

**CITY OF HEPPNER
UTILITIES COMMISSION MEETING
HEPPNER CITY HALL – 111 N. MAIN STREET
JUNE 29, 2023**

ATTENDEES:

**Corey Sweeney
Dale Bates
Forrest Dyer
Josh Coiner
Tom Wolff
Chad Doherty
Tarina Foster**

Absent: Seth Moses

Members of the Public: None

1. Call to Order

The June 29, 2023 meeting of the City of Heppner Utilities Commission was called to order at 9:15 AM by Corey Sweeney.

2. Minutes of February 14, 2023 meeting

Motion to approve the minutes of the February 14, 2023 meeting by Dale Bates.
Seconded by Josh Coiner. Motion Carried

Tom Wolff requested to rearrange the agenda and discuss a few items in “New Business” first.

3. New Business

A. Willow View Drive Sidewalks

A letter from the Undersheriff was submitted to the City Council at the June meeting. The Council referred this to the Utilities Commission. The Sheriff's office is requesting a sidewalk. They are concerned about pedestrian safety, especially for students going to and from the school. The Sheriff's office was approached prior to the project that extended the sidewalk from Water Street to the school. They didn't want the sidewalk along their parking lot at that time as it would affect their driveway access. The City had funds to do this at that time, but it currently does not. A letter of proposal will be sent to see if they will agree to a sidewalk put along the parking lot. Any sidewalk they want on their property would be their responsibility. They will also be reminded that they previously forfeited the sidewalk.

B. Forest Service Building Sidewalk repair: Tom Logan

Tom Logan owns the Forest Service building. He recently contacted the city to ask if his money was ready. He said that Kraig Cutsforth promised him \$4,900 to repair the sidewalk that has cracked. He said it is a safety issue that is caused by the City's water and sewer line installation. At the Budget hearing meeting Kraig mentioned that he had something to use the \$4,900 that was on the Sidewalks line, but he didn't specify. This agreement would set a precedent. The Ordinance states that sidewalks are the responsibility of the property owner. It is unlikely that the city utility lines caused the damage as they were installed in the 1980's. There was some sewer and drainage repair done by the owner that could have caused the damage, or possibly tree roots. The Commission is against paying this and agree that the funds should be used to repair property owned by the city.

Motion by Josh Coiner to deny the request. Seconded by Forrest Dyer. Motion Carried

4. Old Business

A. Frozen Meter Issues

Last winter several meters froze as they were turned off on the customer side and not the city side. This leaves the meter full of water and it can freeze. There was a meter on Riverside that was turned off on the customer side, this was unknown by the City. The meter froze and broke. Chad noticed it leaking and turned the meter off on the city side. He instructed an employee to replace the meter. When the meter was replaced, the employee turned on both valves. The building was flooded as there was a leak inside. They were not charged for the meter as it was insulated. If a meter is shut off by the customer and the city is unaware, they will still be charged the base rate and the service is on as far as the city knows. The best thing to do is to call the City and have them turn off and lock the meter. We have had no contact from the building owner since the incident. Tom Wolff will contact him and find out the status.

5. New Business

A. 505 E Cowins Frozen Meter

Dale Bates takes care of the maintenance of his stepdaughter's duplex in Heppner. Last winter the irrigation meter froze and broke. It was shut off on the customer side and not on the city side. A \$75.00 frozen meter fee was charged to the account. A new meter was installed but there has been no charge for the \$272.60 meter. (Dale Bates moved to a citizen chair) Dale says the installation of the meter was bad and is asking to have the charge removed. It was not deep enough and there is only about ½" of space on top for insulation. There was no room for it so he did not insulate it. The

meter box was originally higher but the garbage truck drives over it and could have pushed the box down. The rule is if you attempt to insulate the meter you will not be charged for repairs. There was some room around the sides of the box for insulation. It is hard to know what caused it to freeze, as it was not insulated. Dale agreed to pay the \$75.00 fee but still disagrees with the installation. If the meter is insulated and freezes again that fee may be refunded. Chad will have the meter lowered before next winter. Chad recommends calling the office and request to have the meter turned off and locked for winter. (Dale returned to the Commission table)

6. Additional Discussion

The ODOT project on Main Street is making citizens upset. There have been no official complaints but it is very difficult to get around town. ODOT has had weekly meetings at City Hall the past two Wednesdays. The next meeting will be on Teams (similar to Zoom) on July 5th at 1:30 pm. Any issues can be discussed at that time.

Morrow County is requesting an Intergovernmental Agreement for the chip seal project.

The final inspection for the HB2017 project was Tuesday. ODOT was here and took pictures. The only exception was the crosswalk at Chase and Willow that doesn't lead to the sidewalk. The crosswalk lines will have to be moved to the correct spot. The City will have to do the changes as the contract with Premier has been paid. The State will release the reimbursement as soon as the repair has been made.

7. Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 10:08 AM