

CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE
CITY HALL, PLANNING/ENGINEERING CONFERENCE ROOM (WEST)
Tuesday, January 5, 2016 at 4:00 PM

MINUTES

Present: Mayor Justin Nickels, Alder Chris Able, Mary Balte, Grace Brandl, Linda Hunter, June Kramer, August Krieser, Anthony Mack, Joanne Vogds, Gloria Wallace, Anna Marie Woods

Guests: Nilaksh Kothari, Ralph Kramer

Minutes: Submitted by Linda Hunter

- I. Meeting called to order at 4:06pm

- II. City Update from Mayor Justin Nickels
 - a. The 2016 budget passed and the City will have money in the bank from 2015. The City is continuing to build reserves toward the \$4 million-dollar goal. The increase in the reserve fund will help the City's bond rating go up.
 - b. The Meijer offer will go through by the end of January, building in 2017. If it is indeed sold, the City will rezone the property. Meijer did not ask for any City money and it will finance Dewey St improvement. The development will create 300 jobs and generate taxes. The City may map out other options for development in that area.
 - c. The mid-city mall area will also be marketed by the City.
 - d. The Common Council approved dollars for demolition of the Mirro building. The City wants ownership of the land with careful provisions including some responsibilities for the present owner. Demolition will probably begin in November 2016.
 - e. The snowstorm on December 28th and December 29th was the worst one in five years. The City crews worked long hours both days. The initial forecast was for 6-10 inches however the City received 11 inches in 15 hours with ice being laid down under the snow which was difficult on the plows. Private contractors were unable to come in to assist and 50mph winds caused big drifts.

- III. Guest Speaker – Nilaksh Kothari, General Manager of Manitowoc Public Utilities
 - a. Question: How has the City reduced our carbon emissions? Answer: The rule from EPA is that the power plant must reduce carbon emissions by 30% over an 18 year period.
 - i. Both boilers are now using biomass, one at 30-40% and the other at 10-20%. Biomass includes paper pellets, shredded tires, etc.
 - ii. MPU also buys wind power from a public utility in Minnesota.
 - iii. MPU promotes conservation, most recently with an offer to trade old Christmas lights for LED lights. MPU will have a 3 year program for increasing LED use as it burns 80% less energy.
 - b. MPU was created in 1911 when the City purchased a private water company for \$157,000. MPU is now worth \$54 million.
 - c. In 1914 MPU purchased an electric generating facility for \$125,000 which is now worth \$200 million.
 - d. The City has very low water rates – in the bottom quartile in the state, and will file for a decrease this spring. This will be the 3rd consecutive rate decrease, 8% less than in 2010.
 - e. Building wind towers in the lake to deliver electricity is currently too expensive especially since natural gas prices have decreased sharply.

- f. The challenges include regulations from state and federal agencies. Currently state legislature is considering giving cities permission to sell utilities without having a referendum. Little information has been published about this, including costs. The EPA requested all plants to have air monitoring equipment that would be very costly. MPU has had careful measurements that show we have no problem without buying the equipment. MPU hopes to negotiate a resolution.
- g. The City has had broadband since 2008. MPU also provides a variety of management, engineering, and technical services to other cities. MPU reviews solar, battery storage, and LED on power supply needs and costs for customers.
- h. The Committee agreed the City is fortunate to have Mr. Kothari.

IV. Next meeting will be Tuesday, 02.02.16, beginning at 4:00pm at the City Hall – Planning/Engineering Conference Room (West), 900 Quay Street, Manitowoc, WI 54220.

V. Meeting adjourned