

City of Scottsbluff, Nebraska

Monday, July 18, 2022

Regular Meeting

Item Reports1

Council to discuss and consider action on entering in an Agreement with Nebraska Municipal Power Pool to conduct a Water and Wastewater Financial Plan, Cost of Service and Rate Design Study and authorize the Mayor to sign the Agreement.

Staff Contact: Liz Loutzenhiser, Finance Director

Agenda Statement

Item No.

For Meeting of: July 18, 2022

AGENDA TITLE: Council to consider approving an Agreement with the Nebraska Municipal Power Pool (NMPP Energy) for conducting a Water and Wastewater Financial Plan, Cost of Service and Rate Design Study.

SUBMITTED BY DEPARTMENT/ORGANIZATION: Public Works

PRESENTATION BY: Kevin Spencer, Elizabeth Loutzenhiser – Interim City Managers

SUMMARY EXPLANATION: The new water meter reading infrastructure allows the City to obtain readings for billing purposes within an hour. This will now allow the City to move from a bimonthly billing to a monthly billing process. To do so, it is prudent to have a Financial Plan, Cost of Service and Rate Design Study conducted to help establish a new monthly rate structure that meets our financial needs.

Anticipating the cost to be under \$30,000, three written quotes were obtained from companies with municipal financial planning and rate study experience. NMPP Energy provided the most cost-effective proposal that meets our needs. Their proposal and Agreement for service are attached for review. Proposals came from:

\$15,790 NMPP Energy
\$38,969 Raftelis (Colorado Office)
\$44,390 Bakertilly (St. Paul, MN)

BOARD/COMMISSION/STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Staff recommends that Council approve using NMPP Energy to provide a Financial Plan, Cost of Service and Rate Design Study for the City and authorize the Mayor to execute the Agreement.

Does this item require the expenditure of funds? X yes no
Are funds budgeted? yes no

If no, comments: Cost will be shared between Water and Wastewater
Estimated Amount \$7,895.00 each
Amount Budgeted Not budgeted, but funding is available
Department Water and Wastewater
Account Description Contractual Service

Approval of funds available _____
City Finance Director

EXHIBITS

Resolution ☐ Ordinance ☐ Contract ☐ Minutes ☐ Plan/Map ☐

Other (specify) NMPP Energy Proposal and Agreement

NOTIFICATION LIST: Yes ☐ No ☐ Further Instructions ☐
Please list names and addresses required for notification.

APPROVAL FOR SUBMITTAL: _____
City Manager

Rev: 12/14/ City Clerk



NMPP MEAN NPGA ACE

Water and Wastewater Financial Plan, Cost of Service and Rate Design Study Proposal

City of Scottsbluff, Nebraska – 6/2/2022

The Nebraska Municipal Power Pool (NMPP) provides consulting services on a nonprofit basis to assist publicly-owned utilities in meeting their strategic and financial objectives. The standard Services Agreements are designed to ensure complete client satisfaction, however other term agreements are available. The cost options for the City of Scottsbluff for Water and Wastewater Financial Plan, Cost of Service and Rate Design Studies are summarized below.

Service	Total Fee Due from Scottsbluff (per Two-Year Study or Update Study)
Water AND Wastewater Cost of Service Study (Financial Plan, 2 Rate Designs and Ordinances, 2 Presentations)	\$15,790
Water Cost of Service Study ONLY (Financial Plan, 2 Rate Designs and Ordinances, 1 Presentation)	\$9,310
Wastewater Cost of Service Study ONLY (Financial Plan, 2 Rate Designs and Ordinances, 1 Presentation)	\$9,310

Further details regarding Financial Plan, Cost of Service and Rate Design Studies by NMPP follow. For questions or additional information, or to request NMPP services of a Financial Plan, Cost of Service and Rate Design Study, contact:

Andrew Ross

Director of Retail Utility Services
and Member Relations
NMPP Energy
8377 Glynoaks Drive
Lincoln, NE 68516

Phone: 402.474.4759
Fax: 402.474.0473
E-mail: aross@nmppenergy.org
Web: www.nmppenergy.org

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NMPPEnergy.org

Study Objectives

An important part of managing utility operations is to understand a utility's financial status; not only for the recent past and current year, but also for future years. To help utilities understand the long-term picture, NMPP's Utility Rate Study begins with the development of a five-year future-looking financial Pro Forma. This financial analysis and model provide the staff and governing body with critical financial parameters such as net operating income, minimum cash reserve policies and other financial targets, borrowing options and debt coverage ratios, and projected cash balances over the planning horizon. The financial plan also analyzes transfers to the general fund, power supply costs, and capital budgets. Five-year rate track recommendations will help deliver desired financial performance for the utility over time.

Through a fully embedded Cost of Service analysis, test year revenue requirements will be functionalized and allocated to rate classes. Cost-based rate elements will be determined for each customer class and used as a guide in rate design. Based on results of this Cost of Service analysis, NMPP will design rates that are fair, reasonable and non-discriminatory and meet with the City's rate objectives. NMPP will work with staff to achieve a satisfactory design of utility rates using cost of service study results as a guideline to move current rates toward cost of service levels while limiting the impact to customers.

Deliverables

Financial Pro Forma – A preliminary Pro Forma is provided to staff for input and discussion. The pro forma will be adjusted as needed to reflect changes in financial expectations and performance.

Executive Summary Report - A Preliminary Executive Summary report is provided to staff for input before it is presented to the Scottsbluff City Council. This report includes summary and discussion of the five-year financial Pro Forma and projected annual rate adjustments and other recommendations.

City Council Presentation of Findings and Recommendations – Once NMPP and Scottsbluff staff have had the opportunity to collaborate, a presentation to the City Council will be performed to review the findings and recommendations of the study.

Rate Design and Ordinances / Schedules - Draft Rate Schedules, Ordinances or Resolutions are provided in Microsoft Word® formats for review and use as amended for City Council consideration for approval.

Project Schedule

Our experience with municipal services agreements allows us to conduct a cost effective and efficient study. Our goal for the City is to have rates designed and implemented 70 days after all requested data has been collected from the staff for each utility.

Regionally and Nationally Recognized Staff

NMPP's project team has the knowledge and experience to successfully meet your requirements, with over 50 years of combined experience performing similar studies for municipal utilities. As a result of our specialized industry knowledge, we are frequently called upon to share our experience with others in the industry. Staff members have given presentations at regional and national seminars, including the

American Public Power Association (APPA), regarding utility financial planning, pricing, restructuring and other issues. This team provides the experience to creatively solve financial and operational issues and to help ensure financial stability for a utility in future years.

Client References

NMPP provides utility related services to almost 200 municipalities similar to Scottsbluff across 5 states. Financial Planning and Cost of Service studies are performed for electric, water, wastewater, gas, and trash utilities across the region. The following is a list of references for our services. Many other references are available upon request.

Client	Contact	Phone	Studies / Other Services
Ansley, NE	Lanette Doane, City Clerk	(308) 935-1467	Electric
Arnold, NE	Patty Lamberty, Clerk/Treasurer	(308) 848-2228	Electric
Belleville, KS Utilities	Neal Lewis, City Mgr.	(785) 527-2288	Electric, Gas, Water, Sewer
Breda, IA	Nancy Janssen, City Clerk	(712) 673-2660	Electric
Bridgeport, NE	Dori Huck, City Clerk	(308) 262-1623	Electric, Water, Sewer
Fonda, IA	Angela Duitsman, City Clerk	(712) 288-4466	Electric
Glenwood Springs, CO	Matt Langhorst, Public Works Dir.	(970) 384-6438	Electric
Gunnison, CO	David Gardner, Public Works Dir.	(970) 641-8000	Electric, Water, Wastewater
Kimball, NE	Bill Hinton, Electric Superintendent	(308) 235-1829	Electric, Water, Wastewater, Trash
Imperial, NE	Jo Leyland, Admin./Clerk/Treas.	(308) 882-4368	Electric
Nebraska City Utilities	Jeff Kohrs, Utility Manager	(785) 527-2288	Electric, Gas, Water, Sewer
North Platte, NE Utilities	Dawn Miller, Dir. of Finance	(308) 535-6740	Electric, Water, Sewer
Seward, NE	Greg Butcher, City Admin.	(402) 643-2928	Electric, Water, Sewer
Stromsburg, NE	Nancy Bryan, City Clerk/Treas.	(402) 764-2561	Electric, Water, Gas
Superior, NE	Andrew Brittenham, Utilities Mgr.	(402) 897-4711	Electric, Gas; Net Metering
West Point, NE	Tom Goulette, City Administrator	(402) 372-2466	Electric
Wray, CO	James DePue, City Manager	(970) 332-4431	Electric, Water, Sewer

It is our sincere hope that NMPP can continue its mission to help serve municipalities such as Scottsbluff with any of their utility related needs.

Respectfully submitted,



Andrew Ross
Director of Retail Utility Services & Member Relations
Nebraska Municipal Power Pool

Appendix A: Sample Financial Plan, Cost of Service and Rate Design Study Agreement

Appendix B: Sample NMPP Utility Data Request

**AGREEMENT FOR
FINANCIAL PLAN, COST OF SERVICE
AND
RATE DESIGN STUDY
FOR WATER AND WASTEWATER RATES**

This Agreement for a Financial Plan, Cost of Service and Rate Design Study for Water and Wastewater Rates is made this 18th day of July, 2022, between the Nebraska Municipal Power Pool, a non-profit corporation of the State of Nebraska, hereinafter called "NMPP," and the City of Scottsbluff, Nebraska, hereinafter called "Municipality."

RECITALS:

NMPP, under the provisions of its Articles of Incorporation, has the authority to enter into and perform contracts with its members.

NMPP has initiated a Financial Plan, Cost of Service and Rate Design Study (Rate Study) designed to provide assistance in certain technical areas related to calculating rates for municipal utility systems for all customer classes and to provide ongoing rate support.

Municipality is a member of NMPP and recognizes the importance of completing a Rate Study.

In consideration of the mutual promises contained herein, NMPP and Municipality agree as follows:

1. TERM

1.1 This Agreement shall become effective upon execution. The term of this Agreement shall begin on the date of execution and terminate two (2) years after the date of the delivery of the documents referred to in Section 2.1.3.6.

2. SCOPE OF SERVICES TO BE PROVIDED AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE PARTIES

2.1 Responsibilities of NMPP

2.1.1 Questions regarding services under this Agreement should be directed to NMPP's Director of Retail Utility Services and Member Relations, or to such other person as may be designated by NMPP from time to time. NMPP will complete the scope of work of this Agreement typically within ninety (90) days of the receipt of all data requested by NMPP. Such data must be accurate and in a format easily usable by NMPP in order for the

scope of work to be done on time. Reports and other document presentation are delivered to the Municipality as outlined in Section 2.1.3.6.

2.1.2 The Rate Study computer models shall be retained by and become the property of NMPP. The Municipality will receive all tables and charts from the model and may use the Rate Study findings and recommendations at Municipality's sole risk and without liability or legal exposure to NMPP.

2.1.3 The Rate Study will include completion by NMPP of the following tasks:

1. Data Collection – NMPP will request data, including but not limited to, customer rate class usage by rate block and revenue billed, and audited and budgeted assets including financial and operating data for the utility as necessary to prepare the Rate Study. This data is to be in an easy to read and organized format. To the extent the requested data is not readily available, NMPP and Municipality will develop and agree upon estimates for the missing data.
2. Develop a Financial Model – NMPP will develop a five-year Financial pro forma model that will provide net-income, target return on facilities investments, minimum cash reserve policy, capital improvements, borrowing, and recommend future rate increases to achieve financial targets.
3. Calculate Revenue Requirements for Test Year to be used in Rate Study – NMPP will calculate Municipality's revenue requirements in a financial pro forma to determine cost of service rate elements to be used in future rate design.
4. Functional Costs – NMPP will assign a function to each expense and each non-retail revenue including, but not limited to, generation, transmission and customer service, as applicable. The items will also be assigned to a sub-category of a function as necessary.

Expenses will be allocated to the various cost classifications based on methodologies that are generally applied to municipal utilities. These allocations will enable NMPP to separately identify and establish cost elements for each rate class provided by the Municipality, including, but not limited to, commodity generation or treatment, transmission, distribution, and customer service and accounting, as applicable.

5. Rate Design – NMPP will design rates using cost elements determined for one or two years to recover adequate revenue for the system and move classes toward cost of service revenue recovery.

NMPP will work with Municipality to develop rates that maintain the financial integrity of each municipal utility system being studied. New rate schedules and ordinances will be drafted by NMPP for approval by Municipality.

6. Present Findings – (a) NMPP will typically within sixty (60) days of receipt of sound data provide a Preliminary Proforma which will present the Financial Plan, first to the Municipality's staff and then to rate making authority. Such presentations will be typically a combination of electronic mail and telephone and/or video conference presentation. An in-person presentation by NMPP may be scheduled as is agreed to by both Parties. (b) The Final Proforma including draft rate approval documents will be completed by NMPP typically thirty (30) days after direction is provided to NMPP regarding the level of rate adjustments desired as directed by either Municipality's staff or the rate making authority. If additional trips are necessary for (a) or (b) above or other purposes, the trips will be billed on a time and expense basis.
7. Support – As a part of this Agreement, upon request NMPP will provide to Municipality the following support:
 - A. Review of up to five (5) large customer bills for accuracy.
 - B. Up to ten (10) hours of telephone support to answer rate application questions from Municipality.

2.1.4 The Parties hereby agree that the Rate Study to be provided by NMPP to Municipality pursuant to this Agreement shall include only the following study(ies) as indicated below:

- ☐ Electric study
- ☐ Water study
- ☐ Wastewater study
- ☒ Water and Wastewater study
- ☐ Trash study
- ☐ Natural Gas study

2.2 Responsibilities of Municipality

- 2.2.1 Municipality shall furnish to NMPP, as requested by NMPP, available cost of serve studies, audited financial reports and other data; obtain or authorize NMPP to obtain or provide additional reports and data as required; and furnish to NMPP any required services of outside third parties. NMPP shall be entitled to use and rely upon all information and services provided by or on behalf of Municipality as accurate without

independent verification in the completion of the services provided hereunder.

- 2.2.2 Municipality shall designate, in writing, a person with authority to act on Municipality's behalf on all matters concerning the services provided by NMPP under this Agreement.
- 2.2.3 Municipality shall perform the responsibilities outlined in this Section 2 in a timely manner so as not to delay the services of NMPP. A delay in Municipality's performance of more than three (3) months for any specific responsibility of Municipality shall be deemed an event of default, and NMPP shall have the right to suspend services or terminate this Agreement in the event such default is not cured within ten (10) days after written notice to Municipality.
- 2.2.4 Municipality shall bear all costs associated with the completion of all requirements under this Section 2.

3. LIMITATION OF LIABILITY AND INDEMNIFICATIONS

3.1 Notwithstanding any other provision of this Agreement, NMPP's total liability to Municipality for any loss or damage, including, but not limited to, special and/or consequential damages arising out of or in connection with the performance of services or any other cause shall not exceed the compensation received by NMPP from Municipality under this Agreement, and Municipality hereby releases and will hold harmless NMPP from any liability above such amount. Municipality further agrees, to the fullest extent permitted by law, to defend, indemnify and hold harmless NMPP and its officers, employees and agents from and against all claims, damages, losses and expenses, direct or indirect, or consequential damages including, but not limited to, attorney's fees arising out of or resulting from the performance of NMPP's services hereunder.

3.2 NMPP shall exercise the same degree of care, skill, and diligence in the performance of services as is ordinarily possessed and exercised by a professional consultant under similar circumstances. NO WARRANTY, EXPRESSED OR IMPLIED, IS INCLUDED IN THIS AGREEMENT OR IN ANY DRAWING, SPECIFICATION, REPORT OR OPINION PRODUCED PURSUANT TO THIS AGREEMENT.

3.3 All express representations, indemnifications or limitations of liability included in this Agreement will survive its completion or termination for any reason.

4. FEES AND PAYMENT

4.1 Municipality shall pay NMPP for performance of the services described in Section 2.1 as follows:

Total Fee for Section 2.1 Services	Current Municipal Energy Agency of Nebraska ("MEAN") Funding (subject to change per Section 4.7)	Municipality eligible for MEAN funding as of date of execution of the Agreement	Total Fee Due from Municipality for Section 2.1 Services
\$15,790	50% ¹	Yes <input checked="" type="radio"/> No	\$15,790 ¹

¹For qualifying participants of MEAN, the MEAN Funding amount and the Total Fee Due will be automatically adjusted in accordance with Section 4.7 in the event MEAN modifies or eliminates funding for the Rate Study service.

4.2 Additional services not provided for in the scope of services set forth herein may be requested in writing by the Municipality. If agreed to by NMPP, such additional services shall be provided by NMPP in accordance with the terms and conditions of this Agreement and billed at the then-current NMPP hourly rate. Expenses will be those incurred in completing the services at the cost or fee associated with the expense.

4.3 The fees established in this Section 4 may be reviewed and updated by NMPP from time to time in accordance with Section 4.5 of this Agreement.

4.4 Fifty percent (50%) of the total fee due from Municipality for Section 2.1 services will be invoiced after NMPP presents the Preliminary Proforma, including the Financial Plan, to the Municipality's staff and/or the rate making authority, with the balance invoiced after delivery of the Final Proforma and Rate Ordinances. For any additional services provided under Section 4.2, and for any additional trips needed pursuant to Section 2.1.3.6, bills for services shall be rendered upon completion of each such additional service. Each bill shall be paid by Municipality within thirty (30) days after the date the bill is rendered. If any bill is not paid within thirty (30) days, it shall be deemed delinquent and interest shall accrue at the rate of 1.25% per month, or fraction thereof, on any unpaid amount from the date the bill becomes delinquent until the date on which payment is made. This Agreement may be terminated by NMPP for non-payment by Municipality.

4.5 Notwithstanding any provision to the contrary in this Agreement, NMPP shall have the right to modify any of the terms and conditions of this Agreement, including but not limited to the scope of services and fees for participation, at any time, by providing written notice to Municipality. Municipality shall have thirty (30) days from the issuance of such notice to inform NMPP in writing of Municipality's objection to modification of the terms and conditions. Upon receipt by NMPP of Municipality's sufficient notice of objection, NMPP shall cease providing

services to Municipality under this Agreement and this Agreement shall automatically terminate; provided, however, that such termination shall not take effect unless and until Municipality has made complete payment for any outstanding amount due and for services provided pursuant to this Agreement prior to receipt of Municipality's notice of objection.

4.6 If at any time during the term of this Agreement Municipality's membership in NMPP is withdrawn or terminated for any reason, the fees for services provided to Municipality pursuant to this Agreement shall automatically convert to the non-member fee, where such a fee is applicable, which fee may be modified from time to time by NMPP, and NMPP shall have the right to terminate this Agreement upon written notice at any time to Municipality.

4.7 For qualifying participants of the Municipal Energy Agency of Nebraska (MEAN), the Board of Directors of MEAN has approved partial funding of the cost of Service Schedule M and K participants to utilize the Section 2.1 services under this Agreement. If this funding is applicable to Municipality as of the date of execution of this Agreement, this amount has been reflected in Section 4.1. Funding is subject to change or elimination without notice from time to time by action of the MEAN Board of Directors. In such event, the amount due from Municipality will be adjusted accordingly and any balance due will be billed by NMPP to Municipality.

5. USE OF ELECTRONIC MEDIA

5.1 Copies of documents that may be relied upon by Municipality are limited to the printed copies, also known as hard copies, which are signed by NMPP. Files in electronic media format of text, data, graphics, or of other types that are furnished by NMPP to Municipality are only for the convenience of Municipality. Any conclusion or information obtained or derived from such electronic files will be used at Municipality's sole risk.

5.2 When transferring documents in electronic media format, NMPP makes no representations as to compatibility, usability, or readability of documents resulting from such transfer or from the use of software application packages, operating systems, or computer hardware differing from those used by NMPP at the beginning of services rendered.

5.3 If there is a discrepancy between the electronic files and the hard copies, the hard copies shall govern.

5.4 Because data stored in electronic media format can deteriorate or be modified inadvertently or otherwise without authorization of the data's creator, the Party receiving electronic files agrees that it will perform acceptance tests or procedures within thirty (30) days, after which the receiving Party shall be deemed to have accepted the data thus transferred. Any errors reported by receiving Party to delivering Party within the thirty (30)-day acceptance period will be corrected by the delivering Party within sixty (60) days of such notification. NMPP shall not be responsible to maintain documents stored in electronic media format after acceptance by Municipality.

6. GENERAL

6.1 Neither Party shall have the right to assign this Agreement without the consent, in writing, of the other Party.

6.2 This Agreement shall be governed by the laws of the State of Nebraska.

6.3 In no event shall any delay by any party in enforcing (in whole or in part) any provision of this Agreement be or be deemed to be a waiver thereof or a waiver of any other provision or shall in any way prejudice any right of that party under this Agreement. Any waiver in regard to the performance of this Agreement shall operate only if in writing and mutually agreed upon by each Party.

6.4 In the event any provision of this Agreement shall be held invalid or unenforceable, the remaining provisions shall be valid and binding upon the Parties.

6.5 Nothing under this Agreement shall be construed to give any rights or benefits in this Agreement to anyone other than NMPP and Municipality.

6.6 Neither Party shall be liable to the other for any delay in the performance of its duties hereunder or for any loss or damage arising from uncontrollable forces including but not limited to fire, theft, storm, war, terrorism, power outage, regulatory action or any other force majeure that could not have been reasonably avoided by exercise of due diligence by the Parties. In the event of such a force majeure, the affected Party shall notify the other Party of the circumstances surrounding the force majeure and provide an estimate of delay time caused thereby. The affected Party shall use due diligence to remove such force majeure as soon as is reasonably practicable.

7. NOTICES

7.1 Any notice required under this Agreement will be in writing, addressed to the appropriate Party at its address on the signature page and given personally, or by mail postage prepaid, or by commercial courier service.

8. OTHER AGREEMENTS

8.1 This Agreement constitutes the entire agreement between the parties and supersedes any oral or written representations, understandings, proposals, or communications heretofore entered into by or on account of the parties and may not be changed, modified, or amended except in a writing signed by both parties.

[SIGNATURE PAGE FOLLOWING]

WHEREAS, NMPP and Municipality have caused this Agreement for a Financial Plan, Cost of Service and Rate Design Study for Water and Wastewater Rates to be duly executed by their authorized officers.

NEBRASKA MUNICIPAL POWER POOL

CITY OF SCOTTSBLUFF, NEBRASKA

By: _____

By: _____

Title: _____

Title: Mayor

Date: _____

Date: July 18, 2022

Address: 8377 Glynoaks Drive
Lincoln, NE 68516

Address: 2525 Circle Drive
Scottsbluff, NE 69361

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