



MINUTES

WATER & SEWER COMMITTEE
AMUNDSON COMMUNITY CENTER
200 SPRING ST., CAMBRIDGE, WI 53523
TUESDAY, APRIL 21, 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, and Matt Dozois
Members Absent – Trustee Schulz, Mat Hughson
Others –Utility Clerk Josie Stine, Utility Superintendent Darnell, and Village Treasurer Brian Wilson
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:**
None.
4. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**
A motion by Dozois, seconded by Hollenbeck, to approve March 17, 2026, meeting minutes passed with Struss abstaining.
5. **APPROVAL OF BILLS:**
Two bill runs were presented for a total of \$140,169.76. A discussion was held regarding two outstanding previous year expenses invoices from MSA Professional Services and Stafford Legal Services. Concerns were raised about the delay in payment and why reminders were not sent, suggesting the invoices may have been lost due to staffing changes or email issues. The committee decided to hold payment for the MSA and Stafford invoices until their outstanding status is verified with the companies. The motion was amended to approve the bills with the exception of MSA and Stafford Legal Services, which totaled \$2,990.64, until further clarification.
6. **REPORTS:**
Utility Superintendent Darnell reported the following items to the committee:
 - **Well 2 Generator Update:** The new natural gas generator has been delivered and is being installed. The project is expected to be completed by the end of May 2026.
 - **Hydrant Maintenance:** The team is flushing, oiling, and inventorying hydrants to identify necessary replacements. A total of 39 hydrants remain to be serviced.

- **Water Tower Repair:** The repair is scheduled for May 18, 2026, and will take approximately three days. The well will run 24/7 to maintain pressure, and residential use should not be effected. The tower will be inspected, cleaned, and the expansion joint replaced.
- **Chlorine Pump Issue at Well 3:** Ongoing issues with the post-chlorinator pump causing air in the line seem to have been resolved by increasing the stroke rate to 100%. While this uses more chemical, it has been effective for the past week and a half. The root cause is still unknown.
- **Primary Lift Station and Grease Management:** The primary lift station is scheduled for cleaning in May 2026. A grease trap management program is being reinstated, requiring businesses to clean their traps and submit receipts. A new restaurant will be added to the monitoring list.
- **Manhole Inspections and Sewer Jetting:** Manhole inspections are planned to address inflow and infiltration (I&I) issues, with potential replacement of open-grate covers. Sewer jetting is planned for June or July 2026.
- **Staff Training:** Superintendent Darnell will attend an iron removal class at the beginning of May, and is scheduled to take tests for iron removal, zeolite softening, and sanitary sewer collections.

-Sanitary Survey Deficiencies & Program Updates

- The DNR identified three significant deficiencies: an inadequate valve exercising program, an inadequate meter replacement program, and a non-comprehensive cross-connection control program.
- **Valve Exercising Program:** All 400 valves must be exercised by December 31, 2027. The agreed-upon plan is to manually open all accessible valves first, then use specialized equipment for the remaining difficult ones. Purchasing a hydraulic valve exerciser was deemed more sensible than renting long term.
- **Customer Meter Replacement Program:** The current program is inadequate. A new, more feasible target of 100-120 meter replacements per year was set, with a full compliance deadline of 2031. For this year, the plan is to test all two- and three-inch meters; next year's plan is to test or replace all 1 and 1 ½" meters.
- **Cross-Connection Control Program:** The program needs to be restarted. Contracting out commercial inspections is being considered due to time constraints and the need for certified personnel. The timeline is longer due to extensive planning needs.
- **Manpower and Resources:** A lack of manpower was noted as a recommendation from the DNR. The committee discussed hiring a part-time or temporary assistant to help with valve exercising and meter replacements to free up certified staff for more complex tasks.

-Water Loss and Leak Detection

- The 2024 water loss was approximately 26%, attributed to unmetered usage and inaccurate meters.
- A water main leak is suspected on Highway 18 and is believed to have existed for years, evidenced by a wet spot, dead trees, and a positive chlorine field test.

- A pressure test of a 400-foot section failed, dropping from 86 PSI to zero. WRWA will return this spring to help troubleshoot the leak.

-Projects and Regionalization

- **Bulk Water Station Project:** Two locations are being considered: one on Verburg and one by the water tower. More planning and thought is being hashed out between the Village and MSA.
- **Rockdale Wastewater Service:** Rockdale is now live on the system, sending 7,800-8,000 gallons per day. A hookup fee needs to be billed. The team is checking if the existing radio-read system is compatible with Rockdale's meters for verification purposes.

Struss reported the following from the COWC to the committee:

- **Background:** The Clean Water Fund loan for the COWC (Cambridge Oakland Wastewater Commission) will be paid off at the end of April 2026. However, there is an \$898,000 surplus in the repayment fund, likely due to an administrative error where bond payments were increased over time.
- **Dispute over Surplus:** The village believes the surplus should be rebated to users. A proposal was made to use \$277,919 to fully fund COWC's equipment replacement fund and then split the remainder between the member communities (58% village, 42% town). The village would use its share for I&I reduction projects.
- **Dispute over Future Payments:** COWC is considering continuing the bond payment charge as a "return on investment" (ROI) to fund future plant expansion. The committee contests this, arguing the PSC recommends a 2.5-3% ROI, which would be significantly less than the current payment.
- **O&M Increase:** COWC is also requesting a 34% increase in Operation and Maintenance (O&M) costs, which the committee believes can be absorbed by the elimination of the bond payment.
- **Agreement Strategy:** The committee agreed to stop paying the bond portion of the bill and pay only for O&M, forcing COWC to present a new agreement. An appendix related to billing (Appendix A) is missing from the original agreement, creating uncertainty.
- **Billing Correction:** The committee approved a motion to bill COWC \$896.92 to correct a two-year underbilling error where a 3-inch meter was billed as a 2-inch meter.

7. NEW BUSINESS – ACTION REQUIRED

- **Billing Correction:** There was a motion by Steve Struss and seconded by Matt Dozios to approve a bill to the COWC of \$896.92 to correct a two-year underbilling error where a 3-inch meter was billed as a 2-inch meter.
- **Budget Review:** A detailed, broken-down budget for water and sewer was presented for the first time in 5-6 years.
 - Water revenues are at 31% of the objective. Sewer O&M wages are at 123% of budget due to

how time is recorded.

- A miscellaneous water expense of \$4,245 was questioned and needs investigation. The budget will provide a baseline for future capital planning.
- **Grease Traps:** Josie and Blake have a list of businesses with grease traps and will be sending out notifications to these businesses. This will be done by June 2026. The businesses will be required to send receipts to the Village showing proof of the cleaning.

QUESTIONS, STAFF REFERRALS, AND FUTURE AGENDA TOPICS:

- Verify the outstanding status of invoices with MSA Professional Services and Stafford and Rosenbaum before payment.
- Prepare a plan for the next meeting on how to exercise all 400 water valves by the December 2027 deadline.
- Develop a plan for the next meeting on the cost and logistics of hiring a part-time assistant for valve exercising and meter replacements.
- Reach out to contacts from the WRWA conference regarding costs and timelines for meter testing.
- Bill Rockdale for the water system hookup fee.
- Finalize the logistics and location for the new bulk water station.
- Schedule and perform manhole inspections to address I&I issues.
- Add the Highway 18 water leak to the ongoing project list for tracking.
- Superintendent Darnell to find out if MSA can assist with the cross-connection control program or identify the firm used previously.
- Struss to write a formal proposal to COWC regarding the distribution of the \$898,000 in excess funds.
- All committee members review the COWC agreement to clarify the bond payment procedure.
- Bill COWC \$896.92 to correct for the meter size underbilling.
- Investigate the miscellaneous expense of \$4,245 in the water budget.
- Revisit the grease trap management and reporting program and add the new restaurant to the list.

8. ADJOURNMENT:

A motion to adjourn was made by Struss and seconded by Hollenbeck. Motion carried

Meeting adjourned at 8:08pm

Respectfully submitted by Josie Stine, Utility Clerk/Deputy Clerk

These minutes were approved by the Water & Sewer Committee on 05/19/2026.