

**CITY OF BYRON  
MINUTES OF THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE  
SPECIAL MEETING  
WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 4, 2020, 5:00 PM  
MEETING HELD VIA ZOOM DUE TO COVID-19 RESTRICTIONS**

Mayor Rickard called the meeting to order at 5:00 pm.

**1. ROLL CALL:**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Alderman Todd Isaacs, Alderman Emily Gerdes, Alderman Mittzi Fulrath, Alderman Zeke Hobbie, Alderman Jessica Nehring, Alderman Mike Gyorkos, Alderman Christy Hanlin

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** Alderman Dan Reilly

**OTHERS PRESENT:** City Attorney Kim Krahenbuhl, Mayor John Rickard, Clerk Caryn Huber, Public Works Director Aaron Vincer, City Engineer Jason Stoll, Pam Kultgen

**2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – OCTOBER 7, 2020 – Motion by Alderman Isaacs to approve, as presented, the minutes of October 7, 2020. Motion seconded by Alderman Fulrath. Roll call vote: Gerdes, AYE; Fulrath, AYE; Hobbie, AYE; Nehring, AYE; Gyorkos, AYE; Hanlin, AYE; Isaacs, AYE. Motion passed: AYE, 7; NAY, 0; ABS, 0.**

**3. WATER RATE STUDY –** Director Vincer addressed the Council regarding the water rate study and water rate recommendations. This topic has been discussed for several weeks, and it appears that most agree that an increase is warranted, and a phased approach is our best option. He presented two options. Option 1 keeps the base rate of 2,000 gallons and adds \$2.00 to water and \$6.00 to sewer over the course of three years. This option will eventually result in increases of +20% in water and +18% in sewer. Option 2 changes the base rate to 1,000 gallons and adds \$1.50 to water consumption and \$6.00 to sewer over the course of four years. This option will eventually result in increases of +15% in water and +21% in sewer. There is also a suggestion to consider eliminating the \$9.00 capital expense fee with option 2. Director Vincer added that with option 2, residents who use under 1,000 gallons will not see any change in their rate. He stressed the need to review these rates annually with the help of IRWA to see if they need to be adjusted. Alderman Isaacs said that either option should be in addition to the annual cost of living increase. He also feels we should not eliminate the \$9.00 capital improvement fee, as this money should be used to pay down our water/sewer loans. Alderman Gerdes feels that now is not the time to raise rates since so many are being affected by the pandemic. Alderman Fulrath expressed concern that if rates aren't raised, and the water/sewer systems break, we will need to get an EPA loan and lose our control over the rates (as those rates would then be controlled by the EPA). Given that we are aware of the shortage, Alderman Fulrath feels we cannot ignore it. Alderman Isaacs agrees that while this may not be the ideal time, the department is running at a deficit and we are taking funds from reserves for operations. Alderman Hanlin said that as aldermen, they are elected to keep watch over infrastructure and facilities, and it is important to mitigate damages or we could find ourselves with an EPA loan and a large increase all at once. Alderman Hanlin is comfortable with option 1. The average usage is between 4,000 and 5,000 gallons, which would add \$7 to \$8 to

current bills. She agrees these rates should be reviewed annually. Alderman Isaacs agreed that option 1 gives us solvency sooner. **Alderman Isaacs motioned to accept water rate Option 1 as presented by Director Vincer. Seconded by Alderman Gyorkos.** Roll call vote: **Fulrath, AYE; Hobbie, AYE; Nehring, AYE; Gyorkos, AYE; Hanlin, AYE; Isaacs, AYE; Gerdes, NAY. Motion passed: AYE, 6; NAY, 1; ABS, 0.**

4. Mayor Rickard adjourned the meeting at 5:31pm.

Respectfully submitted,

*Caryn A. Huber*, City Clerk of Byron, Illinois