

August 10, 2011
Joint Council-Utility Board Meeting Minutes

The August 10, 2011 meeting of the Cascade City Council and the Cascade Municipal Utility Board was called to order at 5:15 p.m. by Mayor Staner in the City Hall Chambers. Council members Henry Knepper, Moriarity and Soppe answered roll call. Boffeli was absent. Motion by Moriarity, 2nd Henry to approve the agenda – all ayes.

Present from the Utility Board were Trustees McDermott and Reiter, Chairman Gavin, and Utility Manager Benke. Motion by Reiter, 2nd McDermott to approve the agenda – all ayes.

Motion Henry, 2nd Soppe to approve a 5 year audit contract with Dietz, Donald & Company, Elkader for \$31,000 with clarification from the firm that the \$85 per hour rate will not increase during the contract – all ayes. Like motion Reiter, 2nd McDermott approving Dietz, Donald & Company for \$15,750 – all ayes.

Utility Manger Benke reported that the new electric substation is in operation and providing all power to the City. The old substation is not being used. There is clean up of equipment at the new station needing to be done.

Utility Manager Benke reported that the directional boring crew has been in town and has 2/3 of the job completed. With one more week, they should be finished. Some of the light pole bases have been installed and the project is on schedule and the southwest side will be finished from Johnson St west. The entire town will take several more years to be completely done. The Utilities is completing the overhead to underground project without financing any of the project.

Utility Board member McDermott addressed the Council with a lingering situation on Adams St SE between 7th & 8th Ave SE where there are 3 trees sitting over or within a foot of a gas line. Utility Manager Benke spoke with the property owner at 1008 7th Ave SE and indicated the southern-most tree may be lost due to removal, but when digging, the Utilities will know how the root system is affecting the line. Chairman Gavin indicated that when the City Council enforces such ordinances, it helps projects like the overhead to underground project and the Utility Board appreciates that cooperation. Since the utility easement is 15', it is probable that the trees are planted in the easement. Council member Henry questioned if the gas line is placed in the correct spot. Gavin responded that it is highly unlikely the lines are in the wrong area, but that should be checked. Administrator Lansing posed the question of who bears the cost responsibility of removing the trees. Mayor Staner answered that it would be the property owner's responsibility. Upon learning that the trees were planted illegally between 15 and 20 years ago, Council member Henry feels the City should assist with the cost of removing the trees. Benke noted that in the past the Utility Company has topped trees that were encumbering overhead power lines and suggested that the property owner make a request to the Utility Board and the City Council for such assistance. Motion Moriarity, 2nd Henry to have Utility Manager Benke and Administrator Lansing determine where the utility easement lies and if the trees are in the easement and assist the property owner at 1008 7th Ave SE as needed in removing the trees – all ayes.

With no other business, motion Moriarity, 2nd Soppe to adjourn the meeting at 6:00 p.m. – all ayes.

Shelley Annis, City Clerk/Treasurer