

TOWN OF SOUTH WHITLEY WATER RATE PUBLIC HEARING
118 E FRONT ST. SOUTH WHITLEY IN 46787
TOWN COUNCIL BOARD ROOM
NOVEMBER 28TH 2017
6:30 P.M.

Those present were President Randy Cokl, Councilman Les Hoffman, Councilman Bill Boggs, Water Operator Ron Anderson, Town Marshal Mikel VanDevender, Town Attorney, Gregg Hockemeyer and Clerk-Treasurer, Janet Howard.

Call to order by President Cokl at 6:34 P.M. and followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

President Cokl opened the meeting regarding the proposed change in rates for the municipal water previously introduced. A proposed water rate ordinance was introduced at the regular meeting of the Town Council on November 14th 2017 and has been available for public review at the office of the town clerk-treasurer since that time. Mr. Cokl stated that any member of the public is welcome to participate in this hearing and would ask that remarks of each speaker be limited to five minutes and to please avoid simply repeating facts or points made by others. After hearing from the public he will close the floor to public discussion and Council members will discuss the proposed rate change. The Council may adopt the ordinance as originally introduced or as modified, also the hearing may be adjourned and reconvened at a later date. Water Hearing Procedure is attached. Steve Carter with Carter Dillon Umbaugh LLC was introduced by President Cokl. Mr. Carter is a rate consultant and financial advisor with Carter Dillon Umbaugh. Mr. Carter stated that the project is in the neighborhood of 2.5 million per engineers estimate. The Bond will be paid over the next 20 years to payback the SRF loan at 2% interest rate. The Debt service for the project is the driving factor for the rate increase. The current rate on 2000 gallons is \$15.60, the new rate would be \$21.85 which is an increase of \$6.25. President Cokl opened the floor to the public for discussion. Dixie Renfore from StarLite Estates voiced her opinion against the rate increase stating she is on a fixed income and will not be able to pay her bill. She is already paying 1 1/2 times what residents of the town pay and asked about annexing out there. President Cokl stated that there has been discussion about annexing for the past year but haven't moved forward with anything. Kathy Marburger who also lives at StarLite Estates stated she is against the rate increase and also against annexation because she chooses not to live in town or be a part of this town and if they annex she will move. Mr. Anderson explained why areas outside the town limit pays the 1 1/2 times, that there was an ordinance put in place years ago but the ordinance could be amended. He explained to Mrs. Marburger that even if the Council would decide to annex that the property is still privately owned but would pay city tax. Trinia Fetick who lives in town asked why the water rates are going up. It was explained that there have been several complaints about the quality of the water over the years and that the filtration project would help with this. Mr. Anderson explained that he has to put chemicals in the water because of the amount of iron currently in the water. This would not need to be done with the filtration plant and the quality of the water would improve. He also stated that it will take a while to notice a difference because of the iron being in the lines. Susan Butcher wondered why the sewage bill went up recently, what is it based on and why they are billed for a minimum of 2000 gallons when a lot of people do not use that much. Mr. Anderson stated that it is based on gallons used and Councilman Boggs explained that the minimum usage rate was put in place to pay for the whole system and upkeep. Mr. Carter explained that most towns operate like South Whitley and that it's not just the water you are paying for but for maintenance, infrastructure and etc. that goes along with the cost. It was asked if there was any help out there for senior citizens who are on a fixed income. The floor was closed to public discussion and there was some discussion. Motion to pass Ordinance 11-14-2017-02 to Amend

the Established Rates for Water was made by Councilman Hoffman, seconded by Councilman Boggs and carried by unanimous vote 3-0. President Cokl adjourned the Water Rate Hearing at 7:02 P.M.



President, Randy Cokl



Councilman, Les Hoffman

Councilman, Bill Boggs

ATTESTED:



Clerk-Treasurer, Janet Howard