
TOWN OF NEW RICHMOND

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Public Hearing Meeting

August 22, 2023 6:00 p.m.

Roll Call: Present, President Minnie Howard, Council Member Linda Forbes, Rachelle Cowherd and Clerk/Treasurer Alaahea Foust.

Minnie H. opened the meeting with the pledge of allegiance.

Minnie H. presented Ordinance 2023-8 Amending the Rates and Charges Relating to the Waterworks.

Steve Brock-Municipal Finance Consultants: Steve talked about the Town of New Richmond's new water infrastructure project. The Town has been given grant money from OCRA (Office of Community Rural Affairs) in the amount of \$700,000 and SRF (State Revolving Fund) IFA (Indiana Finance Authority) grant (Forgivable BAN) in the amount of \$1,100,000. The Town only needs to borrow in the amount of \$180,000 for the rest of the water project through SRF. The Waterworks Revenue bond will be issue at a 2.19% interest over a 20- year term. Steve went on to explain how SRF tries to buy down the rates to the consumer so the increase is not as much. SRF looks at the consumption rates at around 3000 to 4000 gallons to decide how much the Town needs to increase their rates to pay for the bond as well as improvements and maintaining their water system. Steve B. explained that the increase will be 59% and how the water rate increase is required for us to close on the SRF loan. If you use 3000 gallons of water your current bill is \$31.26, it will increase to \$49.95. Steve B. said the Town of New Richmond is a disadvantage community based on the median household income which helped tremendously to be able to get the 1,100,000 grant and you are the first community in Indiana to get the money from bi-lateral construction loan program from the federal government for emergency contaminants in your water system, another reason why the SRF is happy to get in here because they do not like community in Indiana to have emergency contaminants in their water systems. That is one of the things that this water project is going to fix.

Minnie H. opened it up for public comments.

Jessica Fidler from New Richmond, asked about how long has this water project been talked about and why is the rate so high.

Alaahea F. said this project has been going on since 2018 all the meeting minutes are on the Town Website.

Steve B. said the SRF looks at the post project users fee for 4000 gallons of water, which will be \$57.20, last year the SRF compliant project were at \$65.00 for 4000 gallons of water, so New Richmond is well under that and they are doing the best they can for communities. The SRF requires a rate study to be done to see if the Town is meeting the needs of the water system. Rate increases should happen every 3 to 5 years, this increase is more than usual because the current rate was not meeting the current needs of the Town's water system.

Russ Wethington from New Richmond, who is going to be taking care of the water system.

Steve B. said the Town Council overviews the operations and maintenances of the water system, the Clerk/Treasurer takes care of the finances, the Town Superintendent makes sure that everything is operating like it should be and provides monthly reports to the Indiana Department of Environmental Management (IDEM). It is not uncommon for improvements to happen every 10 to 15 years as things wear out and need replaced.

Linda F. said we understand this is a burden on our community, it needs to be done, if not now it will still need done in the future. We need to take advantage of the grant money given to us now instead of waiting when we will not have this opportunity.

Darren Pendleton from Fishers (property owner), Will this change help the quality of the water.

Alaatha F. said we are putting in a water filtration system which will clean the water before going into the water tower out into the water mains, Linden has a water filtration system to which Earl Heide (Water/Sewer Superintendent) says the water quality is better.

Linda F. made the motion to close the public hearing, Rachelle C. seconded the motion, Minnie H. called for a vote, motion carried.

Adoption of Ordinance 2023-8. Linda F. made the motion to adopt Ordinance 2023-8, Rachelle C. seconded the motion, Minnie H. called for a vote, motion carried.

Rachelle C. made the motion to suspend the rules and waive the second reading, Linda F. seconded the motion, Minnie H. called for a vote, motion carried.

Minnie H. presented Ordinance 2023-9 Amending the Rates and Charges Relating to the Sewage Works.

Minnie H. opened it up for public comments.

Darren Pendleton from Fisher, asked what the sewer rate increase is going to be used for.

Alaatha F. said to help maintain the sewer system needs due to inflation. Steve B. said statute requires the Town to raise rate when the current rates are not meeting the needs of the system.

Shelly Wulfers from New Richmond, asked if the sewer rates will be going up 60% too.

Alaatha F. said no, it will be 10%.

Kelly Martin from New Richmond, asked will the sewer system need upgrades in the future.

Alaatha F. said because we still have the ARP (American Rescue Plan) money we have been able to do necessary improvements to the sewer and will be doing more improvements as long as we have the money to do so. There will be a time when we will have to address one of our sewer lagoons according to IDEM (Indiana Department of Environmental Management) there will not be a choose in the manner.

Keith Scott from New Richmond, said we just need to flush the hydrants more and that will improve the water.

Linda F. said we have been flushing the hydrants late at night, so that the settlement does not ruin people's laundry when they wash during the day.

Linda F. made the motion to close the public hearing, Rachelle C. seconded the motion, Minnie H. called for a vote, motion carried.

Adoption of Ordinance 2023-9. Rachelle C. made the motion to adopt Ordinance 2023-9, Linda F. seconded the motion, Minnie H. called for a vote, motion carried.

Linda F. made the motion to suspend the rules and waive the second reading, Rachelle C. seconded the motion, Minnie H. called for a vote, motion carried.


Minnie H. presented Ordinance 2023-10 Additional Appropriations.

Minnie H. opened it up for public comments. There were no comments from the public.

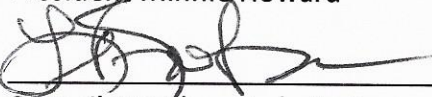
Linda F. made the motion to close the public hearing, Rachelle C. seconded the motion, Minnie H. called for a vote, motion carried.

Adoption of Ordinance 2023-10. Linda F. made the motion to adopt Ordinance 2023-10, Minnie H. seconded the motion, Minnie H. called for a vote, motion carried. Rachelle C. abstained from the vote.
Linda F. made the motion to suspend the rules and waive the second reading, Minnie H. seconded the motion, Minnie H. called for a vote, motion carried. Rachelle C. abstained from the vote.

Rachelle C. made the motion to adjourn the meeting, Linda F. seconded the motion, Minnie H. called for a vote, motion carried.




President Minnie Howard



Council Member Linda Forbes



Council Member Rachelle Cowherd



Attest: Clerk/Treasurer Alaathea Foust