

CIRCLEVILLE SERVICE COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES 11/18/2025

Circleville City Service Committee convened in City Council Chambers, 127 South Court St, Circleville, OH 43113 on Tuesday, November 18, 2025, at 6:00 p.m. Present at Roll Call: Chair Tom Duvall, Committee Members Sheri Theis and Audrey Lukasak, and Clerks Melissa Burns and Sarah Kolesar. Other Council Members present: President Barry Keller, Tom Klitzka, John Moats, and Katie Hedges. Invited Guests present: Mayor Michelle Blanton, Service Director Jim Stanley, Utility Director Brian Frost, Joe Crea, Raftelis Project Director, and Kris Ruggles, Strand Associates.

Duvall called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. with Roll Call.

Theis motioned to approve the Service meeting minutes and the Water Treatment Plant tour minutes from October 7, 2025. Lukasak seconded. Motion carried.

Discussion regarding Water/Sewer proposal: Jim Stanley stated the primary reason they are here this evening is for the water/sewer rate Ordinances being proposed on the Agenda. Stanley noted an operation and needs analysis was conducted three to four years ago on the water treatment plant that highlighted areas that will need addressed. Stanley reported that the plant was built in 1962 and was a three filter 2MGD plant and the core of the facility is currently in operation. Stanley explained that the plant was upgraded in the early 1990's to a 4MGD capacity and currently configured as an iron and manganese removal plant. Stanley pointed out that chlorine and fluoride are added, and current hardness is at 380 mg per liter, thus proposing that with the new reverse osmosis system decreases the hardness to approximately 120-130 mg per liter, which is considered soft water. Stanley said the City is currently in design for the reverse osmosis and nanofiltration system with a 2.9-million-dollar forgiveness loan through the EPA. Joe Crea, Raftelis Project Director, explained his position and role with Raftelis and the steps and goals in conducting a Rate Study. Crea explained the water and sewer rates in Circleville would consist of two components: Water and sewer both have a fixed charge and all customers are going to pay \$5.50 for water or \$8.50 for sewer, which covers much of the cost of customer service and billing, also noting that there are volumetric rates based on the amount of water that goes through a customer's meter. Crea pointed out there are three tiers for both the water and sewer rates and as a customer uses more, their unit rate drops, so they pay less for the larger volumes of water. Crea highlighted this is a common structure in Ohio and the Midwest, due to manufacturing and industrial types of businesses and those who use greater amounts of water regularly would receive a discount. Crea highlighted they've been trying to reconstruct that type of rate structure for the future. Additionally, Crea stated there are different rates if you live outside of City limits and customers do have higher water/sewer rates. Regarding the financial plan and goals, Crea explained that they want to ensure future financial sufficiency and recommending rate increases that will support operating costs but also future capital improvements. Crea stated they want rates and charges that are fair, defensible, and equitable. Crea spoke of the Capital Plan regarding upgrades and enhancements to the water treatment plant, highlighting \$56M for the WTP in 2029, stating it is a lot but it's important and necessary for the age of the facility and to comply with coming regulations. Kris Ruggles, Strand Associates, spoke about the major component to the waterside capital improvements is the water treatment plant, highlighting that the plant is reaching its useful life and with new regulations for forever chemicals, a membrane water treatment plant is the simplest way to treat and remove those chemicals, though it wouldn't remove all of it. Ruggles stated they reviewed the risk and resilience analysis, noting that the current budget for replacing lead service lines is \$300,000 per year for the next 10-15 years. Ruggles said the City does treatment at the water plant that helps coat those lines, explaining that they are not necessarily a risk right now but all galvanized lead lines within the City will need to be replaced per regulations by 2037. Duvall asked if the 56M project cost also includes grants received, Ruggles stated that the 56M is total project cost expected for construction, not considering grants that would potentially deduct from the

total cost. Ruggles reported that everyone in the City currently has significantly hard water, at about 320 grains, highlighting that the goal is to get that number to approximately 120 grains, delivering everyone in the City soft water. Ruggles highlighted that by removing hardness in the water, it removes metals such as iron and manganese that wear other areas of the plant, so this would prolong the life of the plant. Moats asked if they had wells already for this project, and land for the wells. Ruggles answered yes, a new well was recently placed and there is space for additional wells as part of the project. Crea spoke about substantial rate increases built into the Water Financial Plan to increase the revenue stream to the level needed to pay the debt service. Crea noted an increase of 25% per year for a four-year period, followed by a 10% increase and then shift down to inflationary adjustments, likely around 3%. Crea pointed out that regarding the sewer plan, there is an increase to debt service related to the \$42 M project that they're planning to start next year. Crea noted it is an existing debt because it's already been approved. Crea said they're not planning significant borrowing for the sewer CIP but still need to maintain lines and supporting structures. Crea noted related inflationary type adjustments of approximately 3.5% on wastewater rates with modest increases to the fixed charges. Crea explained the impact of these rate increases to a typical residential customer, pointing out that their bill would increase about \$11 every month. Crea showed a graph comparing neighboring Cities and comparable rates, explaining that rates are increasing 1-2% in nearly every community. Crea pointed out that the City of Columbus recently had an increase of 18% on water rates and an 8% increase on sewer rates. Lukasak asked when the rate increases would begin and Crea stated they would be effective January 1, 2026, if passed. Duvall asked what would happen in 2030; Ruggles explained that they're halfway through design and the way that the loan is structured, the plan is to complete the design by summer, followed by a 6-month review by Ohio EPA, then would move to construction the following summer in 2027, and the loan closes after construction is completed. Ruggles pointed out that the plan is for the project to be completed by 2030, at which point debt service would begin. The Mayor emphasized that if the City starts seeing contaminants in the water along with other communities, then there will be competition for the grant funding that is currently available which puts the City at risk of missing out on that funding.

New Business:

a) AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC SERVICE TO ENTER INTO AN AGREEMENT WITH JOHNSON CONTROLS FIRE PROTECTION LP, 6200 SHAMROCK CT, DUBLIN, OHIO 43016, TO REPLACE THE EXISTING FIRE ALARM CONTROL PANEL AND DEVICES, OBVIATING FORMAL BIDDING AND ADVERTISING AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

Discussion: Jim Stanley explained this Ordinance pertains to the fire alarm system at the fire department, noting that it's failing and they're unable to obtain the proper parts due to the age of the system. Stanley stated this is the same Company that maintains and monitors their current system in place. This pointed out that this system upgrade would cost \$88,000.

MOTION-ROLL CALL-VOTE:

Duvall motioned to forward the Ordinance to the next City Council meeting on December 2, 2025, with a recommendation for passage. Lukasak seconded. Roll Call. (3 Yeas- 0 Nays) Motion carried.

b) AN ORDINANCE TO ESTABLISH SANITARY SEWER RATES FOR CONNECTIONS AND MISCELLANEOUS SANITARY FEES OF THE USERS OF THE SANITARY SEWER OF THE CITY OF CIRCLEVILLE, OHIO.

Discussion: Stanley explained this Ordinance pertains what was discussed in the earlier presentation, explaining the proposed upgrades to the current water plant and the rate increases necessary to complete the project.

MOTION-ROLL CALL-VOTE:

This motioned to forward the Ordinance to the next City Council meeting on December 2, 2025, with a recommendation for passage. Duvall seconded. Roll Call. (3 Yeas-0 Nays). Motion carried.

c) AN ORDINANCE TO ESTABLISH SANITARY SEWER RATES FOR SANITARY SEWER SERVICE TO PROPERTIES DISCHARGING INTO THE SANITARY SEWER SYSTEM OF THE CITY OF CIRCLEVILLE, OHIO AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

Discussion: Jim Stanley explained this relates to the sewer portion of the project discussed during the presentation and are the lower rate increases.

MOTION-ROLL CALL-VOTE:

Theis motioned to forward the Ordinance to the next City Council meeting on December 2, 2025, without a recommendation for passage and to be held for three readings. Duvall seconded. Roll Call. (2 Yeas- 1 Nay).

d) AN ORDINANCE TO ESTABLISH RATES FOR WATER CONNECTIONS AND MISCELLANEOUS WATER SERVICES TO THE USERS OF THE WATER WORKS SYSTEM OF THE CITY OF CIRCLEVILLE, OHIO AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

Discussion: Theis confirmed that this Ordinance pertains to the water connection and tap fees discussed during the presentation.

MOTION-ROLL CALL-VOTE:

Duvall motioned to forward the Ordinance to the next City Council meeting on December 2, 2025, with a recommendation for passage. Theis seconded. Roll Call. (3 Yeas- 0 Nays).

e) AN ORDINANCE TO ESTABLISH WATER RATES FOR WATER SERVICES TO THE USERS OF THE WATER WORKS SYSTEM OF THE CITY OF CIRCLEVILLE, OHIO AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

Discussion: Matters pertaining to this Ordinance were discussed during the presentation.

MOTION-ROLL CALL-VOTE:

Theis motioned to forward the Ordinance to the next City Council meeting on December 2, 2025, without a recommendation for passage and to be held for three readings. Duvall seconded. Roll Call. (2 Yeas- 1 Nay).

f) A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE CITY OF CIRCLEVILLE TO APPLY FOR, ACCEPT, AND ENTER INTO A WATER SUPPLY REVOLVING LOAN ACCOUNT (WSRLA) AGREEMENT TO FUND THE UTILITY IMPROVEMENTS FOR WALNUT STREET PROJECT CONSTRUCTION; TENTATIVELY AWARD THE UTILITY IMPROVEMENTS FOR WALNUT STREET, TO THE SUCCESSFUL BIDDER; AND DESIGNATING A DEDICATED REPAYMENT SOURCE FOR THE LOAN.

Discussion: Stanley explained this Resolution is for the Walnut street project, noting that this and the next Resolution on the Agenda are nearly the same except this one doesn't name the winner of the bid and the following one does, highlighting this is the process they must follow per the funding agency. Stanley stated they would like this Resolution forwarded to Council for approval, and the following Resolution that names the bidder to be held until they get approval from the funding agency.

MOTION-ROLL CALL-VOTE:

Theis motioned to forward the Resolution to the next City Council meeting on December 2, 2025, with a recommendation for adoption. Lukasak seconded. Roll Call. (3 Yeas-0 Nays). Motion carried.

g) A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC SERVICE TO APPLY FOR, ACCEPT, AND ENTER INTO A WATER SUPPLY REVOLVING LOAN ACCOUNT (WSRLA) AGREEMENT TO FUND THE UTILITY IMPROVEMENTS FOR WALNUT STREET PROJECT CONSTRUCTION; TO AWARD THE UTILITY IMPROVEMENTS FOR WALNUT STREET TO DARBY CREEK EXCAVATING INC. AND DESIGNATING A DEDICATED REPAYMENT SOURCE FOR THE LOAN.

Discussion: As discussed in the preceding Resolution, Stanley explained they would like this Resolution to be forwarded to Council but held until they are granted approval from the funding agency, at which point it can then be presented at the following Council meeting for full approval.

MOTION-ROLL CALL-VOTE:

Theis motioned to forward the Resolution to the next City Council meeting on December 2, 2025, with a recommendation for adoption. Lukasak seconded. Roll Call. (3 Yeas-0 Nays). Motion carried.

h) A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC SERVICE TO APPLY FOR, ACCEPT, AND ENTER INTO AN OHIO WATER DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY (OWDA) DESIGN LOAN AGREEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE CITY OF CIRCLEVILLE FOR THE DESIGN OF NEW WATER FACILITIES FOR THE NORTHSIDE WATERLINE PROJECT; DESIGNATING A DEDICATED REPAYMENT SOURCE FOR THE LOAN; AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

Discussion: Stanley explained this Ordinance was previously passed but the verbiage mentioned that it was a WSRLA loan but is an OWDA loan, so it was not accepted. The Ordinance needed amended to clarify that it is an OWDA loan.

MOTION-ROLL CALL-VOTE:

Lukasak motioned to forward the Resolution to the next City Council meeting on December 2, 2025, with a recommendation for adoption. Theis seconded. Roll Call. (3 Yeas-0 Nays). Motion carried.

i) AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC SERVICE TO EXECUTE A RIGHT-OF-WAY EASEMENT TO AMERICAN ELECTRIC POWER COMPANY GRANTING IT THE RIGHT TO INSTALL AND MAINTAIN ELECTRICAL TRANSMISSION LINES ACROSS LANDS OWNED BY THE CITY OF CIRCLEVILLE AND USED AS PART OF THE WASTEWATER TREATMENT PLANT AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

Discussion: Service Director Jim Stanley explained that AEP would like to provide a better connection to the wastewater treatment plant, and this Ordinance would allow them to do so.

MOTION-ROLL CALL-VOTE:

Duvall motioned to forward the Ordinance to the next City Council meeting on December 2, 2025, with a recommendation for approval. Lukasak seconded. Roll call. (3 Yeas –0 Nays). Motion carried.

Old Business: None.

Other Business: None.

Theis motioned to adjourn the Service Meeting at 7:29 p.m. Lukasak seconded. Motion carried.

Minutes prepared by Sarah Kolesar, Assistant Clerk.