

**CITY OF STEVENS POINT  
SPECIAL COMMON COUNCIL MEETING**

**Stevens Point Water Department  
300 Bliss Ave**

**July 5, 2011  
5:00 P.M.**

**Mayor Andrew Halverson, Presiding**

**Roll Call:** Alderpersons Beveridge, Suomi, O'Meara, Wiza, M. Stroik, Slowinski, Trzebiatowski, Molski, R. Stroik, Brooks and Moore.

**Excused:** Alderperson R. Stroik.

**Also**

**Present:** City Clerk Moe; C/T Schlice; Director Halverson; Brenda Thomas; Reid Rocheleau; Barb Jacob; Matthew Brown; Brian Kowalski.

**2. Consideration and Possible Action on Resolution Authorizing the Sale and Issuance of Up To \$11,062,597 Taxable Water System Revenue Bonds, Series 2011; and Providing for Other Details and Covenants with Respect Thereto.**

Ald. Wiza asked if this was for building a new facility.

Dir. Halverson said it is for the one that is under construction. The City already approved the project, it has been approved by the DNR, this is just to get the money.

Ald. O'Meara said these are regulatory bonds so it will come from rate payers, not out of taxes.

Ald. O'Meara **moved**, Ald. Slowinski seconded, to approve the Resolution Authorizing the Sale and Issuance of Up To \$11,062,597 Taxable Water System Revenue Bonds.

**Roll Call:** Ayes: Beveridge, Suomi, O'Meara, Wiza, M. Stroik, Slowinski, Trzebiatowski, Molski, Brooks and Moore.

Nays: None. Motion adopted.

**3. Consideration and Possible Action on Resolution Opposing Assembly Bill 182 which Prohibits Municipal Water Departments from Collecting Unpaid Water / Sewer Bills Using the Property Tax Roll.**

Mayor Halverson said under this legislation the utility would not have the ability to place delinquent bills on the tax roll.

Dir. Halverson noted this has been an ongoing situation with landlords for years and that this proposal has been introduced several times but has always been shot down. Landlords could add

the utility payment to the rent but have chosen not to do that. Instead, they want the utility to be a collection agency. If the utility loses the ability to put delinquent bills on the tax roll, then resources will need to be put into collecting. Uncollected amounts will then be placed on everyone's bills.

Ald. O'Meara said that besides these residential renters there are industrial corporations and this could be a bigger hit. This may mean the security deposit gets bigger but it is not fair that the public's water bill goes up because landlords do not want to collect.

Ald. Suomi asked for clarification on the number of disconnect notices the utility sends out.

Dir. Halverson said they first send out delinquent notices to those that are over 100 hours past due. The last mailing went to over 200 accounts and when it came to actual disconnections there were 58.

Ald. Suomi asked about the demographics of those who are delinquent and if they were mostly students.

Dir. Halverson said it is a combination.

Ald. Suomi then asked about communications with the landlords.

Dir. Halverson said they are noticed along with the tenants.

Mayor Halverson noted this initiative was introduced on the Republican side. Historically landlords support these kinds of initiatives because they believe they should not be responsible for the water bill. Landlords feel their tenants are responsible for the water bills. He said these delinquent bills should not be on the backs of all the rate payers. He feels the landlords could raise the security deposit, if they have them, to handle possible delinquency.

Ald. Trzebiatowski asked what happens if a tenant leaves halfway through the billing cycle without paying and a new tenant moves in.

Dir. Halverson said that is a problem and they may have to take legal action.

Ald. Beveridge said he supports the resolution because it will protect the City.

Ald. Moore said he takes issue with this because this non-partisan body and they should not be making a political statement.

Mayor Halverson said he disagrees. This is about the financial loss that would occur if the utility was not able to place unpaid utility bills as special assessments on the property tax rolls. The City would lose \$30,000 annually. The lobbying organizations that we have, including the League of Municipalities, have come out in opposition to this legislation and have asked municipalities to do the same. This is not about partisanship, it is about the financial risk the Department would experience.

Ald. Molski said she does not see this as political as they are standing up for their constituents so their water bills do not go up because of others who do not pay their bills.

Ald. O'Meara said he is afraid of the precedence this bill would set if enacted.

Ald. Slowinski **moved**, Ald. O'Meara seconded, to approve the Resolution opposing the Assembly Bill.

**Roll Call:** Ayes: Beveridge, Suomi, O'Meara, Wiza, M. Stroik, Slowinski, Trzebiatowski, Molski, and Brooks.  
Nays: Moore. Motion adopted.

**4. Adjourned at 5:17 p.m.**