

Minutes
September 27, 2011
Special Meeting
Water

- 1) **The meeting was called to order** by Mayor Charles Neff at 7:02 p.m.
 - a) Council Members present were Charles Neff/Mayor, Bob Dablow, Mark Hanson, Shelley Poehls and Burl Ingebretsen.
 - b) Others present were Wendy Otte/Clerk, Steve Ahlschlager, Dan Hanson, Rich Hayes, Norm Nyland, Aaron Mayry, Becky Nyland, Adam Jenstaed, Chad Spieker, Kalen Boughton, Kathy Dablow, Chad Byram, Darrell Byram, Jim Ernst, Carmen Hutchins, Jay Leroux, Jan Kranda, Jason Jenstead and Maret Kashmark.

- 2) **Pledge of Allegiance** was said.

- 3) **Water** – Council and City employee introductions were made and Rich was thanked again for all of his work with the city over the last 17 years.

Steve Ahlschlager with Moore Engineering was introduced he has been working with the city on the water since March and on site at the plant since July. Steve began by explaining what is what he has observed while working with the city on the water. He asked what type of complaints residents had prior to the treatment plant being installed. Some of the complaints were the arsenic levels were too high, there were staining problems, things floating in the water, and spurts of bad water. Bacteria are normally present in the distribution system and spurts of brown water are not unusual in this type of plant. The discoloration has been an issue for many years unfortunately we do not have data from the timelines of the problems. The issues we have now are not new to the treatment plant, we had some of the same problems before the plant was put in. If residents have issues we need to know what is going on and hopefully take a sample. In our plant the well water is taken from the ground and chlorine is added, the water going into the plant is regulated not what is in the homes after it leaves the plant. Our disbursement system is mainly PVC piping which lowers the amount of build up, but film still builds up in PVC. We have iron and manganese in our water both of which cause discoloration and staining. Steve informed us he will be working with the city to set up a plan of action including collecting data, flushing hydrants to clean out pipes in the distribution, testing in homes when possible and adding chemicals to the water to clear out the distribution system once the water in the plant is turning out more consistently clear water.

Steve also answered some questions from the residents during the meeting.

Q: What causes the white staining to pots and pans when you boil water it that won't come off?

A: Hard water, our water has calcium sulfate which is very difficult to remove. We are in the process of adding a phosphate chemical to the water trying to sequester what comes out of the plant which will be a 3 to 6 month minimum evaluation time.

Q: Would a water softener help with the white residue?

A: If it is calcium it should help to have a softener, but softeners are not designed to remove sulfate. You should have the water sampled and tested for hardness.

Q: Is the water safe to drink?

A: That is a hard question to explain, different people have different sensitivities. Testing shows minimum levels at the plant which is safe. Iron and manganese are not typical of causing health issues.

Q: Will the price residents pay for water be lowered or will any credit be given on the bills while we deal with these issues?

A: The Council will look more into that at the next general meeting. The problem is that we are spending more money on the water, so lowering bills may not be possible.

Q: Is higher use the reason the water is worse on the weekends?

A: Higher use can be a factor, higher velocity in the pipes may flush the lines out more.

Q: Should residents fill a jar at home if the water is discolored that the city can pick up for testing.

A: That may be something we may look into doing if we are unable to get there right away to test it, but airflow must be minimized and the sample needs to be refrigerated.

Norm and Aaron will be starting flushing hydrants in the middle of October after all of the valves have been checked, so we can isolate the pipes and control the water flow. Plans to notify residents of flushing are being put in place.

The Mayor explained some of the things the City is working on to improve the water and communication with the residents. If you have any problems with the water call us, so we can respond. Charley, Norm or Aaron will respond as soon as possible to each call made if you have problems with the water. If you have a problem try not to run the water until we get there to take the test. We are going to try to get water samples from homes when you call us, so we can test it right away. Wendy is the only full time employee of the city, so if you can't get in touch with someone leave a message at the city office and we will respond as soon as possible. We are going to be setting up new protocols for testing water in the home and flushing hydrants to isolate each line for better results. We will be flushing hydrants in mid October and will try to notify residents as early as possible. Notices will be posted in the city office window, the post office and the city web site. The City has also set up an e-mail list for residents to sign up for announcements. To sign up send an e-mail to sabin-subscribe@cityofsabin.com, instructions for signing up will also be posted on the web site.

The Council thanked the residents for coming to the meeting and the feedback they received.

4) Adjournment

A MOTION was made by Burl Ingebretsen to adjourn. It was 2nd by Bob Dablow and the motion carried.

The meeting adjourned at 8:53 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted

Wendy Otte/City Clerk

Approved 10-18-11