

Columbia City Council
Pre-Council Meeting Minutes – December 7, 2009 – 5:45 p.m.
Fourth Floor Conference Room, Daniel Boone Building

Council members present: Mayor Hindman, Paul Sturtz, Jason Thornhill, Karl Skala, Jerry Wade, Laura Nauser and Barbara Hoppe

Absent: None

1) Utility Shut Off-Lori Fleming, Finance Director:

Finance Director reviewed shut off policy and procedures. Lori provided comparison of City Utility, Ameren UE and Boone Electric policies. Provided an overview to the city's shut off policies, practices and answered Council questions:

If you call office before shut-off and request additional time for payment, utility service can work with customer as long as they honor and keep payment agreements. If customer does not call or make arrangements, no choice but to shut off. The city offers short and long term agreements. Finance can even put bill on "hold" if appointment is scheduled with CMCA for utility assistance.

Finance will work one on one with customer to arrange payment agreement. However, customer still needs to stay current on bill in addition to required monthly payments on delinquent amount. Part of discussion with customer is budget training. Steve Hollis or CMCA provides such assistance also.

Emphasis is placed on talking to Finance before due date and try to resolve before they have to turn over to collection agency.

Data provided indicates shut offs remain constant; however, increase in requests for payment agreements. 8% of agreements are "unkept."

Lori went over due dates, how bill is sent out (staggered), and when bills become delinquent to the point of when a shut off will occur. Assured Council that they abide by weather rule; however, do not want customer to go through entire season only to find they're in a worse situation.

Lori reviewed Automatic Phone Call System where customer is notified that they are on shut off list and will be shut off if they do not make arrangements.

Wade- is there comparative data available?
Skala-given economy, changes to policy?
Hoppe-monitor data for changes
Mayor-how many on budget billing?

Follow-Up:

Lori will pursue further information.

2) Convention Visitors Bureau - Lorah Steiner

CVC Board is recommending a grant of \$50,000 to Boone County for the fairgrounds indoor facility. Data indicates events held there are significant hotel generator or Columbia; 300-500 rooms/per event. State that this is the #1 recommendation from consultant that would attract further development at fairground facility. Received support from hoteliers in area.

Wade-impact data available?

Skala-horse attendees vs. other interest's data available?

3) DOE Formula Block Grant - Paula Hertwig Hopkins

Council was briefed on status of grant and request that \$120,000 be directed to retrofits. Council agreed.

4) Boards and Commissions e-mail addresses - Hoppe

Requested status of request that came to Council for e-mail addresses of all boards and commissions members. Council decided that would be a decision for each commission to make and the chair could make that request of the membership. Officer's e-mails seemed reasonable.

Handouts:

E-mail dated 12/07/09 from Heather Windham

Comparison of Policies and Fees City of Columbia and Boone Electric December 3, 2009

Congratulatory letter to Mayor Hindman from EPA regarding city's Home Performance ENERGY STAR Program December 2, 2009

Crime Information Handout from Councilperson Laura Nauser December 6, 2009