



City of Homer

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Memorandum 20-165

TO: Mayor Castner and Homer City Council
THROUGH: Rob Dumouchel, City Manager
FROM: Elizabeth Walton, Finance Director
DATE: October 6, 2020
SUBJECT: Water and Sewer Rate Model – Rate Scenarios

There has been some interest in performing a what-if analysis on adjusting the reserve requirement and its implications on the utility rates. Staff spent time identifying a couple different scenarios that aligned with previous council conversations. Below are descriptions on four different rate scenarios. Included as supplemental information to this memo are detailed rate models for each scenario and a comparison chart. This chart compares each of the proposed rates with our existing 2020 rate.

Scenario 1 – Maintain Current Rate Model (15% Reserve Requirement)

This scenario keeps everything status quo and utilizes a 15% reserve requirement. All other line items and definitions remain consistent with the original proposed model.

The model under these terms proposes the following rates:

Water Rates:

Commodity (per gal): \$0.0133

Bulk (per gal): \$0.0173

Monthly Fees: \$13

Sewer Rates:

Non-Lift Station: \$0.0157

Lift Station: \$0.0256

Scenario 2 – Utilize Current Rate Model, Amend to 10% Reserve Requirement

This scenario utilizes rate model, but amends the reserve requirement to 10% (instead of the original 15%). All other line items and definitions remain consistent with the original proposed model.

The model under these terms proposes the following rates:

Water Rates:

Commodity (per gal): \$0.0126

Bulk (per gal): \$0.0166

Monthly Fees: \$13

Sewer Rates:

Non-Lift Station: \$0.0149

Lift Station: \$0.0247

Scenario 3 – Utilize Current Rate Structure, Amend Inputs to match 2021 Budgeted Costs

This scenario utilizes current rate model structure, but amends inputs to match the adopted 2021 budgeted costs. The following line items in the water model were adjusted to match the budget: total revenue required, reserve requirement and service fee deduction. The hydrant rents line item is amended, as it is a fraction of the total revenue required. All other line items and definitions remain consistent with the original proposed model.

The model under these terms proposes the following rates:

Water Rates:

Commodity (per gal): \$0.0130

Bulk (per gal): \$0.0170

Monthly Fees: \$14

Sewer Rates:

Non-Lift Station: \$0.0148

Lift Station: \$0.0249

Scenario 4 – Utilize Current Rate Model, Amend to 2021 Budgeted Reserve Transfer

This scenario utilizes the current rate model, but amends the reserve requirement to match the FY21 budgeted reserve transfer (instead of the original 15%). All other line items and definitions remain consistent with the original proposed model.

The model under these terms proposes the following rates:

Water Rates:

Commodity (per gal): \$0.0127

Bulk (per gal): \$0.0167

Monthly Fees: \$13

Sewer Rates:

Non-Lift Station: \$0.0138

Lift Station: \$0.0237

Current Rates:

To provide additional context our current rates are as follows:

Water Rates:

Commodity (per gal): \$0.0132

Bulk (per gal): \$0.0172

Monthly Fees: \$13

Sewer Rates:

Non-Lift Station: \$0.0145

Lift Station: \$0.0224

Recommendation:

Without a detailed analysis on the budgetary implications of changing the inputs of the rate model it would seem to be worth considering Scenario 3, as it would further connect the model with our budget.

Future considerations should be given to adjusting the schedule of water/sewer rate passage. Some efficiencies could be found in timing the rate setting discussion around our budget schedule.