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Staff Report

To: Honorable Chairman, Board of Trustees
From: Roger Kolman, Trust Manager
Re: Automatic Meter Reading System
Date: 9/9/19

BACKGROUND

The Coweta Public Works Authority owns and operates a domestic water system with approximately 3,500 meters spread across the City and into certain parts of surrounding Wagoner County. Currently, these meters are read through a manual process by Public Works employees walking to each meter and entering the read into a handheld electronic entry system. That information is then uploaded into the utility billing system, which generates a list of abnormal reads that are sent back out for rereading.

In the field, the meter readers may encounter meter boxes with vehicles parked on top of them or filled with water or dirt. If the box is filled with water or dirt, the water must be pumped out, or the dirt dug out, prior to the meter being read. In the case of a car parked on top of the box, the meter reader may have to return several times to read the meter if the owner cannot be immediately contacted.

Automatic Meter Reading (AMR) systems generally consist of a water meter that is joined to a battery-operated radio that reports read data to a data collection device that is contained in a vehicle. Depending upon the surrounding terrain, most modern AMR's will consistently broadcast for 4 to 5 city blocks to the vehicle doing the data collection. As a result, one person, in one vehicle, can accurately read all the meters in Coweta's domestic water system in under 4 hours.

An additional advantage of these systems is that they retain data on approximately 90 days of water consumption, by hour, which can be provided to the customer upon request. This data helps customers better manage their water consumption and determine if a leak may be present.

The modern battery and radio systems generally will last for 15 to 20 years before the battery and/or meter needs to be replaced.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the Trustees direct staff to initiate a public bid process to replace the existing manual read meters and infrastructure with a drive by automatic meter reading system.

ATTACHMENTS

None.