

Public Works & Streets Commission Meeting

Summary

September 12, 2023

- **Start of the meeting. [0:00](#)**
 - The Public Works and Streets Commission meeting called to order.
 - A grant application for the transport study has been submitted.
- **Public Works Report. [2:51](#)**
 - The public works report is a little special because it was mostly Kevin and Rick taking care of the water, plus all the operations. The crew did a great job in August. One person started last Friday and has been very helpful and energetic. Looking forward to the next one to come on the 18th.
- **Second Street [6:21](#)**
 - Second street is about done, but final payment needs to be made; the backflow, backwash, recycled program is still stagnant, 3 to 4 weeks out; started the clarifier rebuild – parts and technology are antiquated; purchased the Ranger and the lift truck in August.
- **Updates on pump plug installation. [11:28](#)**
 - Engineering was supposed to have been done last month but is taking longer than expected; Water percentages are off, including utility billing due to previous staff; there is a City Council meeting tomorrow to discuss going into level one and a meeting to discuss water demand. Tourism is costing the city more than it's benefiting.
- **Highlights of the financial reports. [22:55](#)**
 - Finance reports are on the website.
- **Emergency Preparedness update. [28:18](#)**
 - Conex at the fire station is waiting on a few items then will be stocked;
- **Barriers. [38:31](#)**
 - Barriers will be set up and reflective tape will be used.
 - Southwest Lincoln water district are still in the hopeful stage, they need to go through their board and vote on it. They need a public hearing. The long-term agreement is going to take a lot of work and may take a year or two.
 - Main focus today is looking at utility rates and compensation or lack thereof, and how to relook at this and what might be done: The first item is the meters; In terms of procedure, how to change the charge for the four inch to the two inch water rate.
 - The planning department is looking at ways to subsidize low-income housing.
 - Another option for future projects is a non-metered sprinkler system, where the building pays for water that is metered instead of holding water for the fire sprinkler.
- **How would you change the base rate for meters? [51:08](#)**
 - Most of the meters in Springbrook are one and five eighths, so the base rate would be through the meter size; The last study was done to the American Water Works

Association, and it was a percentage-based program, but the City Manager didn't like it. The industry standard is important. How to make an argument to the council that they need to move more aggressively to equalize rates or to get them fair. The cost of a two-inch water line is about \$700 a month, while a one-inch line is \$170.

- **The base rate for water.** [1:04:22](#)
 - The base rate has two parts to it, a base rate established by the meter size and two units of water measured at the rate of flow. The two units are charged at the same rate flow that the per unit charge would be otherwise. Vacation rentals have been full all summer long, with washers and dryers going all the time, and a lot of water usage occurring. The second home situation is subsidizing the permanent residents and vacation rentals, and they are paying part of it by paying minimum monthly base with the two units; conservation of water should be encouraged in short term rentals.
- **How much should we charge?** [1:13:53](#)
 - There are 93 lots in Yachats that have prepaid SDC fees and have no meter. They would like to start paying 50% of what it would cost to have a meter. Most of the 93 vacant lots in town have the ability to hook up to the wastewater system. Most of them have water and sewer.
- **Spreading the cost of infrastructure improvements.** [1:23:53](#)
 - Spreading the cost of infrastructure improvements to customers that will benefit from the improvements, including vacant lots and people with meters. Discussion continued on avenues to look into.
- **Is the Visitors Amenities Fund part of the general fund?** [1:34:05](#)
 - Is the Visitors Amenities Fund associated with the General Fund or is it actually a separate fund?
 - The straightforward way to handle the tourist industry is to say you will pay for the cost of water and pass the costs along.
- **Mechanics of the three taxes.** [1:38:53](#)
 - The mechanics of the three taxes, the rates, transient lodging and the hotel tax, and how the three go together.
- **How to increase water rates for businesses.** [1:44:20](#)
 - Increase the percentage to those businesses that use additional water, not just before rate increase, but to businesses in general.
 - Discussion also had regarding fire hydrants.
- **Speed Zones.** [1:48:38](#)
 - Had a vote on establishing a 25 mile an hour zone for all of 101 through the city, and the major hotel owners are in favor of it and ODOT is willing to consider it.