

TELECOMMUNICATIONS UTILITY

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

May 27, 2020

4:00 p.m.

Harold E. Getty Council Chambers

Members present: Kajtazovic, Kurtenbach, Pilkington, and Van Fleet. Absent: Batemon
City Council Board Liaison Juon was present.

Moved by Kurtenbach seconded by Pilkington that the Agenda, as proposed, be approved. Voice-vote Ayes: Four. Motion carried.

Moved by Pilkington seconded by Kurtenbach that the minutes of February 26, 2020, be approved. Voice vote-Ayes: Four. Motion carried.

Update on broadband study progress.

Mr. Van Fleet provided an update on the broadband study with Magellan Advisors. He noted they are planning to send the study out to city leaders in June and will hold an update meeting with city leadership to review in June as well. They are still finalizing the information included in the study but noted that it will include an overview of capital expenditures, infrastructure plans, staffing needs, revenue modeling, product price points, and business modeling. He expressed optimism about the results of the study and noted that the board and city have a lot of work ahead. Next steps will include taking the plan to the city and the board for review.

Mr. Kurtenbach questioned if there is concern that the city does not have another utility to tap into.

Mr. Van Fleet commented that when they have looked at modeling their plan is to have some cross-pollination with the water utility, especially when it comes to customer service. This is both for onboarding customer service and bill pay.

Discussion of CARES Act and EDA Funding.

Mr. Van Fleet explained that the city might be eligible to receive governors discretionary funding or funding through the CARES Act.

Mrs. Juon commented that the governor allocated funding to get rural communities connected to broadband and questioned if this is similar to the funding Mr. Van Fleet was referring.

Mr. Van Fleet commented that he would need to check into that. He added that EDA funding is available to any municipality wishing to apply. He added that Courtney Violet with Magellan Advisors recommended applying for a \$3 million dollar grant for designing and constructing the utility. Magellan Advisors has a grant writer on staff that would be able to assist the city with applying for a grant.

Mrs. Juon commented that INRCOG would be able to provide some support for applying for EDA funding.

Mr. Pilkington added that the board would want to consider using INRCOG if applying for an infrastructure grant through EDA as INRCOG is the EDA six county contact for infrastructure.

Mr. Van Fleet commented that, as he understands it, there is not a deadline for this grant process and can be utilized based on whatever project comes to them.

Mr. Pilkington commented that the board should remain realistic about EDA funding, as much of it is earmarked for specific regions.

Mr. Kurtenbach questioned if the city can offer services to other communities and if that would be beneficial to obtaining additional grant funds.

Mr. Van Fleet commented that they were reluctant to go beyond city boundaries from political and infrastructure standpoints.

Chris Youngblut, IT Director, commented that Magellan Advisors was reluctant to provide recommendations on providing services outside of Waterloo city limits.

Mrs. Juon questioned if Magellan Advisors has looked at working with Cedar Falls Utilities as she spoke to someone on the board of trustees and they expressed interest in working with Waterloo.

Mr. Van Fleet commented that it would be a good question to raise in the working session next week, when Magellan Advisors meets with city staff.

Ms. Kajtazovic questioned if broadband could be regionalized and provided as a service for the entire county.

Mr. Kurtenbach commented that the Telecommunications Board's purpose is to provide services to the City of Waterloo, but would be open to expanding those services outside the city.

Chris Wendland, Clark, Butler, Walsh, and Hammond Law Firm, commented that the referendum provided for the establishment of a utility board for the city of Waterloo because that is the extent of the jurisdiction the city could operate within. The board would have to look at creating a 28E agreement to provide services to other jurisdictions.

Mr. Kurtenbach commented that he would like to leave an option open to work with other communities.

Mr. Van Fleet commented he would discuss the board's thoughts on providing services to other communities with Magellan Advisors.

Discussion of next steps for the board.

Mr. Van Fleet stated that the next steps would be to review the initial draft with city leaders and a subset of this group with Magellan Advisors next week and provide feedback on the draft. Next, the board will review the second draft of the study with Magellan Advisors so that they can provide feedback. Magellan will then revise the plan again. He stated that he would need to have further discussion with the board on next steps for presenting the study to council and the community.

Adjournment

Mr. Kurtenbach questioned if the next meeting will be lengthy.

Mr. Van Fleet commented that he anticipates the meeting being longer and that he may have Magellan Advisors attend to engage in discussion. He added that he would know more after the meeting with Magellan Advisors and would communicate with the group.

Mr. Kurtenbach commented that if the board were to discuss a draft of the study at the next meeting, he would appreciate receiving a copy well ahead of the meeting so that he has plenty of time to review.

With no further business before the board, it was moved by Pilkington seconded by Kajtazovic that the meeting be adjourned at 4:25 p.m. Voice-vote Ayes: Four. Motion carried.

Kelley Felchle
City Clerk