



City of Boulder City

401 California Avenue
Boulder City, NV 89005
www.bcnv.org

MEMORANDUM

**BOULDER CITY
CITY COUNCIL**

MAYOR
RODNEY WOODBURY

COUNCIL MEMBERS:
WARREN HARHAY
PEGGY LEAVITT
KIERNAN MCMANUS
RICH SHUMAN



MEETING LOCATION:
CITY COUNCIL CHAMBER
401 CALIFORNIA AVENUE
BOULDER CITY, NV 89005

MAILING ADDRESS:
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WEBPAGE:
WWW.BCNV.ORG



CITY MANAGER:
ALFONSO NOYOLA, ICMA-CM

CITY ATTORNEY:
STEVEN L. MORRIS, ESQ

CITY CLERK:
LORENE KRUMM, MMC, CPO

**COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
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MICHAEL MAYS, AICP

PUBLIC WORKS DIRECTOR:
KEEGAN LITTRELL, P.E.

UTILITIES DIRECTOR:
DENNIS PORTER, P.E.

POLICE CHIEF:
TIM SHEA

FIRE CHIEF:
KEVIN NICHOLSON

FINANCE DIRECTOR:
DIANE PELLETIER, CPA

PARKS & RECREATION DIRECTOR
ROGER HALL

DATE: May 8, 2019
TO: Alfonso Noyola, ICMA-CM, City Manager
FROM: Dennis Porter, P.E., Utilities Director
SUBJECT: Mr. Johns Utility Rates Response

I have attached Mr. Brynn Johns document regarding utility rates, my staff report that was completed for the April 23rd City Council meeting, and the information we have sent out regarding the BC Tap Transformer previously in response to Mr. Johns information.

His percentage increase numbers between 2016 and now are accurate but do not provide all the information to understand why the rates are what they are. There is nothing new in these numbers, and in fact, they were approved with the EES Consulting Utility Fund Rate Study in March 2016 by City Council. Until 2016, rates had not been increased since 2009. The utility funds were not providing sufficient revenue to support operating, maintenance and capital improvements necessary to manage the utilities effectively. Had the electric rates been increased at annual percentage of 2.3% starting in 2009, the higher rate increase starting in 2016 would not have been necessary. With regards to the water rates and water service charges, the increases were necessary in order to cover the costs for the SNWA drought and infrastructure surcharge as well as the debt service on the raw water line (\$2.3M per year). The rates also had to be increased to cover increased costs in materials and services in addition to supporting the capital improvement projects.

PART 1 UTILITIES

On June 11, the community of Boulder City has an opportunity to vote for change. The BCCA wants to provide voters with factual information that concerns every citizen. Please read through and decide, are you ready for change, or do you want more of the same?

UTILITIES

Provided by Brynn Johns

The bill due in October 2016 was the last reasonable bill for Boulder City residents. Dig out your old bill and compare to your most recent bill.

Don't have the old bill? Here are the numbers:

Electric rate per kWh: 7.4 cents then, 9.1 cents now. An increase of 23%. ✓

Water rate per 1,000 gallons: \$1.49 then, \$2.39 now. An increase of 60%.

But wait, there's more. There are monthly fees just for existing. They are:

Electric: \$5.00 then, \$10.00 now. An increase of 100%. ✓

Water: \$18.34 then, \$37.56 now. An increase of 105%. ✓

Sewer, which just has a fee: \$14.65 then, \$23.46 now. An increase of 60%.

Not counting trash, our latest bill for 1,000 gallons of water and 1,096 kWh's of electricity is \$52.56, or 43.6% higher than what it would have been with pre-October 2016 rates. Inflation was 4.6% for October 2016 through February 2019, as measured by the Consumer Price Index. 43.6% vs. 4.6%!

In the meantime, the price of natural gas, which generates most of the power you use, decreased 9.8%. (Natural gas prices per million Btu's on the Henry Hub spot market were \$2.98 in October 2016 and \$2.69 in February 2019).

But wait, there's more. The incumbents enacted an automatic 2.5% increase each year from now on.

The incumbents told us critical infrastructure needs to be replaced to prevent recurring outages. Meter replacement was the first project they embarked on. Replacing old meters will never prevent a neighborhood outage. These folks have no knowledge of what it takes to run an effective, safe, economical utility. I've written previously regarding a \$1.4 million transformer, paid for with your utility increase money, sitting uselessly unconnected at a substation. This,

along with other expensive projects, came from a report commissioned by the City prepared by a consultant called SAIC. This high-cost report contains an extensive list of necessary reliability-related projects (meters not included). It was presented to City Council in January of 2012. It is now over seven years later and virtually nothing in the report has been successfully completed. Mayor Woodbury was Councilman Woodbury in January of 2012. Councilwoman Leavitt was Councilwoman Leavitt then. Councilman Shuman has only been on Council for the last four years, so he did not have a front-row seat for the SAIC presentation.

But wait, there's more. As recently as November of 2017, the Utilities had reserves of \$22 million. I have no idea what happened to that money. Why couldn't this very substantial pool have been used to start working on a prioritized and vetted list of capital projects rather than raising rates through the roof? With nothing to show for the robbery?

Last month the City Council voted to DEFER, not remove, the next 2.5% rate increase. The incumbents running in this election voted to have the rate increase originally. Only Kiernan McManus has requested to remove that rate increase, while the incumbents voted to DEFER. We have 6 months, then the DEFERRAL will be voted on again to either take place or be removed. Please join us in voting for a change, vote for Kiernan McManus, James Howard Adams, and Claudia Bridges.

Please forward this email to any you think may have an interest.

[Sign up for our list!](#)

Boulder City Community Alliance





City Council Meeting April 23, 2019 Item No. 14

Staff Report

**BOULDER CITY
CITY COUNCIL**

**MAYOR
RODNEY WOODBURY**

**COUNCIL MEMBERS:
WARREN HARHAY
PEGGY LEAVITT
KIERNAN MCMANUS
RICH SHUMAN**

TO: Alfonso Noyola, City Manager

FROM: Dennis Porter, P.E., Utilities Director

DATE: April 23, 2019

SUBJECT: For possible action: Matters pertaining to the calculation of electric, water, and sewer rates (as requested by Councilmember McManus)



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**PARKS & RECREATION DIRECTOR
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- A. Resolution No. 6926, a resolution of the City Council of Boulder City, repealing and replacing Resolution No. 6489 to remove the annual adjustment
- B. Resolution No. 6927, a resolution of the City Council of Boulder City, repealing and replacing Resolution No. 6490 to remove the annual adjustment
- C. Resolution No. 6928, a resolution of the City Council of Boulder City, repealing and replacing Resolution No. 6491 to remove the annual adjustment

Business Impact Statement: This action will not have a significant economic impact on business and will not directly restrict the formation, operation, or expansion of a business.

Action Requested: That the City Council take no further action on repealing and replacing Resolution No. 6489, Resolution No. 6490, and Resolution No. 6491 until such time that the upcoming rate study is completed and recommendations from the newly created Utility Advisory Committee be considered by the City Council.

Overview:

- City staff worked with EES Consulting to conduct the Utility Fund Rate Study to develop a 10-year expense and revenue forecast for each utility, including the utility reserves.
- On May 24, 2016, City Council approved Resolution No. 6489, 6490, and 6491 to increase the utility rates based on the Utility Fund Rate Study findings.
- The resolutions included the approval of a 2.5% annual rate adjustment to occur each July 1.
- Councilmember McManus is requesting to remove the annual rate adjustment.
- Provided below are background and financial information pertaining to the effect that repealing the annual rate adjustments would cause.

Background Information: On November 10, 2015, City Council approved City Staff to work with EES Consulting to conduct the Utility Fund Rate Study. This study developed a 10-year expense and revenue forecast for each utility, including utility reserves in accordance with the Financial Plan. The results demonstrated the need for a rate increase in order for the City to achieve financial sustainability within the utility fund.

The results of the study were presented at the March 8, 2016, City Council Meeting. The results demonstrated that current revenues and projected revenues over the 10-year study period were insufficient to fund the projected expenditures that include wholesale cost, operating cost, capital improvement projects, and reserve accounts. City Council further discussed the rate study and funding options for the utility fund at the March 16, April 13, May 10, and May 12, 2016 workshops. At the May 12, 2016 workshop, Council directed staff to proceed with the rate increases following the rate study's option number one for Electric and Water Utility rates and option number two for the sewer utility rates. The rate resolutions presented to Council on May 24, 2016 were set up with the subsequent increases to reach the City's goals of financial sustainability in the utility fund, and included a 2.5% increase thereafter ensuring the City continues to meet the cost of utility fund expenditures. Council approved the resolutions with a few voted changes to the initial percent of increases for the utilities.

Before the utility rate increases approved in May 2016, the last time Boulder City raised utility rates was in 2009. To avoid increasing utility rates during the economic downturn, the City postponed many Capital Projects. As the City's annual operating and maintenance cost continued to rise, fewer Capital projects were able to be constructed, leading to service outages and costlier emergency repairs. Increases have been made to customer bills over the past eight years to cover pass-through charges from the Southern Nevada Water Authority, but none of the increases were to cover the City's increasing operating and capital cost. To ensure the City would be able to cover the increasing operating and maintenance cost and construct capital improvement projects, Resolutions No. 6489, 6490, and 6491 were approved as part of the Fiscal Year 2016-17 Budget.

Staff recommends the resolutions that include the annual 2.5% rate increase stay in place until the upcoming rate study is completed and the Utility Advisory Committee has the ability to review the results and provide a further recommendation to City Council. The continued implementation of an annual rate increase is a sound practice that helps ensure the continuance of healthy ending fund balances along with the following reasons:

- Enterprise funds, by definition, are intended to be self-sufficient. The voter-approved capital improvement fund provides an additional \$9,815,000 (FY20 – FY23) for water, sewer, electric, and landfill capital projects that are not supported by the revenue generated by the funds. Eliminating the 2.5% rate increase will only exacerbate the inability of the funds to be self-sufficient.
- As presented in the April 10, 2019, Budget Workshop, each of the utility ending fund balances will otherwise be significantly reduced (depicted in the financial section).
- Construction costs for CIP projects are increasing. For example, the Boulder City Parkway Project has risen by almost \$4M in less than three years.
- Water and electric conservation programs are effective, and usage has remained relatively flat over the past five years.
- Costs for contracting, goods, and services continue to increase. The average Consumer Price Index (CPI) from 2001 through 2018 is 2.06%.
- The small annual increases provide for future rate stability and avoidance of future rate shock.
- Additional revenue from the annual increases in the water utility could be used to help pay off the debt from the raw water line bonds.
- Condition assessments have not been completed for the three utilities, and there is a concern that additional capital projects will be required to address aging infrastructure. Delaying the 2.5% increase will likely lead to higher rate increases in the future.

In order to quantify the effect of repealing the utility rate resolution’s 2.5% increase, staff has created a table for each utility fund to project what the loss in fund balance would be, as depicted in the financial section below.

Financial:

	With 2.5% Increase	With No Increase	Projected Loss in Fund Balance
Electric			
FY20	\$2,882,910	\$2,278,092	\$604,818
FY21	\$4,754,287	\$3,541,627	\$1,212,660
FY22	\$5,165,108	\$3,341,567	\$1,823,541

FY23	\$5,185,626	\$2,748,148	\$2,437,477
FY24	\$4,934,582	\$1,880,099	\$3,054,482

	With 2.5% Increase	With No Increase	Projected Loss in Fund Balance
Water**			
FY20	\$806,513	\$554,223	\$252,290
FY21	\$1,793,064	\$1,135,911	\$657,153
FY22	\$2,358,812	\$1,143,448	\$1,215,364
FY23	\$2,093,180	\$165,469	\$1,927,711
FY24***	\$477,077	(\$2,317,914)	\$2,794,991

	With 2.5% Increase	With No Increase	Projected Loss in Fund Balance
Sewer			
FY20	\$467,074	\$422,053	\$45,021
FY21	\$1,022,630	\$846,593	\$176,037
FY22*	(\$1,094,037)	(\$1,491,804)	\$397,767
FY23	(\$1,321,537)	(\$2,036,704)	\$715,167
FY24	(\$1,898,413)	(\$3,031,855)	\$1,133,443
Sewer (does not include \$2.5M Force Main project in FY22)			
FY20	\$467,074	\$422,053	\$45,021
FY21	\$1,022,630	\$846,593	\$176,037
FY22	\$1,405,963	\$1,008,196	\$397,767
FY23	\$1,178,463	\$463,296	\$715,167
FY24	\$601,587	(\$531,855)	\$1,133,443

*Large CIP project for Sewer – Force Main at Treatment Plant (\$2.5M)

**Effective water revenue increase is 1% annually, assuming water use will reduce by 1.5% due to conservation efforts under the 2.5% increase scenario. Water revenue decrease is projected under no increase scenario due to natural conservation efforts (sod reduction, new fixtures, etc.)

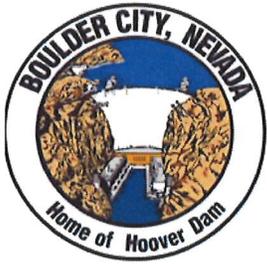
***Large dip in fund balance is due to ALL CIP projects for that year being funded only from Water Fund.

1. All funds are funding their required 20% fund balance and their proportional share of the \$5M Emergency CIP Fund for Utilities. The ending fund balance is after these contributions.

Boulder City Strategic Plan Goal: The annual 2.5% rate adjustment ensures the City accomplishes Goal A of achieving prudent financial stewardship by continuing self-sustaining funds, ensuring budget reserves are met and establishing an emergency fund. The rate adjustment also supports Goal B by continuing the revenue source to invest in the City's infrastructure via capital improvements.

Department Recommendation: The Utilities Department respectfully requests that Resolution No. 6489, Resolution No. 6490, and Resolution No. 6491 that include the annual 2.5% rate increase stay in place until such time that the upcoming rate study is completed and recommendations from the newly created Utility Advisory Committee be considered by the City Council.

Communications Division Statement



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 13, 2019

Contact:

Lisa LaPlante, Communications Manager
702-293-9302 or llaplante@bcnv.org

Boulder City Tap Transmission Substation Project Statement

BOULDER CITY – The staff in Boulder City Utilities and Public Works Departments pulled together the following information at the request of residents regarding the delay in energizing the Boulder City Tap Transformer.

- Staff installed the new transformer next to the current unit in Spring 2018, and noticed the leak in July 2018. Staff notified the manufacturer via phone.
- One of the manufactured parts needed to be replaced with a new manufactured part which took several weeks to complete.
- Once the manufacturer received the part, the City was notified the part was incorrect and another one had to be manufactured.
- The manufacturer's crews were onsite the week of January 28, 2019 to install the new part. Staff is currently testing the system under pressure to insure the new part does not leak. We plan on keeping it under pressure for 2 more weeks. Once we confirm that the repair is complete and the product meets our expectations, we'll release final payment to the manufacturer, Virginia Transformer.
- The City holds a 5-year warranty on the new transformer, which will begin once we release final payment.

The following pages provide background on the project.

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PARKS & RECREATION DIRECTOR
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Boulder City Tap Transmission Substation Upgrade Project Background

The BC Tap upgrade project involves replacement of:

- a transformer that connects the Boulder City 69,000 Volt transmission system to the 230,000 Volt regional transmission system owned by the U.S. Western Area Power Administration (WAPA)
- 230,000 Volt circuit breakers and associated sensors and relays that protect the WAPA system from a failure on the Boulder City system

The project requires that BC Tap be taken off service for an extended period of time to allow structures to be built and the equipment to be installed and tested. As BC Tap is the only backup power source for the entire City, the main priority of City Staff is that the station must be available during the summer months, when the risk of an extended City-wide electrical outage is least acceptable.

Due to the layout of the BC Tap substation, it is possible to install the new transformer alongside the old transformer, leaving the old transformer in place and ready to be energized if needed. However, once installation of the circuit breakers is started, the substation becomes unavailable as a backup power source for the City until construction is complete, and all equipment is tested and accepted by WAPA for connection to their system.

Given this situation, City Staff's original plan was to install the new transformer in the spring of 2018, followed by installation of the circuit breakers and protection system in the fall of 2018. However, after its installation in April, 2018, the new transformer was found to have oil leaks that the manufacturer considered acceptable, but City Staff did not. The manufacturer did eventually accept the oil leaks as warranty issues, and completed repairs at the end of February, 2019.

The delay in transformer installation has led to a further delay in the second phase of project – installation of the circuit breakers and protection system. City Staff has determined that starting phase 2 of the project now, this close to summer, is needlessly risky: any issue that arises that would prevent WAPA from accepting the new installation for connection to their system could make BC Tap unavailable to provide backup power during the months when the need for air conditioning is most important. The better course of action is to continue to rely on the old transformer for backup power this summer, and to commence breaker replacement starting in October 2019.

Lisa LaPlante

From: Josh Gorman <josh@gorman-co.com>
Sent: Monday, October 29, 2018 3:29 PM
To: Jim Keane; Marvis Poole
Subject: Re: VTC service

Jim

The parts arrived at VTC. They are currently fabricating the solution and plan to be able to ship to you all next week.

What address do you want it sent to? I am told it will weigh between 300 -400 lbs.

The service team is working with the sub contractor that initially dressed the transformer to come out and make this repair.

I will send you all a drawing soon of the piece for your files.

Josh Gorman

Sent from my iPhone

On Oct 18, 2018, at 7:54 AM, Jim Keane <JKeane@bcnv.org> wrote:

Josh:

Any update? Also, do you have any plans of the repair that you can send us to review?

Thanks.

*Jim Keane, P.E., Acting Public Works Director/City Engineer
City of Boulder City
401 California Avenue, Boulder City, NV 89005
(702) 293-9200 / jkeane@bcnv.org*

From: Josh Gorman [<mailto:josh@gorman-co.com>]
Sent: Friday, September 21, 2018 6:53 AM
To: Jim Keane <JKeane@bcnv.org>; Marvis Poole <MPoole@bcnv.org>; Rory Dwyer <RDwyer@bcnv.org>
Subject: RE: VTC service

Good morning guys,

I wanted to give you an update on the VTC repair. The parts for the new piping should be arriving to the factory the end of next week. It will take a couple weeks to fabricate the part. Then we can schedule the site visit to get it installed.

Looks like 4-6 weeks.

Josh Gorman

Sales Representative

<image003.jpg>

4819 35th Street
Phoenix, AZ 85040

602 470-0400 (office)

602 470-1733 (fax)

josh@gorman-co.com

<http://www.gorman-co.com>

From: Jim Keane <JKeane@bcnv.org>

Sent: Wednesday, June 20, 2018 4:48 PM

To: Josh Gorman <josh@gorman-co.com>; Marvis Poole <MPoole@bcnv.org>; Rory Dwyer <RDwyer@bcnv.org>

Subject: RE: VTC service

Josh:

Yes, they did get started. I haven't had the chance to get out there yet. They said they will be done by the end of next week.

Thanks.

Jim Keane, P.E., Acting Public Works Director/City Engineer

City of Boulder City

401 California Avenue, Boulder City, NV 89005

(702) 293-9200 / jkeane@bcnv.org

From: Josh Gorman [<mailto:josh@gorman-co.com>]

Sent: Wednesday, June 20, 2018 2:11 PM

To: Marvis Poole <MPoole@bcnv.org>; Jim Keane <JKeane@bcnv.org>; Rory Dwyer <RDwyer@bcnv.org>

Subject: VTC service

Good afternoon guys,

How is everything going this week with the VTC service? Did they get started promptly on Monday?

Josh Gorman

Sales Representative

<image004.jpg>

4819 35th Street
Phoenix, AZ 85040

602 470-0400 (office)

602 470-1733 (fax)

josh@gorman-co.com

<http://www.gorman-co.com>

Lisa LaPlante

From: Marvis Poole
Sent: Tuesday, January 8, 2019 10:51 AM
To: Jim Keane; Josh Gorman
Subject: RE: VTC repair

Thank you,

Marvis E. Poole
Electrical Distribution Supervisor
City of Boulder City, NV
mpoole@bcnv.org
702.293.9249

From: Jim Keane
Sent: Tuesday, January 08, 2019 8:36 AM
To: Josh Gorman; Marvis Poole
Subject: RE: VTC repair

Thanks Josh.

Jim Keane, P.E., City Engineer
City of Boulder City
401 California Avenue, Boulder City, NV 89005
(702) 293-9200 / jkeane@bcnv.org

From: Josh Gorman [<mailto:josh@gorman-co.com>]
Sent: Tuesday, January 8, 2019 8:22 AM
To: Marvis Poole <MPoole@bcnv.org>
Cc: Jim Keane <JKeane@bcnv.org>
Subject: VTC repair

Marvis

As discussed yesterday, the VTC repair is going to be scheduled for the week of January 28th. Someone from Electrical Technologies will be contacting you to coordinate.

Josh Gorman

Sales Representative

GORMANCO

4819 35th Street
Boulder City, NV 89005

602 470-0400 (office)
602 470-1733 (fax)

josh@gorman-co.com

<http://www.gorman-co.com>

Lisa LaPlante

From: Josh Gorman <josh@gorman-co.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 29, 2019 5:19 PM
To: Marvis Poole
Cc: Mike Sterner; Jim Keane
Subject: Re: VTC - Boulder City, NV conservator pipe replacement

Marvis.

auto correct.

Josh Gorman

Sent from my iPhone

On Jan 29, 2019, at 6:18 PM, Josh Gorman <josh@gorman-co.com> wrote:

Thanks Marcus

Josh Gorman

Sent from my iPhone

On Jan 29, 2019, at 5:32 PM, Marvis Poole <MPoole@bcnv.org> wrote:

Mike,

Please have crew reach out to me once they arrive on site.
Will give instructions and direction from there.

I have a Substation Tech lined up to meet them and lead them to the Boulder Tap where transformer is located.

Thank you,

Marvis E. Poole
Electrical Distribution Supervisor
City of Boulder City, NV
mpoole@bcnv.org
702.293.9249

From: Mike Sterner [<mailto:Mike@electrical-technologies.com>]
Sent: Tuesday, January 29, 2019 4:28 PM
To: Josh Gorman; Marvis Poole; Jim Keane
Subject: Re: VTC - Boulder City, NV conservator pipe replacement

All,

Our crew will be on site tomorrow morning at 8AM. We need someone to be there to make sure we can access the site.

John Suman is our onsite contact and lead for this project. His number is

Please reach out to me or John as soon as possible to confirm that someone will be onsite and that you are ready for us in the morning.

Thanks,

Mike

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From: Josh Gorman <josh@gorman-co.com>

Sent: Tuesday, January 29, 2019 5:13 PM

To: Marvis Poole; Jim Keane

Cc: Mike Sterner

Subject: RE: VTC - Boulder City, NV conservator pipe replacement

Good Afternoon Marvis & Jim,

Mike Sterner with Electrical Technologies is working to schedule the VTC work for next week. Their crew will be arriving on site on **1/30**.

He has some questions regarding the site, equipment and logistics that he would like to discuss with you in advance. Can you please reach out to him at your earliest convenience? His contact info is below.

Mike Sterner

Project Manager

<image001.jpg>

16145 Table Mountain Pkwy

Golden, CO 80403

Office: (303) 462-0317