



Detroit Water and Sewerage Department Meeting Minutes - Final Customer Service Committee

735 Randolph Street
Detroit, Michigan 48226
(313) 224-4704 Office
www.dwsd.legistar.com

Tuesday, October 4, 2016

10:30 AM

5th Floor Board Room, Water Board Building

Customer Service Committee Meeting

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson Blackman called the meeting to order at 10:34 a.m.

2. ROLL CALL

Present: 3 - Mary Blackmon, John Henry Davis and Pamela Rodgers

Absent: 1 - Jane Garcia

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Chairperson Blackmon requested approval of the agenda.

A motion was made by Commissioner Pamela Rodgers, seconded by Commissioner John Henry Davis that this agenda be approved. The motion carried by an unanimous vote.

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Chairperson Blackmon requested approval of the minutes of September 6, 2016.

A motion was made by Commissioner John Henry Davis, seconded by Commissioner Pamela Rodgers that the minutes be approved. The motion carried by an unanimous vote.

5. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There were none.

6. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Draft Collection Rules and Procedures

Cheryl Jordan, Deputy General Counsel reported that there was a draft policy generated a few years ago and an interim collection rules and procedures in 2003. The two documents are being merged to obtain a complete draft by the next meeting.

Commissioner Blackmon asked who was the targeted audience for this document? Ms. Jordan replied, customers and staff. It guides our staff in their actions and policies for the department. It will also assist the customers in knowing what to expect. At some point it will be available on the City's website. Commissioner

Blackmon asked what other ways will the document be disseminated to the public? Robert Presnell, COO replied through a collaboration with our Public Affairs Group. We will also post at the customer care centers, the new bill format has a marketing tool for posting messages.

There were none.

7. NEW BUSINESS

1. New Bill Format

[16-0152](#)

BOWC Customer Service Meeting Presentation

Sponsors: Presnell

Attachments: [Cust Serv BOWC Bill Design 9 29 16 1](#)

Robert Presnell, COO reported that the committee expressed concern for the vision of the customer service group and one being better communication with our customers. A major piece is the water bill. The department reached out to its customers and to the representatives to find out what were the major concerns with the bill. The department generated several sample layouts from a reading and development standpoint. (Envelope A) the old bill format confused customers on the amount to pay, could not figure out how to calculate bill, and could not read the small text.

Envelope B - has two windows. the amount to pay is in large print and in color. It gives a summary on what to pay and the usage. It converts usage by gallons vs CCF.

Commissioner Blackmon asked why is there a estimated bill for three months if we have converted to the new meters? Mr. Presnell replied there are some accounts that have not converted, but department is working on those. Its a work in progress and sometimes there are technical problems, such as tampering issues.

Commissioner Davis asked if the word penalty (if paid after the due date a 5% penalty will be added to your bill) was the best description to use for the five percent? He said it does not appear to be the best message and we should use another description for the charge. Mr. Presnell said it is a late fee and this is just a markup and we can provide a better message. Commissioner Davis said would there be more variations of the bill format before completion. Mr. Presnell replied, the bill is ninety-five percent complete and scheduled o go-live November 1, 2016. Mr. Presnell will check with staff and perhaps replace penalty with late fee.

Commissioner Rodgers stated that there should be some changes to the language that references (this month, last month last year, etc). It should note a comparison. Commissioner Rodgers asked about the the CCF conversion in gallons and there should be some consistency in calculating. Mr. Presnell replied that he would check and refer back to the committee.

Commissioner Davis asked where on the bill does it say "make check payable to?". Mr. Presnell replied it will be added as an update. He also asked where is the information for customer's to contact for assistance with their water bill. Mr. Presnell replied it could definitely be a part of our message board. Commissioner Davis stated that the message board is quite small and he is not sure the department would

be able to list all the various forms of assistance the customers could contact and should look into other avenues for displaying the information. Mr. Presnell replied that would be a task for our Public Affairs Group. Linda Clark, Public Affairs Officer, added that the WRAP program should be on the bill but there should be other options for communicating the other services that are available.

Envelope C - shows a double window and also includes the "past due statement " that appears in the window in red and the same setup applies for "shut-offs statements"

Mr. Presnell presented a sample document available on the DWSD website and mailed out that shows the customer how to read the bill. There will also be a FAQ on the website. Customer Service is working on a document that would explain (water usage, water charge). Mr. Marc Antonie Cooper, Chief Customer Service Officer is working on this communication to help our customers understand.

Commissioner Blackmon asked had any field testing been done. Mr. Presnell replied yes, and received a 95% passing.

16-0153

New Bill and Sample Envelopes A,B,C

Sponsors: Presnell

Attachments: [New Bill and Sample Envelopes A.B.C](#)

2. Draft Customer Service Charter

Chairperson Blackmon said that Cheryl Jordan, Deputy General Counsel provided a draft to the committee chair only for review. The Chair recommended that the draft is forwarded to Mr. Cooper before being distributed to the entire committee for feedback by October 17, 2016.

3. Customer Service Update

The committee requested that any information that impacts the department should be reported on a monthly basis.

a. Neighborhood Flooding

Linda Clark, Public Affairs Officer reported that there were approximately 400 calls and the department cleaned just under 400 of those homes at the Jefferson/Chalmers area.

Commissioner Rodgers asked if there were any additional homes reported from the last rain storm for the Jefferson/Chalmer area. Cheryl Jordan replied not many. But there were basement backups all over. Major things have taken place with Great Lakes Water operation of the pump stations. We're seeing hundred year storms twice a year and climate change. The Green Infrastructure is going to help eliminate water entering into the system. We are still processing claims.

Commissioner Blackmon asked if there was a way for the Board to see articles that have impacted the Department. Linda Clark replied, public affairs will house every news article regarding DWSD. Commissioner Blackmon requested articles that especially misquote the department by the media.

b. Drainage Fee Discussion

Commissioner Blackmon asked for the drainage discussion to be placed on the agenda because there have been a number of questions on how it is going to be rolled-out, how it will impact others customers, how a certain segment of the population is being delayed until 2018, how it will affect the implementation as outlined, and the funding expected. Commissioner Blackmon would like this information directed to the Director for response.

c. Customer Service Training

Mr. Presnell introduced Julianne Gabon the Customer Service Training Specialist who presented a brief overview of the upcoming training.

Commissioner Blackmon asked how will scheduling be implemented in conjunction with staff work day. Ms. Gabon replied we schedule at least twelve (12) staffpersons per session at coordinated times. Commissioner Blackmon how will you ensure that the training has been retained. Ms. Gabon replied there will be assessments after each session, roadshows, and eventually a reference guide.

Commissioner Rodgers asked if this training was mandatory and would the trainee receive a certificate for their personnel file. Ms. Gabon replied, yes it mandatory and part of the curriculum is recognition for different levels of training.

Commissioner Blackmon asked if the reference guide would be generated in segments as the trainee completes a session. Ms. Gabon replied, that is the goal.

Commissioner Rodgers asked how are the trainers trained? Ms. Gabon replied she will conduct all the training. Some of the training sessions will not require a computer but site visit training.

Commissioner Blackmon asked for an example of soft-skills. Ms. Gabon replied it refers to how you speak and your performance.

[16-0154](#)

Training Classes/Training Schedule

Sponsors: Presnell

Attachments: [Training Proposal_1](#)
[Training Schedule_1](#)

8. NEXT MEETING

November 1, 2016 at 10:30 a.m.

9. OTHER MATTERS

The Committee suggested that continued updates be provided. Include any rollout and target dates.

Commissioner Blackmon suggested that the committee be kept apprised of the Council meetings.

Commissioner Rodgers suggested a site visit to the customer service centers.

10. ADJOURNMENT

Chairperson Blackmon requested a motion to adjourn.

A motion was made by Commissioner Pamela Rodgers, seconded by Commissioner John Henry Davis that the meeting be adjourned. The motion carried by an unanimous vote.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 11:52 a.m.