



MINUTES

WATER & SEWER COMMITTEE

AMUNDSON COMMUNITY CENTER
200 SPRING ST., CAMBRIDGE, WI 53523
TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 17, 2026, 6:30 PM

1. **CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL:** President Hollenbeck called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

Members Present – President Hollenbeck, Steve Struss, Mat Hughson, and Matt Dozois

Members Absent – Trustee Schulz

Others – Amy Coggin, Utility Clerk Josie Stine, Utility Superintendent Darnell, and Administrator Breunig

2. **PROOF OF POSTING:** Confirmed - Upper and Lower levels of the Amundson Center, Cambridge Post Office, Badger Bank, Bank First, and the Village website.

3. **PUBLIC COMMENT:**

A property owner, Amy Coggin, contested a \$2,185 water bill for 220 West Main Street, which indicated an unusually high usage of 72,000 gallons. She only found out about the high usage after receiving the bill even though the tenant had been notified by a Village employee.

The committee explained that Public Service Commission (PSC) standards prevent forgiving the water portion of the bill but that relief on the sewer portion is possible if the water did not enter the sewer system. The committee advised waiving late fees until the issue is resolved and proposed that the owner will have a plumber investigate, and the village will monitor usage and can test the meter at the owner's request.

4. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

A motion by Struss, seconded by Hughson, to approve the January 20, 2026, meeting minutes passed unanimously after a brief discussion for procedural clarification.

5. **APPROVAL OF BILLS:**

A discussion was held on whether the committee or the Village Board should approve bills related to utilities to avoid late fees, as the Village has incurred late charges multiple times. It was noted that the committee is a subcommittee, and the current ordinance states it shall review and recommend action to the village board for approval. Even so, the committee is considered better equipped to spot red flags on bills before board approval. Going forward, the committee will review water and sewer bills monthly after they are paid by the Board. If issues are found, they will consider recommending to amend the ordinance to grant the committee pre-payment approval authority.

6. **REPORTS:**

Utility Superintendent Darnell reported the following items to the committee:

- **Meter Replacement:** A significant number of one-inch meters (20+ years old) have been replaced. Work has begun on replacing the three-quarter-inch meters, with over 500 still to go.
- **Sanitary Survey:** Preparations are underway for the sanitary survey, rescheduled for the second week of February.
- **Sewer Jetting:** Jetting was performed in "trouble areas," including South Street and the alley by the fire department, which had severe grease buildup. A goal was proposed to jet 20% of the village's lines annually, cleaning the entire system over five years. The current jetter is old (~40 years), and a new one should be added to the capital improvement plan (e.g., for 2027).
- **Equipment Issues:** A grant was applied for to replace a faulty fluoride scale at a well. The chlorine scale at well house two is scheduled for replacement. A check valve in a new well pump was not functioning, preventing it from

creating pressure; this was disassembled and repaired.

- **Reporting:** It was agreed to condense monthly DNR reports by sending the more concise DNR report directly.
- **Data Logging:** Manual operational logs are later transferred to a computer for official DNR report

7. NEW BUSINESS – ACTION REQUIRED:

a. Water Charges for Marc's Garage, 206 Commerce

This item will be discussed in Closed Session.

b. Discussion and Possible Action on sanitary sewer spot repairs.

A list of troublesome sewer areas was compiled from notes and video footage. Expeditors provided a color-coded response on which areas they could service. Expeditors can perform spot repairs on two stretches (East Madison Street, Johnson Street) for \$5,000. For other areas, a full manhole-to-manhole liner is recommended. Three high-priority areas needing repair were identified: South Street, the alley between East Madison and Pinecrest, and a spot on Ash Street.

The committee decided to get quotes from other companies (Busy Sewer, In Situ Form) for manhole-to-manhole lining in the high-priority areas before proceeding with the \$5,000 spot repairs to evaluate if a larger project is more cost-effective.

c. Discussion and Possible Action for purchasing new meters and radios.

Over 500 water meters are older than the 20-year DNR guideline for replacement or testing. Replacement is easier than testing. Newer, more accurate meters are compatible with the AMI system, which allows real-time monitoring and high-usage alerts. A phased approach of replacing 100 meters (20%) annually was deemed a reasonable target due to budgetary constraints. The upcoming sanitary survey on March 12th is expected to highlight this deficiency. The primary vendor is Core & Main, the primary distributor for compatible Badger Sensus meters in Wisconsin. The committee discussed exploring other vendors or negotiating a quantity discount.

A motion was made by Steve Struss and seconded by Hughson to authorize the superintendent to purchase 12 boxes of meters and 3 boxes of radios, with a spending cap not to exceed \$40,000. Despite budget concerns, the motion was carried via a roll call vote.

d. Discussion and Possible Action of Well #2 Pump Swap, Cleaning, and Inspection.

The pump head at Well number two is leaking oil. Quotes were obtained from Municipal Well and Pump (\$5,030) and CTW (\$5,560). A backup pump head is on-site, which will prevent service disruption. The selected company will install the backup and take the old pump for a no-charge cleaning and inspection.

A motion was made by Steve Struss and seconded by Matt Dozois to contract with Municipal Well and Pump for the swap, cleaning, and inspection at a cost not-to-exceed \$5,030

e. Discussion and Possible Action on replacing the leaking glandular valve with a bellows-type valve in the column pipe of the Water Tower.

A significant ice buildup was discovered inside the water tower, indicating a leak in the fill/draw pipe, likely from a glandular expansion joint. Heat tape and a sump pump are in place as temporary measures. A 2023 report recommended replacing the joint with a bellows-type joint for an estimated \$15,000. The issue should be addressed before next winter. Utility Superintendent Darnell will get quotes from different companies for replacing the valve.

f. Discussion and Possible Action regarding the Water & Sewer Budget.

The committee discussed the need to enter the water and sewer budget, previously created by Ehlers, into the Workhorse system to enable budget vs. actual reporting. Concerns were raised about the accuracy of the Ehlers numbers. The budget numbers will be reviewed for accuracy before being entered into the Workhorse system by the Utility Clerk.

8. QUESTIONS, STAFF REFERRALS, AND FUTURE AGENDA TOPICS:

Cambridge-Oakland Wastewater Commission (COWC) Billing

A discussion was held regarding COWC continuing to bill for a loan that is scheduled for final payment in May. The agreement states charges should only cover operation and maintenance after the loan is paid. COWC's justification is to fund future expansion and equipment breakdowns, but the committee argued current ratepayers should not fund future projects. The village can legally refuse to pay the loan portion of the bill. It was noted that three critical exhibits (C, D, and E) are missing from the agreement document. It was suggested that if the village continues to

collect the funds, the money should be used for the village's own system improvements (e.g., I&I work) rather than go to COWC. COWC reportedly holds ~\$800,000, and the committee questioned if a portion should be returned to Cambridge and Oakland now. A COWC meeting is scheduled for the 25th at 6:30 PM to discuss the issue.

Transition to Electronic Water Billing

The village is encouraging residents to switch to electronic billing to reduce the current \$686/month cost of paper billing. Electronic payment users have increased from 58 to 64. Strategies to increase adoption include public service announcements, social media promotion, and including flyers with the annual Consumer Confidence Report. A discount for electronic billing is not possible due to PSC regulations. A manual process is currently required to remove residents who opt-in to electronic billing from the paper mailings.

Zoning Inquiry

A question was raised about a property in a Business Commercial (BC) zone with a residential tenant, which also had high water usage. The committee noted this should be investigated to see if the property has the required conditional use permit.

9. CLOSED SESSION

The Water & Sewer Committee will convene into Closed Session pursuant to Wis. Stat. §19.85(1)(e) for deliberating or negotiating the purchasing of public properties, the investing of public funds, or conducting other specified public business, whenever competitive or bargaining reasons require a closed session: Negotiations related to Water and Sewer Charges for Marc's Garage, 206 Commerce Ave.

Steve Struss made a motion to enter into Closed Session pursuant to Wis. Stat. §19.85(1)(e). Second by Mat Hughson. Motion carried on a roll call vote.

Yes – Hollenbeck, Struss, Hughson, and Dozois

No - None

10. RECONVENE TO OPEN SESSION

A motion to reconvene in Open Session was made by Struss and seconded by Hughson. Motion carried on a roll call vote.

Yes – Hollenbeck, Struss, Hughson, and Dozois

No - None

11. POSSIBLE ACTION TAKEN ON CLOSED SESSION ITEMS

Motion was made by Struss to direct staff to calculate the credit to Marc's Garage and make payment. Second by Hollenbeck. Motion carried on a voice vote.

12. ADJOURNMENT

A motion to adjourn was made by Stuss and seconded by Hughson. Motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at 8:31 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Brian Wilson, Village Clerk/Treasurer.

These minutes were approved by the Water & Sewer Committee on 3/17/2026.