gave a brief overview of the Water and Wastewater and the Underground Utilities 2010 Budget expenses, and the type and number of customers involved. There is significant operational costs included, the treatment of chemical, utilities, building and grounds maintenance and personnel. Also the expense of planning and building a new water treatment plant are included in the Water, said Mr. Burtner.

The Wastewater System provides the treatment and collection of wastewater from the City of Piqua and accepted area's in a safe and effective manner for the health and welfare of the public. The city also takes in flow from the Monnin Estates, Greens and Villages of Springcreek, Piqua Country Club, and the I-75 Roadside Rest Area. In addition the City will be adding the Fletcher flow in 2010 or 2011, said Mr. Burtner.

The Underground Utilities provide operation and maintenance of Piqua's underground water distribution and wastewater collection systems. They also ensure that quality potable drinking water is delivered to each consumer's tap and that the wastewater flows are conveyed effectively to the Piqua wastewater treatment facility. The Underground Utilities Department received financial support from the Water System and the Wastewater System to provide a variety of support functions, said Mr. Burtner.

City Manager Enderle stated the city will have to borrow to cover the development and construction costs for the new plant and those loans have been already figured into the city budget. Water rate increases have been implemented to increase the reserve and increase the city's capacity to borrow money at lower interest rates. In the long run this saves the customers money and helps to ensure them of not receiving a sudden large increase in the water bills, said Mr. Enderle.

There was discussion concerning the costs and if the city is in line with other communities, and was stated Piqua is not the only community raising rates.

Major capital expenses for the wastewater system will include the necessary sewer line repairs and the extension of the sewer line to Fletcher, which is being paid for by the Village of Fletcher, said Mr. Enderle. The only cost to the city would be the over sizing of the system to allow for additional tap-ins with development beyond that area. The lines will reach approximately a mile beyond Springcreek School for future connection to tie in as needed.

There was discussion over the size and the maintenance of the water towers needed, type of system that is being considered, where have the studies taken place, and if aquifers can be utilized. A question was raised if it would be possible for someone tie into a pressurized line. Mr. Burtner stated no, no one can tie into any sewer line without the consent of the city.

Health & Sanitation Director Amy Welker gave a brief overview of the 2010 Refuse Budget revenues and expenses, along with the number of residential and commercial accounts.

Types of refuse customers include: Residential customers include all homeowners and tenant occupied structures, and buildings with four or more apartments my contract with a commercial hauler upon approval by the city. Commercial or business accounts include small buildings, churches, retail operations, etc. Businesses may contract with a commercial hauler upon city approval.

Ms. Welker stated the Refuse Utility provides for the collection of solid waste from residential properties and commercial operations. Rates are reviewed annually and rare set to cover operations and needed capital expenditures, (refuse trucks). Significant operational costs include: tipping fees, recycling contract, personnel and capital. Current rates for residential are \$15.30 per month plus \$3.13 for recycling and Commercial is \$17.23 per month (min) plus \$3.13 for recycling also, said Ms. Welker.

There was discussion on the citywide clean-up being discontinued and the reason along with the costs involved. Questions were raised on the cost of the tipping fees over the years. Ms. Welker stated in 2003 the tipping fee was \$46 per ton and in 2010 it is \$59.05 per ton. There was also discussion on types of refuse can be put into the red recycling bins. Ms. Welker gave a brief explanation on the types of things that can be placed in the recycling bins and stated more information is located on the City's website.

Ms. Welker stated there are several Refuse Programs in place at this time and they include: Senior Bag Program; Vacation Option; Senior/Disabled Discount. Ms. Welker went over each program and the impact the increase has to the other customers if these are utilized.

There were various questions raised by some of the rental property owners concerned about their vacant properties having to pay for water and refuse when they are unoccupied, some of them are having to turn off the utilities until they can rent them again. One rental property owner voiced his concern about having to pay for refuse pickup when the property is unoccupied. Ms. Welker stated there is no way for the refuse collectors to tell when a home is vacant or not from the rear of the property, and it would be hard to monitor such a situation. It was suggested that markers possibly be place on the vacant properties to alert the refuse collector it is an unoccupied property. Another suggestion was made to possibly al-a-carte the fees for water and sewer, refuse and recycling, and electric separate, or to have a base fee for the refuse like there is for the electric for the unoccupied properties.

One rental property owner requested a breakdown of the cost for the refuse. Ms. Welker stated the cost is in the budget document. Another rental property owner stated it is hard to show a property when the utilities have been shut off; it is not very attractive and will not bring many people in to the city of Piqua. One of the rental property owners stated he has thirty-two rental properties and sixteen have had the utilities turned off and only have nine rented at this time. Mayor Fess stated the city would look at options to try and work out some reasonable answer to the situation. There was also discussion of the deposit that is required for utility services and the reason for the deposit not rolling over each time a new tenant moves in.

Mayor Fess stated she wanted to compliment the rental property owners for screening their applicants before allowing them to move in to the City.

Mayor Fess asked what type of time frame would it take to work on some of the options suggested. Mr. Enderle stated a couple of weeks could possibly have something by the February 10, 2010 work session.

Chuck Starrett, P.O.I.N.T, Chairman, stated the P.O.I.N.T. statistics are available through P.O.I.N.T. if anyone is interested.

Mayor Fess asked the rental property owners to be pro-active rather than reactive.

Mayor Fess thanked all who attended, and stated a lot of good information came from the meeting.

Moved by Commissioner Vogt, seconded by Commissioner Martin, to adjourn from the Piqua City Commission Work Session at 1:15 P.M. Voice vote, Aye: Wilson, Martin, Terry, Hudson and Vogt. Motion carried unanimously.

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LUCINDA L. FESS, MAYOR

PASSED: \_\_\_\_\_

ATTEST: \_\_\_\_\_

REBECCA J. COOL  
CLERK OF COMMISSION