



**Committee Members:**

- Randy Greeno, Ward 5 – Committee Chair
- Joshua Palmer, Ward 7
- Grant Russel, at-large

**Staff:**

- Tammy Kirkpatrick, Billing Supervisor
- Jason Phillips, Water Treatment & Distribution Superintendent
- Dave Beach, WPCC Superintendent
- Brian Thomas, Service Director/ Acting City Engineer

Meeting Start Time: 6:00 pm

Meeting End Time: 6:36 pm

**Guests:**

Mayor Muryn      Jeff Fenimore  
Ginger Sampson  
Jim Staschiak

**Agenda:**

Call to Order

Roll Call

New Items

Water Meter Transmitters

Adjournment

Randy Greeno  
 Randy Greeno, Water & Sewer Committee Chair

## COMMITTEE REPORT

### THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF FINDLAY, OHIO

The **WATER AND SEWER COMMITTEE** met on July 30, 2020 to discuss March 11, 2020, May 21, 2020, and July 16, 2020 updates to the water meter/transmitter project.

We recommend to go ahead with the infrastructure portion of this project. This includes the purchase and installation of (11) DCU's, software and integration into billing software. Also included will be the purchase of 325 transmitters for the year 2020. We recommend that \$250,000 be appropriated out of the Sewer fund to match the \$250,000 that has already been appropriated out of the Water fund.

This recommendation is contingent upon a resolution of the bidding issue discussed in this meeting. If issue has been resolved →

Aye  Nay

Randy Greeno  
Randy Greeno, Chairman

LEGISLATION: \_\_\_\_\_

Aye  Nay

Josh Palmer  
Josh Palmer

DATED: July 30, 2020

Aye  Nay

Grant Russel  
Grant Russel

COMMITTEE:  
WATER & SEWER

**Committee Members:**

- Randy Greeno, Ward 5 – Committee Chair
- Joshua Palmer, Ward 7
- Grant Russel, at-large

**Staff:**

- Jason Phillips, Water Treatment & Distribution Superintendent
- Mayor Christina Muryn
- Brian Thomas, Service Director/ Acting City Engineer
- Jim Staschiak, City Auditor
- Ginger Sampson, Deputy City Auditor
- Jeff Fenimore, Water Billing Dept

**Meeting Start Time:** 6:00 p.m.**Meeting End Time:** 6:36 p.m.**Guests:**

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**Agenda:****Call to Order****Roll Call****New Items****1. Water Meter / Transmitter Project Update**

- Councilman Greeno asked for an update on the concerns about the bidding process raised at the last Water & Sewer Committee meeting.
  - Brian Thomas stated that this project was run as a ‘design & build’ project, including a RFQ with preferred equipment identified; the responses were ranked and a final solution, including vendor, was selected.
  - Auditor Staschiak stated that he does not have a definitive opinion at this time. If this was run as a ‘design & build’ project then the legislation that authorized it should reflect that, however the legislation has not been reviewed and therefore he cannot provide an opinion.
- Councilman Greeno asked about the delivery time for the infrastructure and the transmitters. Jason Phillips said that the DCUs can be built and installed within 10 weeks after purchase and that transmitter lead time is four to five weeks.
- Councilman Greeno asked for clarifications about the capacity to perform transmitter installations. He figures a rough estimate is a maximum of 14 per person per day based upon an average installation time of 30 minutes per transmitter and seven hours per day dedicated to installations.
- Brian Thomas offered that if additional funding of \$250,000 from the Sewer Fund was combined with the \$250,000 already committed from the Water Fund then 328 transmitters could be purchased along with the DCU units and corresponding infrastructure.
- Mayor Muryn stressed the need to get started the project started at some point. This project has been on hold for over a year and we cannot keep kicking it down the road.

- Auditor Staschiak said that the Performance Audit, currently in process and due to be completed in September, will address this issue, however it will not recommend a specific technology or vendor. The intent of the audit is to give us a tool to analyze this decision.
- Jason Philips said that of the comparison cities being used in the Performance Audit, none use Aclara transmitter technology selected by the City of Findlay; the comparison cities all use different technology that we looked at and chose not to pursue.
- Mayor Muryn suggested that it is doubtful that the Performance Audit will state that we should not pursue a solution that uses 5G technology.
- Jason Philips stated that the decision boiled down to the fact that with other systems that were investigated, the meter and reading system were tied together whereas the Aclara transmitter is meter agnostic, i.e. it does not tie us to a specific meter and will work with our existing meters as well as any new meters that we might purchase.
- Mayor Muryn stressed that this 'meter agnostic' point is important because it helps with the transition to the new technology because it works with our existing installed meter inventory.
- Auditor Staschiak mentioned that the last meter replacement project was completed in approximately 2009, so it is not too old. The ability to work with our existing meter inventory is important.
- Auditor Staschiak mentioned that Badger Meters, the largest meter company, could not bid on our project because the specifications were in too restrictive of a manner so as to exclude Badger's technology. Brian Thomas said that the restriction was because Badger did not offer technology (5G) that the City was looking for; Badger only offered a different cellular technology.
- Auditor Staschiak said that the financial position of the Water Fund is unable to support subsequent years of this project. Councilmen Russel and Greeno requested the spreadsheet behind graphs that Auditor Staschiak presented at the last Water & Sewer Committee meeting. Auditor Staschiak agreed to provide the spreadsheets.
- Councilman Palmer asked about the plans to get the transmitters installed. Jason Philips mentioned that a third meter technician starts employment with the City of Findlay on Monday. They will also seek to augment the effort with staff pulled from other areas and that there are no plans to use an outside party to assist with the installations.
- Auditor Staschiak stated that manual meter reading of meters is the backup plan in case the 2G is no longer available.
- Councilman Russel stated that he is ready to support moving forward with the installation of the DCI infrastructure, including necessary software updates, and a minimal number of transmitter purchases, approximately 325 that Brian Thomas had mentioned, and with additional funding of \$250,000 coming only from the Sewer Fund. Doing so would not cause addition stress on the Water Fund and provide time to create a reasonable transmitter installation plan. He said the 'meter agnostic' characteristics of the Aclara solution seems to be an important factor that provides the City with a reasonable transition plan to the new transmitters; that any solution is going to need to run both the current transmitters and any new transmitters in tandem, which the Aclara

solution enables us to do. He also concurred with Auditor Staschiak's assessment about manual meter reading being the fallback solution in case the 2G network became unavailable. Councilman Russel asked Councilman Greeno if he wanted that as a motion.

- Motion:
  - Proceed with the infrastructure portion of this project. Including the purchase and installation of 11 DCUs, the software and integration into the billing software. Purchase 325 transmitters for installation in 2020.
  - Appropriate \$250,000 from the Sewer Fund to match the \$250,000 that has already been appropriated from the Water Fund.
  - All predicated on satisfactory resolution of the questions about the bidding of the project.
  - Motion Russel; Second Palmer
  - Motion passed (3-0)

**Adjournment**

*Randy Greeno*

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Randy Greeno, Water & Sewer Committee Chair