

June 27, 2023

The City Council of Scott City met in regular session on the above date at 6:30 p.m. in City Hall.

The Council and others recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

Present were Mayor Everett Green, Council members Craig Richards, Jeff Allen, Kelly Funk, Josh Gooden, Bo Parkinson, Barb Wilkinson, Adam Winter, Armando Tarango, City Attorney Jennifer Cunningham (by Zoom), City Administrator Brad Pendergast, and City Clerk Ruth Becker.

Also present were Water Superintendent Terence Appel, Scott County Record Editor Rod Haxton, and property owners Linda Tilton, Brian Berry, and Robert Willman.

Mayor Everett Green stated that the purpose for this meeting is to hear from residents who have concerns about water rates, primarily rates affecting multi-family dwellings, and to take their input into consideration when drafting a new water rates ordinance.

City resident Linda Tilton explained to the Council that she has a property with 25 living units being served by 3 water meters – one meter on each of 3 separate legal descriptions. One meter that serves 3 structures, and 2 meters that serve 4 structures each. She mentioned that two other property owners had planned to attend to lend to this discussion, but they had other commitments and could not attend. Mrs. Tilton requested that the Council consider an expanded water rate tier system for multi-family housing situations like hers. She explained that the current tier structure is applied across the board for all residential units, but she believes that when multiple living units are tied to a single meter, the gallons allotted for each tier should be increased. According to her proposal, a property owner could qualify for the increased tier structure when one meter serves 3 or more structures that represent 5 or more living units each, and if the property owner agrees to submit an annual report to the City Council demonstrating water conservation efforts. An example of her proposed expanded tier structure is below:

	Current Tier Structure	Proposed Tier Structure	Water Usage Rate (per 1000 gallons)
Water Allotment Included in Base Rate	2,500 gallons	12,500 gallons	
Tier 1	2,501 to 39,999 gallons	12,501 to 199,999 gallons	\$1.70
Tier 2	40,000 to 59,999 gallons	200,000 to 299,999 gallons	\$2.72
Tier 3	60,000 to 79,999 gallons	300,000 to 399,999 gallons	\$3.72
Tier 4	80,000 gallons and up	400,000 gallons and up	\$5.44

City resident Brian Berry was asked if he had any items that he would like to discuss regarding water rates. He indicated that he attended so that he could educate himself because he will soon own an apartment complex with 25 living units. He has been working with Lebbin Lawn & Tree

on improvements to the existing irrigation system and plans to pass along any water costs not associated with landscaping maintenance on to his tenants.

City resident Robert Willman explained that he was present to explain that, although he owns a home in Scott City, he travels and is out of town for months at a time. He encouraged Council members to consider waiving the \$50 connection fee every time he, or others in his situation, needs his water service turned back on upon his return, or to credit his account for the amount of the base rate each time a bill is generated with no usage. Mayor Everett Green acknowledged that Mr. Willman's situation is not unique, but that it would be difficult to write City code specific to everyone's special interests. City Administrator Brad Pendergast noted that although services are not being used, there are still costs associated with keeping the utilities running, such as the electricity needed to operate the treatment plants, the upkeep of the water infrastructure, and even debt repayment for water infrastructure bonds. Mr. Pendergast also explained that the base rate for water customers is essential to build reserve funds and to provide for the immediate needs of existing water infrastructure. The water rates charged for usage cover only the cost of producing water for public consumption.

City Attorney Jennifer Cunningham was asked about how Scott City's water ordinance compares with those of other cities comparable to Scott City. She mentioned that, regardless of the number of meters serving a property, both Hays and Lakin charge a base rate to each living unit. Scott City only charges a single base rate per meter. Mrs. Cunningham also noted that cities such as Garden City and Salina have an extremely complicated rate structure which delves into residential versus commercial structures, etc. Neither of these two cities requires that each structure utilizes at least one meter. When asked if she was aware of any other cities that utilized multiple tier structures, she answered that she did not find a single city that operated using multiple tier structures.

After all residents who wished to speak had been heard, Mayor Everett Green noted that the City Council would reconvene on Monday, July 3, 2023. More discussion regarding water rates for multi-family dwellings would be held, and an ordinance for water rates for multi-family dwellings would likely be presented for approval at that time.

Motion by Adam Winter seconded by Armando Tarango to adjourn at 7:23 p.m. Vote – Unam.

Everett M. Green
Mayor

Ruth Becker
City Clerk