

Contact: Nick Hernandez
Phone: (620) 441-4415
Fax: (620) 441-0869
nhernandez@arkansascityks.gov

City Manager's Office
City of Arkansas City
118 W. Central Ave.
Arkansas City, KS 67005



Press Release

City Commission authorizes grant application for water meters

Reclamation grant of up to \$300,000 could halve cost of Phase 3 installation

ARKANSAS CITY, Kan. (January 21, 2016) — The City Commission of Arkansas City voted 5-0 during its regular meeting Tuesday night to authorize City staff to apply for a federal grant that, if awarded, could pay for up to half of the third and final phase of new water meter installations in the city.

The commissioners' resolution seeks a WaterSMART water and energy efficiency grant to partially fund Phase 3 of a master project agreement with HD Supply Waterworks to procure, install and implement the Sensus FlexNet metering system, for an amount not to exceed \$600,000.

Staff recently became aware of the federal grant opportunity through the U.S. Department of the Interior's Bureau of Reclamation that could result in up to \$300,000 being awarded to the City to offset the cost of Phase 3. One of the conditions for the grant application, which was submitted Wednesday, was an official resolution of the governing body to authorize the project. The resolution had to be dated more recently than July 1, 2015, necessitating "reauthorization" of the project by the commissioners.

In March 2013, the City received quotes from three separate manufacturers to replace its outdated residential and commercial water meters with the Advanced Metering Infrastructure (AMI) system and Sensus meters. The Sensus line of water meters and AMI technology ultimately were selected.

Staff then negotiated with HD Supply and Sensus for pricing a three-phased approach. The City Commission on May 6, 2014, approved a master project agreement with HD Supply Waterworks for a total amount not to exceed \$1.6 million, to be spent over the next three years in three project phases.

This approach has allowed the City to reduce and manage water loss, provide better customer service through the detection of water leaks, and best fit the City's budget during the previous two years.

Phase 1 consisted of the purchase and implementation of all reading infrastructure and meter data management software. In addition, many water meters and radio transmitters were purchased and

For immediate release

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installed, per the direction of the City. Phase 1 commenced in October 2014 and was completed by May 2015. The budget for implementing Phase 1 was set at \$450,000.

Phase 2 consisted of the purchase and implementation of additional water meters and radio transmitters. It started in January 2015 and was finished by July 2015. The budget for implementing Phase 2 was set at \$550,000. The first two phases were completed at a total cost of \$992,401.96.

The Sensus FlexNet system already has been integrated into the water utility operation, and now is being used by the City to operate and maintain the water distribution system.

Phase 3 will consist of the purchase and installation of the remaining water meters and radio transmitters. It will commence sometime between March and June, and should be completed by the end of this summer. The estimated cost for implementing Phase 3 currently is projected to be \$577,544.45.

The resolution approved Tuesday was only a formality, since the project was approved previously.

Grant awards should be announced by the end of September. The Sensus FlexNet meters have a manufacturer-guaranteed life span of 20 years, double the useful life of the outdated current meters.

In other business Tuesday, the City Commission:

- Heard from citizen Ken Harader regarding his multiple concerns about the new Family Dollar store at 1313 N. Summit St., which opened Monday. While his assertion that a third lighted sign was not allowed on the north face of the building under a variance was disproved, City staff were instructed to contact Family Dollar about its dumpster enclosure, which later was found not to be in accordance with the approved plans, and possibly painting a fence instead of treating it.
- Recognized Arkansas City Police Department Officer Ted Shinneman for being named the Officer of the Year for 2015 by Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 1254.
- Unanimously approved the Jan. 5 regular meeting minutes as written.
- Heard a second reading of and voted 4-1 to approve an ordinance amending several articles in the City's zoning and subdivision regulations, mostly concerning sign regulations and the site plan review process. Commissioner Brandon Every cast the dissenting vote and suggested holding a study session at a future date to go through the regulations in more detail.
- Unanimously approved two resolutions amending the City's "cafeteria plan," which sets out all of the policies associated with employees' benefit packages. The first resolution cleans up the plan

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to match benefits offered in the 2016 plan year, while the second updates the job titles of the only two employees who are authorized to access employees' protected health information.

- Unanimously voted to table until Feb. 2 a resolution authorizing City Manager Nick Hernandez to execute and submit a "project programming request" Form 1302 to the Kansas Department of Transportation's (KDOT) Bureau of Local Projects. Submitting the form would accept an award of KDOT funds for a resurfacing project on U.S. 77 from the Arkansas River bridge north to the U.S. 77-U.S. 166 intersection, as part of the 2017 KLINK Resurfacing Program.
- Instructed staff to put a resolution on the Feb. 2 agenda that would schedule a study session on Feb. 9 at the Hogan building to discuss the proposed purchasing policy and procedures manual.