



City of Cambridge
Cambridge Utilities Commission Meeting Minutes
City Hall Conference Room – 410 Academy Street
December 5, 2023, 6PM

Cambridge Utilities Commissioners Present:

Dewey Barlow
Derek Griffin
Stephen Rideout, Mayor

Also Present:

City Manager Thomas Carroll
Finance Director Deborah Cooper
City Engineer George Hyde, PE
Public Services Director Wayne Suggs
Assistant City Engineer Carl “Bucky” Jackson, PE

Utilities Manager Ed Bramble
Utilities Superintendent James Hurley

Agenda

Mayor Rideout opened the meeting at 6:00 p.m. and invited everyone to introduce themselves. Pleasantries were exchanged. Derek Griffin asked if they were going to have a proper swearing in, and the City Manager went to get the City’s oath book from his office. While he was doing so, Utilities Manager Ed Bramble provided some of the history of the water utility and the Municipal Utilities Commission. Mayor Rideout gave some additional history and described how the Commissioners of Cambridge have replaced the former Municipal Utilities Commission (MUC) with the Cambridge Utilities Commission, (CUC).

Discussion ensued and covered a wide range of topics. Topics discussed included how enterprise funds work to keep monies legally separated from other funds, how rates are calculated, how much working capital is in both the water and sewer funds, the contract the City has had for almost 30 years with Maryland Environmental Services (MES), capital planning, sewer camera solutions, risks of systems failures, the West End Sewer project currently out for bid, personnel, utility billing, the City’s GIS, impact fees, rates relative to other municipalities and how low our rates are, and more. The CUC commissioners asked a number of questions which were answered by various staff members.

The CUC commissioners all noted that the City's utilities seem to be in very good shape and plans are being developed to make sure this continues. Mr. Rideout asked about future meeting agendas and the commissioners discussed a desire to have specific topics with staff reports drilling down deeply into the issues at hand. A specific topic might include the costs and benefits of purchasing our own sewer camera system vs. contracting it out from time to time, rate comparisons, procedures for late payments or turnoffs of services, etc. Mr. Rideout asked if there was anything the commissioners should have asked about that they had not. Mr. Carroll stated that he thought the sewer collections would need more human resources to move towards a proactive system. Mr. Jackson noted that there is a third underground utility that does not have a service charge but which is aging: the city's stormwater system.

Before the ending concluded, the City Manager administered an oath of office to all three CUC commissioners.

Mr. Griffin moved to adjourn, and the motion was seconded by Mr. Barlow. The motion to adjourn was approved 3-0. The meeting was thus adjourned at 7:10 p.m.

I hereby certify that the foregoing is a true and accurate account of the Cambridge Utilities Commission meeting on Tuesday, December 5, 2023, insofar as I personally am aware.



Stephen W. Rideout
Mayor