

UTILITIES COMMITTEE MINUTES OF OCTOBER 16, 2017
Municipal Council of the City of Vermilion
Municipal Complex, 685 Decatur Street, Vermilion, Ohio 44089

In Attendance: S. Herron, M. Stark, F. Ostrander, F. Loucka, B. Holmes, J. Forthofer, B. Brady, B. Keller, G. Fisher, T. Valerius, C. Hartung, C. Stempowski.
Absent: L. Miggins, Mayor Bulan.

Call to Order: B. Brady, Chairperson, RESOLVED THAT this Utilities Committee consisting of the Committee of the Whole does now come to order.

TOPIC ONE: Water Plant Shut Down Alerts

B. Brady asked T. Valerius what actually happened a couple weeks ago with the water plant shut down that affected many Vermilion residents. T. Valerius said he did apologize to the Fire Chief regarding the communication as they have always communicated well in the past, but in this case it was overlooked. He reported this was a 24-hour shut down of the plant to allow the Bac-T sample to be done on the new pipes that were installed on Main Street. They really didn't foresee any major issues as this has been done before. When they did have the 16" valve burst about 1,000 feet from the tower, that's when it all went bad. Certainly, next time they do water plant shut downs he will send an email to City Council so they can answer questions when they receive calls.

B. Brady said they do get calls and they want to be able to give the same answers that the administration does, but they couldn't this time because they didn't have any information. She said City Council is part of the family and it would be good to know these things, so in general she thinks better communication will help.

J. Forthofer said in light of what the Fire Chief said; under ideal circumstances how should he have known there was no water pressure when he went to the hydrants. T. Valerius said he would have either gotten the information directly from himself or from the Water Plant Supervisor. J. Forthofer stated this time the chief didn't have this information and he wondered why. T. Valerius said it was overlooked.

B. Brady asked if the administration in the future can send out an FYI to Council, as well as advise them on any issues that arise or will be happening in the city if it hasn't been mentioned in a council meeting.

S. Herron asked if the burst pipe is just another example of the aging system when that pressure hit. T. Valerius said yes, but it was a valve. M. Stark reiterated that being on council she would appreciate any information they could get. She will never complain that the administration is giving them too much information. The more information on what's happening in the community will be the best all-around because everybody comes to Council as they think they know, but for Council to not know it reflects badly on the city as a whole. More communication is always best, stated Stark.

F. Ostrander asked if there is a program to inspect valves on an annual or five year basis. T. Valerius said there is a valve exercising program.

C. Hartung said the police department's Facebook page is a turning point, but right now they are working on creating a city Facebook page. He gets a lot of interaction with people asking what is going on and he spends a lot of time explaining the issues at hand. He said not everyone is social media savvy so they can sign up for voice alerts. He said they have had a tremendous amount of success through with their social media platforms and they are trying to integrate that with the city to hit everybody.

Dave Terken said recently there was an article in the Photojournal that addressed the problem with the water line that was pressurized, and it stated that this shows they need a new Water Treatment Plant. He said many times council has discussed they have a water distribution system and a plant and the two are different, but when an article comes out in the Photojournal and goes to all the people in the City of Vermilion, then it means a lot of them are getting misled. Therefore, he thinks prior to writing an article such as this it would be nice if the Photojournal would check with the Utilities Department before a statement like this grossly misleads the people in the city.

TOPIC TWO: Update on Main Street Project

T. Valerius said with regards to the water main, they successfully tied in today and they have one more tie in to do next Monday because the French Restaurant and Dentist Office is closed, so they are trying to accommodate these businesses. After that, the water main replacement portion of the project should be complete. As far as the green infrastructure project, the areas where they are pouring the curbs were dug out and the curbs will be poured this week. Next week they will start digging up the area where the pavers will go and the pavers should be laid at the end of next week. They are looking to be finished on the project in three weeks plus depending on weather or other unforeseen conditions. B. Brady mentioned what a great job the contractor has been doing.

TOPIC THREE: Wi-Fi Signal (East of Town)

Joe Pinter said with regards to the problems Liberty Auto Wash was having with their internet and Wi-Fi, they found out nobody from Spectrum had ever come to see if there was a drop in this area. So he personally went and found a drop across the street. He said Liberty Auto Wash was having cellular system problems. He contacted the Spectrum Sales Representative and told him exactly where the drop was located so they sent somebody out who gave the car wash a price.

The next meeting is scheduled for November 13, 2017 at 7:00 p.m.

Gwen Fisher, Certified Municipal Clerk