



**WHITE BEAR
TOWNSHIP**

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Board of Supervisors
ED M. PRUDHON, Chair
STEVEN A. RUZEK
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**MINUTES
UTILITY COMMISSION MEETING
SEPTEMBER 14, 2023**

The meeting was called to order at 6:04 p.m.

Present: Bernstein, Cremons, DeLoach, DeMars, Groschen; Commissioner: McCune; Clerk: Christopherson; Public Works Director: Reed; Town Finance Officer: Kelly;

Absent: Fredericks, with notice.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA (Additions/Deletions): Bernstein moved to approve the agenda as amended, with the note that there is an additional late fee waiver request. DeMars seconded. Ayes all.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF AUGUST 10, 2023: DeMars made the motion to approval of the August 10, 2023 minutes. Bernstein seconded. Ayes all.

DISCUSSION AGENDA: There was some discussion of the Monthly Service Report. Bernstein moved to receive the discussion agenda as presented as follows: A) Receive Monthly Service Report; B) Receive Republic Call Log; C) Receive Solid Waste Abatement Report. DeMars seconded. Ayes all.

KATHLEEN LEWELLEN -- LATE FEE WAIVER REQUEST: The Town Clerk introduced this agenda item to the Commission. There was some discussion of her account, her fees, and payment methods. The resident has a good payment history, so there was discussion of waiving the request. The resident has a water meter now.

Bernstein made the motion to waive the late fees in request. DeMars seconded. Ayes all.

Additional Late Fee Waiver Request: The Town Clerk reported on this late addition to the agenda. There is some personal information within this request. The customer was a part of the radio meter replacement, if they didn't respond they would get a non-compliance fee. With no response, the customer was given the non-compliance fees from

**White Bear Township's
Mission:**

To provide White Bear Township residents, businesses and visitors with reliable, equitable, high quality municipal services while serving as open, inclusive and responsible stewards of the public trust.



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the past 3 quarters, totaling \$900. For personal reasons, the resident is requesting the fees be removed, but the late fees remain. The meter and radio have now been installed. There was some discussion of documenting the fees, noting the request and waiving the fees, and see if it happens again maybe reevaluate. There was also some discussion of a simple, low, payment plan to become current on expenses. Staff can work with the resident to put together a payment plan, and waive some of it over time. Staff will work with the resident.

Groschen made the motion to set up a payment plan with the resident and upon successful initiation will waive all fees. DeMars seconded. Ayes all.

PFAS -- UPDATE: The Public Works Director updated the Commission of the settlements that are pending related to PFOs and PFAs. He explained the cases and settlements. From these cases there will be new levels of PFAs for municipalities to test and for clean water to remain under the limits. This is something for the Town Public Works Department to continually monitor, but the Town has remained under these levels for the time being. There was some discussion of the cases.

UTILITY RATES -- DISCUSSION: The Town Finance Officer explained that the Town funds are flowing the way they should, so he is recommending the tiers and the rates remain the same for 2024. There was some discussion of the funds, how the Water Fund showing negative cash flow in 2027 due to a major water treatment plant, but without that the fund would still be making money. If the Town does complete the major water treatment plant, the Town would bond for it to help boost the fund. There was some discussion of the rates. It was proposed to raise the residential to \$6.70 on tier 4 on page 26, so instead of \$6.65 so there's a nice differential.

DeLoach made the motion to go with what the Finance Officer says and move on. Groschen seconded. There was some discussion. Ayes all.

RESIDENTIAL IRRIGATION RATES -- UPDATE: Member Bernstein explained that Weston Woods is not concerned with conservation since there is a lot of water consumed in October and November. Staff has had a lot of discussion with the Weston Woods Finance Officer who is disputing the rates. Weston Woods is currently billed at the residential irrigation rate, which is billed at \$6.65 per thousand gallons. Tier 3 is currently billed at \$3.80 per thousand gallons, which is what Weston Woods would like to be in. It was noted that the Town is currently supplying water at the rates in which was properly published, Weston Woods is requesting the change. There was discussion of conservation and that the Utility Commission does not want to help Weston Woods pay less to water more, the Commission wants Weston Woods to water less and save more money and water.

The Town Finance Officer calculated what Weston Woods could save over (\$22,000) in the third tier. If you divide that by the 70-71 townhomes, is that going to make much of a difference? The total savings would be around \$246 per household. There was some discussion of the sprinklers. There was some discussion of this being a drought year.

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DeMars moved to keep the irrigation rates where they are. Bernstein seconded. Ayes all.

FUTURE JOINT POWERS AGREEMENT WITH NORTH OAKS -- UPDATE: The Town Clerk updated the Utility Commission of this agenda item that it will be in front of the North Oaks City Council next Thursday. It went through one final round of edits about the original 600 properties in the 1999 JPA will be supplied water, and others will need to purchase water from elsewhere. The sale price of water will be between 125% and 200% of the Township's residential water rates. The Township will have no fees besides water meters to gauge the water usage of North Oaks.

PUBLIC WORKS DIRECTOR REPORT: The information for the Public Works Department Activity for August 2023 was in the packet for the Commission to review. He highlighted the **televising report from around Bald Eagle Lake**. It is a proposed sewer project for next year. He discussed some future storm and water projects. The Town Board **approved the purchase of a new Jet Vac truck** and the Town will receive the truck next year. There was some discussion of truck prices. Ramsey County is reconstructing **Otter Lake Road and returning it to White Bear Lake**. He described some updates going on north of 96. Red Pine area will be completed next year as well with a lot of storm work, including **10 ponds going in** the area. There was a question of the reflective sign replacement; it was noted that the Township is **halfway completed with the replacements**. The County will most likely want the Town to take care of **South Shore Boulevard** next year.

NEXT MEETING DATE / AGENDA ITEMS: The next meeting date will be October 12, 2023.

Bernstein moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:24 p.m. DeLoach seconded. Ayes all.

Respectfully Submitted,

Megan R. Wede
Recording Secretary