

PUBLIC HEARING SEWER RATES

Date: January 28, 2025. Mayor opened at 6:30 p.m.

Mayor Voorhis read Notice of Public Sewer Rates Hearing (attached)

Present: Kelly Petty, Richard Icenhower, Ben Lord, Mark Stewart

Staff: Sara Davis, Chandra Scott, Kenny Hokanson, Interim Chief Deckard, Officer Walters

Steve Short – 70 E. Willow, Fair Grove (See attached statement in support)

Karla Lampe – Swan Estates – I just seen on the agenda that you guys were going to discuss multi-family sewer charges.

Voorhis – Ms. Lampe, at this time we're on the public hearing for the hearing. I believe what you are talking about is on the agenda for after the hearing is done and then we will have another public forum.

Lampe – Ok.

Voorhis – Just to update everyone as I didn't before. Mr. Steve Short spoke about the rate increase. To give everybody an update, the residential rate increase, we're looking at going up to \$28.80 for a base rate, \$7.10 for a usage charge for the residential. On the commercial side of it, we're looking at going to \$30.80 for the base rate for the service charge and \$7.10 for the usage charge.

Frankling Hodges – Can I ask a question?

Voorhis – We have open forum Mr. Hodges to talk about...

Hodges – The sewer? I have a question. It would be on Steve here. I forget what my sewer bill is. It's probably \$32 a month or something like that, how much more a month are you talking that it's going to jump to?

Voorhis – Mr. Hodges...

Hodges – Do you know?

Voorhis – If you're in the city of Fair Grove, you pay a base rate now of \$21.80 as a base rate and you pay \$4.80 per 1,000 gallons of usage. Quick math would say, you said your bill is \$32?

Hodges – I use about 2,000 gallons or so a month. It's not really 100% accurate cause my son is filling up water tanks and stuff and watering stuff in Springfield, trees and stuff so how much would that bill be?

Voorhis – I can't give you an exact estimate Mr. Hodges but I can give you an estimate on that. \$20.80 that's a \$7.60 jump from the current so an additional \$7.00 plus another \$3.00, Mrs. Petty did some quick math, it's around \$43 so about \$10 to \$11.

Hodges – I was just curious cause there's a lot of people here in Fair Grove that can't afford a lot but my opinion, like I said, when you addressed the sewer problems and things, I don't think some of the stuff is real accurate like was said at the last meeting. The water that's going through there, I don't think that you're treating the water, if that's really going through there as Mr. Icenhower was saying, you're not treating it, it's just going right straight through.

Icenhower – No, it's not going straight through. It's all got to go through the plant.

Hodges – I know it's going to go through the plant but the sewer can't handle, I think you said 10 or 15 million more gallons or something. You ain't treating no 10 or 15 million gallons. It's not getting cleaned.

Icenhower – Oh, it is getting cleaned.

Hodges – I don't think so.

Icenhower – Well it is. It all has to go through the plant...

Hodges – I know, I know. Going through the plant...

Icenhower – It don't make any difference.

Voorhis – Alright.

Hodges – I'm gonna address that later on.

Voorhis – When we go into public forum you can come up and talk. We will have to continue this public forum for another 5 minutes as we have to keep it open for 15 minutes for people to have the opportunity to speak on the public hearing.

Petty – When will this reflect on people's bills?

Davis – I believe April is what has been discussed.

Petty – With the new average?

Davis – Yes.

Voorhis – If nobody else would like to speak on this behalf of the public hearing, we're going to go ahead and close it out.

In Favor: 1

Opposed: 0

Closed Public Hearing at 6:45 p.m.

PLEDGE OF ALLEIGIANCE (Led by Mayor Voorhis)

OPEN MEETING

Roll call taken by Mayor Thomas Voorhis

Dennis Roe ABSENT, Kelly Petty PRESENT, Richard Icenhower PRESENT, Ben Lord PRESENT, Mark Stewart PRESENT, Sherry Veach ABSENT

Call to order at 6:46 p.m.

Approve Agenda. Motion by Petty to approve agenda. Second Icenhower
Petty AYE, Icenhower AYE, Lord AYE, Stewart AYE

PUBLIC FORUM (Agenda Items Only)

Karla Lampe, Swan Estates – I got a question regarding the multi-family sewer charges, item 6 and 7. Is that going to effect me?

Voorhis – Item 6 and 7, go ahead Richard.

Icenhower – Alright. You've got a water meter for each unit, right? Each meter will be charge the sewer. You understand what I'm saying. They will be charged on actual usage. That's the way it's set up.

Petty – So they will be put into the sewer system under a duplex charge code, which includes a base rate for each dwelling within one unit so there's two base rates that you would split between each household and the usage would be calculated the total off of both since there's only one meter.

Voorhis – She has quadplex and each unit has it's own meter...

Petty – Each individual?

Lampe – Yeah. Each unit is treated as it's own home.

Petty – Oh. Apologies for interrupting Mr. Icenhower. I misheard.

Icenhower – Each unit has got it's own water bill, they will have their own sewer bill.

Lampe – Right. So are they charged on actual usage or on average usage?

Icenhower – On usage.

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Lampe – But aren't residents charged...

Icenhower – Now here's how it's set up Karla. You can do actual usage per month or January, February and March, they take those 3 months and average them out and that's what they're charged year round.

Lampe – Okay. So can the resident make that choice?

Icenhower – Yes. When they sign up they can make that choice whether they want to be actual year round or whether they want to do January, February and March average.

Lampe – Okay so that's something that I can let them know.

Icenhower – Yes. The secret is January, February and March don't use much water.

Hodges – Not washing your car.

Lampe – Okay, well that's pretty much all it is?

Icenhower – Yeah.

Lampe – Alright, easy enough. Thank you!

Hodges – If it's not on your form, you can't say nothing then? Can I...

Voorhis – No.

Hodges – Okay. Didn't understand that.

CLOSED SESSION

Motion by Petty to go into Closed Session 610.021 (3) hiring, firing disciplining or promoting particular employees and 610.021 (13) Individually identifiable personnel records, performance ratings or records at 6:50 p.m. Second Icenhower

Petty AYE, Icenhower AYE, Lord AYE, Stewart AYE

Motion by Lord to accept resignation in agreeance with severance package and allow Mayor Voorhis to have the authority to sign the agreement. Seconded by Icenhower

Petty AYE, Icenhower AYE, Lord AYE, Roe AYE

Motion by Lord to go back to open session at 6:54 p.m. Seconded by Icenhower

Petty AYE, Icenhower AYE, Lord AYE, Roe AYE

OLD BUSINESS

DISCUSS EMPLOYEE JOB DESCRIPTIONS (Roe, Veach)

Motion by Icenhower to table until next meeting. Seconded by Petty
Petty AYE, Icenhower AYE, Lord AYE, Stewart AYE

NEW BUSINESS

**DISCUSS AND/OR APPROVE INVITATION TO BID SIDEWALK IMPROVEMENTS
(Roe, Icenhower)**

Icenhower – What this is, is to get the approval to go ahead and put this out for bid. It starts right here at City Hall and goes on up to the Senior Center and the engineer has got the plans drawn up and we need an authorization to put it out on bid.

Voorhis – We would need a motion to approve it to put it out on bid.

Petty – After approval, Sara will submit this to the Buffalo paper tomorrow morning to be published.

Motion by Petty to approve Invitation to Bid Sidewalk Improvements. Second by Stewart
Petty AYE, Icenhower AYE, Lord AYE, Stewart AYE

REMOVE WILLIAM WORSHAM AS SIGNER ON COURT CHECKING ACCOUNT

Davis – This is because we have to keep the court checking account open in case somebody sends fine or fees in. The Judge is still a signor on there and he wants off. We need to remove him, but I have to have minutes to do that.

Motion by Icenhower remove William Worsham as signer on Court checking account. Second by Stewart
Petty AYE, Icenhower AYE, Lord AYE, Stewart AYE

DISCUSS AND/OR APPROVE 2024 STATUTORY UPDATES

Motion by Petty to approve 2024 statutory updates.

Stewart – This is just to updating our code to what the state statutes are?

Davis – Yes.

Second by Stewart

Petty AYE, Icenhower AYE, Lord, Stewart

DISCUSS AND/OR APPROVE BILL FROM FLUID EQUIPMENT

Icenhower – in your packet, you can see that you have a bill for \$19, and then you’ve got a new one for \$18,000 and something. What this is, is that we bought 2 new pumps to put in there and they went to put them in and the whole well was rusted out. So they had to rebuild whole well and before it was built out of regular steel, but what they put back in there was stainless steel. They rebuilt the ramps for the pumps to slide down and put new ones in and so that well and those pumps and everything brand new. Didn’t know we had this problem until we went to put the pumps in and it was rusted out and couldn’t put the pumps in. So need to approve the payment of \$18, 766.67

Davis – is that a motion?

Icenhower – Yes I’ll make that a motion.

Motion by Icenhower to approve payment to Fluid Equipment in the amount of \$18,766.67.

Second by Petty

Petty AYE, Icenhower AYE, Lord AYE, Stewart AYE

DISCUSS AND/OR APPROVE CHARGE ON INDEED JOB POSTING

Davis – When Chief Howell started here, he made our job posting a sponsored ad on Indeed and we get charged \$120 every month and I don’t know that last time we got an Indeed application. It’s been a few months I believe. We are being charged \$120 a month for pretty much nothing.

Petty – How many positions do we have posted?

Davis – Just a police officer, just one.

Icenhower – Don’t know that we need that if we’re not using it.

Voorhis – Yes I think we could get by, especially for now with the removal of that. If it comes back to it and we need to do it again, we can always sign back up for it.

Motion by Petty to discontinue sponsored job posting with Indeed for \$120 per month. Second Stewart

Petty AYE, Icenhower AYE, Lord AYE, Stewart AYE

BILL NO. 25-02 AN ORDINANCE AMENDING CHAPTER 700 OF FAIR GROVE MUNICIPAL CODE BY REPEALING APPENDIX “C” AND “D” OF CHAPTER 700, AND ADDING A NEW APPENDIX “C” AND “D” PROVIDING FOR SEWER SERVICE CHARGES AND EXTRA CHARGES FOR EACH RESIDENCE BUILDING AND

**STRUCTURE CONNECTED TO THE SEWER SYSTEM AND DISCHARGING
WASTEWATER INTO THE SYSTEM (Posted 1/22/2025)**

Motion by Petty to have the first reading of Bill No. 25-02 by title only. Seconded by Icenhower
Petty AYE, Icenhower AYE, Lord AYE, Stewart AYE

MAYOR READ BILL NO. 25-02 BY TITLE ONLY.

Motion by Petty to approve the first reading and have second reading of Bill No. 25-02 by title
only. Second by Stewart

Petty AYE, Icenhower AYE, Lord AYE, Stewart AYE

MAYOR READ BILL NO. 25-02 BY TITLE ONLY.

Motion by Petty to approve second reading of Bill No. 25-02 by title only and assign it
Ordinance No. 271. Second by Stewart

Petty AYE, Icenhower AYE, Lord AYE, Stewart AYE

**DISCUSS ATTORNEY OPINION REGARDING MULTI-FAMILY SEWER CHARGE
(Mayor)**

Motion by Icenhower to table until next meeting when we have a full council. Seconded by Petty
Petty AYE, Icenhower AYE, Lord AYE, Stewart AYE

DISCUSS RECRUITMENT PROCESS ON POLICE DEPARTMENT (Petty)

Voorhis – We would not have a quorum for this.

Petty – I make a motion to table this

Voorhis – Uh, Miss Petty, we do not have a quorum so we wouldn't be able to vote on that.

Petty – Ok

Davis – She couldn't vote to table this?

Voorhis – No, we still have to have a quorum.

Davis – We can't vote to table it?

Icenhower – I think we still need to vote to table it.

Petty – Do we just skip over it?

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Voorhis – He can't vote, so we wouldn't have a quorum. After talking with Miss Holly, that was her recommendation was just to...

Davis – to forget it?

Voorhis – No, we'll have to add it again as another item on the next agenda. It would be under new business because we don't have quorum to move forward with that.

Petty - ok

Business Meeting

SEWER AND PUBLIC WORKS

Hokanson – I don't have anything unless anybody has some questions.

Icenhower – well they, what was the name of that company?

Davis – Copperstate?

Icenhower – Yeah, they finished all the work down there.

Hokanson – I thought Dennis brought that up last time?

Icenhower – I don't know, anyways, it was \$90,000. So I don't know whether Dennis brought that up last time.

Hokanson – I thought he was going to.

Icenhower – I don't know, maybe he didn't, but anyway, that job is completed. And I think we've paid for that, haven't we Sara?

Davis – Yes

Icenhower – Other than that, I don't know of anything with the sewer or the streets.

Hokanson – Ben, you got anything?

Lord – No

Davis – Kenny

Petty – Snow plowing went ok?

Hokanson – I don't know, did it?

Petty – I don't know.

Hokanson – I mean was you happy?

Hokanson – I mean that's kind of a loaded question

Icenhower – Tell them the problems that you had.

Hokanson – Well, we hooked everything up on Tuesday and messed with it, got it all going. Wednesday, it was all working fine. Thursday I go out to get in my truck and take off and the plow wouldn't work, couldn't get it off the ground. Finally got it off the ground, went to Bus Andrews, got it fixed. Friday, I'm on the job getting that on. And we have a couple of man holes down about that far. Trust me, you can feel them when you hit them. It busted the reservoir on the plow, so I had to call in a second crew to finish up. But it's up and fixed and ready to go again. So did I do a good job for as long as I was on it, or not?

Petty – Absolutely.

Icenhower – Had to call Lafollette in to finish up.

Petty – That was going to be my next question. I saw Lafollette here. They were following you.

Hokanson – Yeah, I was trying to get everybody a path going on, so we could get back to it. That's normally the main concern. I've got a route that I do, you know, I call it the emergency route. To get that all done first, then move into the subdivisions.

Petty – Thank you

Voorhis – Thank you Kennie.

FINANCIAL STATEMENT

Motion by Petty to approve financial statement as submitted. Seconded by Stewart

Petty AYE, Icenhower AYE, Lord AYE, Stewart AYE

PARK BOARD

Tim Cooke – I can give you a quick run down about what's been going on. We had a dead tree on park property that we needed taken down. We got a couple of bids for that and ultimately ended up going with Hodges Tree Service. They got that taken care of for us. Basketball is going well, numbers are higher than last year. I can't tell you what exactly those numbers are,

but they are up from last year. So that's good. Park Board has intended to collaborate with the Chamber of Commerce again for the Easter events coming up. We should have more information on that shortly. We are working with our grant writer and there are a few grants out there that look very promising to put towards some of the projects we are working on in the future. We are currently hiring for a new season worker for this year. We have adjusted the time frame March to the end of October, I believe. Previously it was March until the end of September. The application process is underway, we have not received any application for that position yet. From July to end of December we have netted \$51,523 bringing our total balance to \$288,378.98. So if there isn't any questions, that's all I've got for you.

Voorhis – Thank you, sir!

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

POLICE DEPARTMENT

Interim Chief Deckard – I will go over some stats that we have from December when we had our meeting in December, all the way to this point. We have had 162 incidents, those are a variety of traffic stops, check well beings, property, miscellaneous stuff, check persons, child abuse, disturbance, domestics. WE had to fix a vehicle that cost us approximately \$2,700. We have that vehicle back and it's up and running. We purchased our range ammunition today so we are ready for that. This coming up Friday and Saturday, all of our fill-timers are going to be participating in that as well as one of our reserves and the SRO. I believe that is all unless you have questions.

Icenhower – That's what we approved last meeting, right?

Stewart – Yes, sir!

Deckard – Yes.

Voorhis – Thank you ma'am.

CITY CLERK

Davis – I have nothing unless you have any questions for me? No?

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Icenhower – No, I don't think so right now the sewer don't have anything.

Petty – The only thing is that I did complete the, I think it's MoDot or State of Missouri...

Davis – MoDot

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Petty – MoDot, Person of Responsibility charge training so I can continue the Phase II Sidewalk projects through the state funded grants that we have approved.

Voorhis – Well thank you.

APPROVE BOARD OF ALDERMAN MINUTES

Voorhis – Don't believe we have the minutes as many things have happened this week. I'm sure we'll get that taken care of at the next council meeting.

MAYOR REPORT

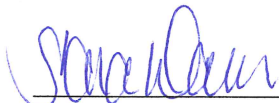
Voorhis – I have nothing to report.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Icenhower to adjourn at 7:14 Seconded by Stewart

Petty AYE, Icenhower AYE, Lord AYE, Stewart AYE

Adjourned at 7:15 p.m.



Sara Davis, City Clerk

January 28, 2025
Mayor Voorhis and Aldermen

Let me explain why I support the proposed sanitary sewer increase for residential users customer charge of \$28.80 and volume charge of \$5.80 per 1,000 gallons with five percent increases the following three years. I apologize to the Aldermen for the rehash of facts but also direct this to folks who have not had time to study our situation.

Historically we had two professional reviews of our sewer system with both suggesting increasing the rates to adequately fund and operate the enterprise. Most recently the SANITARY SEWER RATE STUDY prepared for the City of Fair Grove prepared by OWN Engineering as presented on the Fair Grove Internet page. Basically, the report states the treatment plant has sufficient capacity to effectively treat domestic waste water through 2034 assuming "the majority of I&I will be eliminated". The report further states the average residential sewer volume is 3,400 gallons which was confirmed by the review of actual October, 2024 billing records. To meet the suggested operation and facility improvements the OWN report suggested a residential customer charge of \$36.71 and volume charge of \$7.20.¹

The Facility Report prepared by Trekk Design Group, LLC concludes the in depth review that included inspecting the treatment plant and lift stations, inspecting and documenting every sewer manhole in the system, testing every line, and smoke testing about half the collection system during dry weather (the whole system was not smoke tested due to a lack of MoDNR grant funds). After documenting I&I with flow monitors located in key manholes, smoke testing observations, and facility records Trekk Design group suggested rate increases were needed to meet operating and capital improvement plans.²

Our neighbors ask "why should I pay more for sewer"? Nearly everyone does not want a rate increase. No one wants to pay more for their utilities than someone in a neighboring community. That is human nature. Fair Grove has documented in two studies that improvements must be made and they cannot be implemented out of current revenues. Rates have to go higher so improvements can be completed. While our rates will go higher than those in some nearby communities, that is a temporary situation as other cities address their improvement needs.

Neighbors ask "is our sewer rate affordable, will we be paying too much"? Rate reviewers and states use an Affordability Index to determine if the monthly residential sewer charge for 5,000 gallons is affordable. This is calculated by dividing the cost of 5,000 gallons divided by the median household income as provided by the US Census Bureau. The current (2022 data) median annual household income for Fair Grove is \$71,447.³ The proposed \$28.80 customer charge plus volume charge for 5,000 gallons equals \$57.80. \$57.80 divided by the monthly median household income (\$5,954) equals and affordability index ($\$5,954 \times 2\% = \119.08) $\$57.80 / \119.08 equals an affordability index of 0.49. An Affordability Index of 0.49 is generally considered a "cheap" sewer utility charge.

The proposed increase may increase sewer revenue by \$10,500 monthly.⁴ Since this is significantly less than engineering studies suggested leadership must allocate wisely.

We are stewards of the precious land and water resources that are entrusted to us. Our land and water are not just natural resources; they are the lifeblood of our community. Protecting these vital assets is essential for our current and future generations. Today's and our children's health and welfare depend on Aldermen Stewart, Icenhower, Roe, Petty, Veach, and Lord. Thank You

1 OWN, page 9

2 Trekk, Chapter 5, and Appendix F

3 <https://data.census.gov> "Fair Grove, Missouri" (2022 data)

4 attached sanitary sewer spreadsheet for October usages, current and proposed by S Short

97	1	97	\$	68.36	\$	97.67	0	\$	-	\$	-
100	1	100	\$	69.80	\$	99.80	0	\$	-	\$	-
103	1	103	\$	71.24	\$	101.93	0	\$	-	\$	-
108	0	0	\$	-	\$	-	1	\$	75.34	\$	107.48
110	2	220	\$	149.20	\$	213.80	0	\$	-	\$	-
121	1	121	\$	79.88	\$	114.71	0	\$	-	\$	-
129	1	129	\$	83.72	\$	120.39	0	\$	-	\$	-
132	0	0			\$	-	1	\$	86.86	\$	124.52
160	0	0			\$	-	1	\$	100.30	\$	144.40
161	1	161	\$	99.08		\$136.11	0	\$	-	\$	-
		20147	\$	22,358.16	\$	31,065.97		\$	-	\$	-
								\$	-	\$	-
185							1	\$	112.30	\$	162.15
192							1	\$	115.66	\$	167.12
229							1	\$	133.42	\$	193.39
262							1	\$	149.26	\$	216.82
287							1	\$	161.26	\$	234.57
358							1	\$	195.34	\$	284.98
471							1	\$	249.58	\$	365.21
604							1	\$	313.42	\$	459.64
612							1	\$	317.26	\$	465.32
613							1	\$	317.74	\$	466.03
							APT	\$	540.50	\$	708.40
								\$	4,424.46	\$	6,223.72

APT surcharge current 23 unitsx\$23.50=\$540.50

APT surcharge proposed 34 unitsx\$30.80=\$708.40

NAME

ADDRESS

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