



FOLSOM
DISTINCTIVE BY NATURE

Utility Commission Regular Meeting

Approved Minutes

City Council Chambers | 50 Natoma Street, Folsom CA 95630
November 19, 2024
6:30 PM

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:29 p.m.

Roll Call

PRESENT:	L. Ladd, M. Menz, A. Ross, A. Silva, B. Vempati.
ABSENT:	Z. Akhter, T. Widby
STAFF PRESENT:	Marcus Yasutake: Environmental & Water Resources Director
	Mark Rackovan: Public Works Director
	Emma Atkinson: Management Analyst, EWR

Business from the Floor

None.

Minutes

Approval of the Minutes of the October 15, 2024, Regular Meeting.

Motion by Commissioner Silva, second by Commissioner Ross to approve the Minutes of the October 15, 2024, regular meeting. Motion passed by the following roll-call vote:

AYES:	Commissioners Menz, Silva, Vempati.
ABSTAIN:	Commissioners Ladd, Ross.
ABSENT:	Commissioners Akhter, Widby.

Directors' Reports

Public Works:

- The City wide re-route of waste collection has been successful, with the community being well informed and placing cans out according to the new schedule, for new services and one time transition services. The re-route has effectively balanced workloads over the work week, leaving room for growth in the Folsom Ranch area. Management is closely monitoring routes and load compliance. Further balancing of routes within the new service areas will take place over the next several months and if necessary, schedule changes and new positions will be considered.
- Public Works will soon be requesting authorization from City Council to contract with Agromin, our current organics processor, for long term services from July 2027 through June 2042.
Commissioners requested more detail about the proposed contract, including an explanation of the length of the contract, the associated costs, any built-in cost increase, if there is an exit clause, and whether any other contractors were considered for the contract. In response, Director Rackovan offered to bring the item to the Utility Commission for review before taking it to Council.
- Public Works would like to replace the body on a waste collection vehicle; the mechanics of the vehicle are fine, but the chassis needs repair. City Council has granted authorization to proceed.
- Four residential collection vehicles, one roll-off and one front loader have been ordered. To date all but the roll off have been received. These are the last vehicles to be ordered before

having to comply with Advanced Clean Fleet (ACF) regulations, which became effective in Calendar Year 2024.

Commissioners engaged in a discussion about ACF regulations, asking about the consequences of non-compliance, the availability of zero emission vehicles, the reliability of electric heavy-duty vehicles, and ACF reporting requirements. Director Rackovan reported that electric garbage trucks ordered in FY22-23 have still not been delivered and there is no estimate for when they will be delivered. The electric rear loader that was delivered a couple of weeks ago had to be rejected due to mechanical issues. The City can be audited by the State and lists of vehicles need to be available on demand.

- The Collections team has experienced several months of staff shortages, due to open refuse driver positions and various medical absences. Director Rackovan summarized the difficulties experienced during a 6-month recruitment process. All full-time positions have now been filled, but recruitment of part-time staff is ongoing, and the division is still impacted by one long term medical absence. Additionally, the Admin team is currently working on replacement of one Office Assistant.
- The Recycling team has completed a route review, fulfilling a requirement of SB1383. Following an outreach campaign, including social media postings and newsletter articles, staff checked trash containers to evaluate program participation. Based on findings, 'Good Job' tags or educational material was attached to the container. No enforcement action was taken and generally, there was a positive reaction from residents.

EWR:

- Staff is currently working on 2 Requests for Proposals that will be issued early next year.
 - Rate Study Analysis for Water and Wastewater: The last Rate Study was finalized in 2019. The new rate study will provide an opportunity to look at the cost of service. Work will start in early 2025, with 3 possible dates identified during the summer for rate study discussion at Utility Commission meetings.
 - Sewer Master Plan: This is a new waste discharge requirement. Work on this is likely to start in summer next year.
- Director Yasutake thanked the Commission for their time this year. There will be no meeting in December due to the change in City Council and consequent change of Utility Commission members. The new City Council will be sworn in on December 9, and it is anticipated that all commission/committee appointments will be known by January 14th, the first meeting of 2025.
- City Manager Elaine Andersen has announced her retirement. Her last day in office is December 13, and Director Yasutake passed along an invitation to all Commissioners to attend a retirement gathering on December 11.

Commissioners engaged in a discussion on various topics related to EWR:

Rates:

- Commissioners asked when rates were last increased, what those increases were, whether increases should be expected based on the new rate study, and how Folsom rates compared to others.
- Director Yasutake responded that the last public hearing for rates was completed in November 2019, with rates increases taking effect in January 2020 and July 2022. There was an average \$4 increase each time. In the Sacramento region, Folsom's rates are nearly the lowest for water and are mid-range for the total amount charged to citizens for wastewater service (total wastewater charge takes into account both the Regional San and City charges). When based solely on collection system charges (without Regional San charges) Folsom is one of the lowest. Director Yasutake explained the Utility Commission's involvement in the Rate Study process, that the new Rate Study will likely identify a need for additional increases, but that a large part of the study is to focus on funding for CIPs (to analyze different approaches for budgeting and investment in CIPs) and solidifying a reserve policy (evaluation of best practice for reserves for water & wastewater utilities).

- Commissioners asked if the Rate Study will again cover 5 years, if there is a current reserve policy and engaged in discussion about planning and management of infrastructure, specifically in relation to life expectancy of pipes, and the risks associated with various approaches.
- Director Yasutake responded that the rate study will again cover a 5-year period. There has been a reserve fund policy, but a written policy will be developed using consultant knowledge of best practice, in collaboration with City Finance staff. Director Yasutake explained current practice of considering infrastructure condition assessment in combination with age, strategically balancing work on older sections without operational issues with work to address challenges experienced in newer sections. The Consultant will be asked to complete an analysis, and factor in depreciation, to figure out best approach.

Lead Assessment:

- Commissioners asked about the recent letter issued relating to the Lead Assessment Program.
- Director Yasutake provided a detailed explanation of the program, and required action of the city to comply with regulations.

Fluoride:

- Chair Menz asked about reports of recent changes to standards relating to fluoride in drinking water, and whether the City has been keeping up on this new information.
- Director Yasutake responded that the City, like most local agencies, does not include fluoride in the water system, so there is no need to make any changes at this time.

Staff Appreciation:

- Commissioner Ross acknowledged EWR staff who recently worked in her neighborhood. She reported that all staff were friendly, kind and willing to share information about work being performed.

New Business

- **Environmental and Water Resources Draft Fiscal Year 2023-24 Operating Budget Recap**

Director Yasutake presented draft financial figures comparing the Fiscal Year 2023-24 approved operating budget and the FY 2023-24 actual operating budget. The presentation was informational only, and no action as required.

Chair Menz requested a copy of the line-item budget for FY24-25.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 7:45 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted:



Emma Atkinson, Management Analyst

Approved:



MARK MENZ Utility Commission Chair