

# Village of Mapleton

## HEALTH & WATER COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

Wednesday, December 4, 5:30 p.m.

*Meeting to be recorded*

### **PLEASE SILENCE YOUR CELL PHONES!**

#### **A. Call to Order at 5:30 by Chair, Liz Rensch**

#### **B. Role Call**

In attendance: Liz Rensch, Mike Beecham, Rodney Smith and Harvey Stidham.

Also in attendance: Pat Briggs, Clerk; Rhonda Hodges, Treasurer and Fred Rensch, Water Operator.

#### **C. Subjects**

**a. Jim Cummings** – Grant Opportunities for Water (spoke after b.)

**b. Eric Larson and Roger Goodson** – Illinois American Water

Eric explained that Illinois American Water is a private company who provides water in 135 communities in Illinois. They are a subsidiary of American Water and are in over 40 states and Canada. Because they are so large, they have purchasing power to buy materials at a much cheaper cost. They have their own lab and two call centers, one in Alton, IL and one in Pensacola. Customer Service call center is open 24/7. If the Village would sell the water system to them it would save residents about \$12 per month for normal rates. When they come into a community, they create a 5-year plan for upgrading and repairs to the system. The rates are set by the Illinois Commerce Commission so they can't just arbitrarily raise rates.

Roger Goodson went on to explain that they come in and check every hydrant and make sure everything is working. They have 72-hour turnaround if something is down. He stated they have put \$10-20 million dollars' worth of investments to replace mains and hydrants in the district

of Peoria.

Liz asked why they were seeking the Village out and were they approached. They stated that they had spoken to Tony Brown in Glasford, who suggested they talk to the other towns in the area. If the process goes through the village would receive tax money from the real estate taxes from the property where the tower is situated. They explained that the company is trying to grow. If they take over, they take on all liability such as EPA violations, painting, repairs, etc. Liz asked if they were going to turn on or turn off like we do. Roger explained that yes, they have a second shift that would be available as needed. Liz asked if they would you be using the tower and they responded that yes, they would, and would probably upgrade the tower with a satellite location.

If there is a Purchase agreement, a 1% franchise fee could be attached, which would come back to the village. There would be benefits of taxes, permit fees, permit fees for digging in the right-of-way which would be paid to the Village. Mike explained that he asked them to come because as he was looking at repairs and financing for all the projects ahead for the water department, he contacted Glasford and then talked with Eric about it. They explained that no one would lose their job if a purchase went through, which is covered by law.

Harvey asked how improvements get paid back to the company, if they invest millions of dollars. They explained that with 400,000 customers instead of 122 it is shared among all customers.

There was also a question about whether they have employees that do the work or if it is contracted. Roger stated that for simple repairs it is mostly their employees, for larger projects, it is contracted.

A. Jim Cummings: After a lengthy discussion it became apparent that the work the village needs to have done would not qualify for grant money. Either because income levels are too high or the work is considered maintenance, which is not covered.

**D. EXECUTIVE SESSION** pursuant to Section 2(c)(1) of the Open Meetings Act for purposes of discussing the employment, discipline, performance, or dismissal of specific employees of the Village.

**E. Additional Business**

**A. Adjourn Open Session at 6:52 pm**

Meeting recorded and transcribed by Patricia S. Briggs

Approved by the Board of Trustees of the Village of Mapleton 11 December 2019

*Patricia S. Briggs*

