

# STOUGHTON UTILITIES COMMITTEE REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

Monday, October 20, 2025 – 5:30 p.m.

Stoughton, WI

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**Location:** Edmund T. Malinowski Board Room, Stoughton Utilities Administration Office  
600 South Fourth Street, Stoughton, Wisconsin  
Optional Virtual Participation: Teams Meeting ID: 226 346 779 828 5

**Members Present:** Citizen Member Carl Chenoweth, Citizen Member David Erdman (Chair), Alderperson Regina Hirsch, Alderperson Greg Jenson, Mayor Tim Swadley, Citizen Member Dustin Thoren (Vice-Chair), Alderperson Jordan Tilleson

**Excused:** None

**Absent:** None

**Others Present:** Stoughton Utilities Assistant Director Brian Hoops, Stoughton Utilities & WPPI Energy Services Manager Darren Jacobson, Tami Olszewski (Ehlers Public Finance Advisors), Stoughton Utilities Director Adam Schleicher, Stoughton Utilities Finance Manager Shannon Statz, Daniele Thompson (St. Marie Law, LLC), Reijo Wahlin (STI, Inc.),

**Call to Order:** The chair called the regular Stoughton Utilities Committee Meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. Chenoweth, Hirsch, Jenson, Swadley, Thoren, and Tilleson were present in person. Erdman attended by phone.

**Verification of Quorum:** The chair verified that a quorum of the committee membership was present.

**Certification of Compliance with Open Meetings Law:** Hoops certified that the meeting had been properly noticed in compliance with open meetings law.

**Public Comments:** Thompson and Wahlin presented their application for a private well operation permit, included on the agenda as New Business item number four.

**Utilities Committee Consent Agenda:** Stoughton Utilities staff presented and discussed the Stoughton Utilities Committee consent agenda items. Discussion followed.

Motion by Chenoweth, the motion seconded by Tilleson, to approve the following consent agenda items as presented:

- a. Minutes of the September 22, 2025 Regular Utilities Committee Meeting
- b. Stoughton Utilities Payments Due List Report
- c. Stoughton Utilities Statistical Report
- d. Stoughton Utilities Activities Report
- e. Communications

The motion carried unanimously 7 to 0.

**Status of the Utilities Committee recommendation(s) to the Stoughton Common Council:** Stoughton Utilities staff informed the committee that no items from recent committee meetings had been recently approved and/or placed on file by the Stoughton Common Council. Staff noted that the utility had received a payment from Alliant Energy for the previously approved easement on McComb Rd. Discussion followed.

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**Update: Stoughton Utilities Administration Building:** Stoughton Utilities staff presented an update on the design status of the proposed new Stoughton Utilities Administration Building. A contract for design services has been executed and meetings have been scheduled to discuss design specifics. A desired timeline is to have all designs and cost estimates prepared in preparation for an early 2026 application submitted to the Public Service Commission of Wisconsin for construction approval, with such approval predicted to be a 9-12 month process. Discussion followed.

Chenoweth had concerns with the proposed schedule and impacts delays might have on the potential sale of the building. It was brought up that a site had not yet been selected, and the committee questioned why, since prior action had been taken by the committee and council. Swadley informed the committee that the council had not approved a specific site. Discussion followed regarding site selection and timelines. Staff explained that they will continue to push the architect for an expedited schedule. Discussion followed.

The committee requested this item be brought back for additional discussion and potential action if there are any additional budgetary impacts.

**Wastewater Treatment Facility and Sanitary Sewer Collection System 2024 Compliance Maintenance Annual Report (CMAR): DNR Response:** Stoughton Utilities staff presented an update to the annual CMAR filing, which was approved by the Utilities Committee and Common Council in June and filed with the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR). The WDNR has received and approved the CMAR filing, providing favorable comments, and no further action is needed until the 2025 CMAR filing that will occur in June 2026.

**Private Well Operation Permit Application: STI Holdings, LLC:** Stoughton Utilities staff discussed the application received from STI Holdings for a new private well operation permit, a copy of which was included in the committee's packet of meeting materials. Staff presented a background of regulatory references related to Stoughton's private well permitting program, including Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Administrative Code NR810.16 and Stoughton Municipal Code Secs. 74-146 and 74-2.

Staff's made a recommendation to the committee to deny the private well operation permit, with the recommendation based on the following criteria: whether "water mains are available", there is a "need for use," of a private well in addition to water that can be provided from the public water supply, the installation is "necessary," and the well will be "routinely used." Staff explained to the committee that the customer's needs can be met by the existing public water supply via the facility's existing water connection and private fire hydrants. Staff further explained that the utility has actively pursued well abandonment whenever possible, and no new wells have been permitted since the inception of the private well regulation and ordinance where no well previously existed.

Discussion followed, including Q&A between the committee and Thompson and Wahlin representing STI Holdings, LLC. Topics of discussion included regulatory requirements, public health and safety, potential well contamination, stormwater retention needs, stocking stormwater ponds with fish, potential partnership with Stoughton Parks & Recreation for irrigation use, ongoing maintenance requirements, construction schedules, and the existing developer's agreement.

Motion by Chenoweth, the motion seconded by Hirsch, to deny approval of the application for a private well operation permit submitted by STI Holdings, LLC, and to recommend the same to the Stoughton Common Council at an upcoming meeting. The motion carried 6 to 0, with Jenson abstaining.

Thompson and Wahlin left the meeting at 6:16 p.m.

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**Stoughton Utilities & City of Stoughton Investments: Annual Report:** Stoughton Utilities staff introduced Ms. Tami Olszewski of Ehlers Public Finance Advisors who presented a review of Stoughton Utilities cash and investment management portfolio. Discussion followed.

The committee requested that Ehlers review the current City of Stoughton Investment Policy as it relates to utility investments and suggest areas of potential improvement for various investment scenarios, and prepare an investing services agreement for the utility to further its investing relationship with Ehlers. Discussion followed.

**Stoughton Utilities Proposed 2026 Budget and Five Year (2026 – 2030) Capital Improvement Projects (CIP) Program:** Stoughton Utilities staff presented and discussed current financial projections that were used to create the proposed 2026 electric, water, and wastewater operating budgets. Information about the current financial health of the utility was presented, as well as rate forecasts and comparisons.

Staff explained that the 2026 budget assumes a slight increase in sales in all three utilities, based on consumption trends seen in 2025. However, trends indicate that all three utilities should expect continued conservation, despite the accelerated growth in new development.

Staff discussed proposed 2025 utility staff wage adjustments and shared that the budget includes an estimated 3.5% wage increase, but referred to the previously approved Stoughton Utilities wage adjustment policy which requires that individual positions be analyzed and compared with market comparisons to set 2026 wages, and that an across-the-board wage increase will not occur. Two new positions are included in the budget: a utilities administrative assistant and a utilities systems automation coordinator.

Staff presented the anticipated future rate increases and debt issuances for each utility and informed the committee that they are the result of a continued aggressive water and sewer main replacement program and construction of a new administration building. Current rate projections indicate a total increase of \$55.43 per month at the end of a five-year period for the average residential customer living within the City of Stoughton. Staff shared that these increases are in line with increases that have been and continue to be implemented across Dane County, and presented a rate comparison of current electric, water, and wastewater rates of Stoughton and its surrounding communities. Staff further presented a history of going education and outreach efforts targeted at informing customers about future rate projections.

Staff informed the committee that the previously approved five-year (2026-2030) Capital Improvement Projects (CIP) program had been increased by \$90,000 to carry over funds for an electric project that will not be completed in 2025.

Jenson left the meeting at 6:35 p.m.

Discussion followed. Staff informed the committee that the proposed budget and CIP will be presented to the Stoughton Common Council on October 28, 2025, and is scheduled for adoption on November 11, 2025.

Motion by Chenoweth, the motion seconded by Thoren, to approve the Stoughton Utilities proposed 2026 budget appropriations in the sum of \$21,950,479 and for purposes herein set forth by the same, and approve the proposed five year (2026-2030) capital improvement projects (CIP) program, and recommend approval to the Stoughton Common Council at its November 11, 2025 meeting. The motion carried unanimously 6 to 0.

**Addition of a Stoughton Utilities Systems Automation Coordinator Position:** Stoughton Utilities staff discussed current staffing levels, and advised the committee that it has been determined that there is a need for a specialized technical position that will be focused on tasks associated with utility automation system

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technologies, including the existing supervisor control and data acquisition (SCADA) systems and outage management system (OMS), as well as potential automation advancements that will increase staff productivity and reliability of services. Staff advised the committee that funding was included in the 2026 operating budget that was approved earlier in the meeting. Staff presented a final job description to the committee for review, and advised the committee that the Stoughton Personnel Committee had acted on October 6, 2025 to approve the description. Discussion followed.

Motion by Hirsch, the motion seconded by Chenoweth, to approve the addition of a Stoughton Utilities Systems Automation Coordinator position and recommend approval of the same to the Stoughton Common Council at an upcoming meeting. The motion carried unanimously 6 to 0.

## **Release of Easement Rights to Platted Utility Easements in the Magnolia Springs Development:**

Stoughton Utilities staff presented a request from the developer of the Magnolia Springs Subdivision to release the utility's rights to a platted utility easement that was established during the creation of the certified survey map due to conflicts with an overlapping stormwater easement. Staff explained that a new utility easement is being created as part of the same process, and that staff has no concerns with the easement release. Discussion followed.

Motion by Chenoweth, the motion seconded by Hirsch, to approve the release of easement rights to the platted utility easements on Lots 32-43, 77-88, and 97-104 of Magnolia Springs, recorded as Document No. 5952542, and Outlot 1 and Lot 1 of CSM 16872, recorded as Document No. 6049784, and recommend approval of the same to the Stoughton Common Council at an upcoming meeting. The motion carried unanimously 6 to 0.

**Stoughton Utilities RoundUP Program:** Stoughton Utilities staff presented and discussed the Stoughton Utilities Round-Up Program. A brief description of the program was provided to the committee, noting the list of 19 eligible organizations and their application materials that were included in the meeting packet. Staff recommended the committee award a \$1,500 donation from the 2025 Stoughton Utilities RoundUP Program to an eligible applicant(s). Discussion followed.

Motion by Chenoweth, the motion seconded by Teilleson, to donate \$1,500 from the Stoughton Utilities RoundUP Program to the Stoughton United Methodist Food Pantry. The motion carried unanimously 6 to 0.

**Utilities Committee Future Agenda Items:** Stoughton Utilities staff informed the committee that future agenda items include a presentation by Mike Peters, CEO of WPPI Energy, a public hearing for, and adoption of a drinking water supply service area plan required by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, investment review follow-up from Ehlers, and an update on the design progress and site selection for a new Stoughton Utilities administration building. Discussion followed.

**Adjournment:** Being no further business before the committee, motion by Tilleson, the motion seconded by Chenoweth, to adjourn the meeting at 7:23 p.m. The motion carried unanimously 6-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Brian R. Hoops

Assistant Stoughton Utilities Director