

**MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF THE CITIZENS UTILITY BILLING REVIEW
ADVISORY COMMITTEE OF THE CITY OF PEARLAND, TEXAS, HELD ON THURSDAY,
March 8, 2021, VIA TELEPHONE/VIDEO CONFERENCE AT 4:00 P.M.**

Residents may watch this meeting online within 72 hours post meeting at:
<https://www.pearlandtx.gov/departments/water-billing/utility-billing-advisory-committee>

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Saboe called the meeting to order at 4:04 p.m.

ROLL CALL AND CERTIFICATION OF QUORUM;

Mayor	Kevin Cole
Chairman	Steve Saboe
Committee Member	Jimmy Davis
Committee Member	Ralph King
Committee Member	Julie Ward
Committee Member	Patrick O'Day
Committee Member	Jennifer Sheffield
Raftelis Consultant	Josh Rauch
Raftelis Consultant	Seth Garrison
Chief Information Officer	Daniel McGhinnis
HR Assistant Director	LaRae James
Utility Billing Manager	Nancy Massey
Budget Officer	Erick Roche
Utility Billing Assistant Manager	Dara Eng

CONSENT AGENDA;

- I. **Approval of March 4, 2021 Minutes:** Chairman Stephen Saboe tabled the minutes to be discussed at the next meeting.
- II. **Comments from Mayor Cole;** Mayor Cole discussed the upcoming plans for a townhall meeting focused on bettering the communication with residents. Mayor Cole explained the purpose of the meeting is to engage with residents by acknowledging the issues, providing solutions, and sharing the future plans of Water Billing. Department staff will also be in attendance with devices to assist with questions on individual water accounts. Mayor Cole expressed his appreciation of staff and the Committees' camaraderie in pushing forward to gain the community's trust back.
- III. **Input, Discussion, and Possible Action;** [Initial recommendations](#) were presented at the February 22, 2021 Council Meeting.
 - a. **Agreed, already underway**
 - i. **Recommendation 1:** Foster a culture of engagement and continuous improvement

- ii. Recommendation 2: Establish formal performance measures to track service delivery
- iii. Recommendation 3: Review and update written standard operating procedures (SOPs) regularly.
- iv. Recommendation 4: Develop an enhanced training program.
- v. Recommendation 7: Synchronize meter reading and billing cycles
- vi. Recommendation 13: Adjust staffing to reflect short-term needs and prepare for AMI implementation.
- vii. Recommendation 15: Create an inclusive AMI Implementation Team

b. Agreed, with caveats; Chairman Saboe recognized Josh Rauch who presented to and reviewed the recommendations provided in the Raftelis Report.

- i. Recommendation 5: Improve external communication plans for meter-to-cash activities.

Chairman Saboe elaborated on the essential responsibilities of the Advisory Committee as being the focus group for Water Billing. Chairman Saboe emphasized the purpose of the group having to build trust and supported Committee Member Ralph King and Jimmy Davis on the need for repetition, consistency, and accuracy of messages.

- ii. Recommendation 8: Implement a streamlined meter-to-cash process.

Chairman Saboe inquired on the plan to share the AMI process such as providing a media format. Ms. Nancy Massey assured the Committee of ongoing meetings between Public Works, Director of Engineering, and Water Billing discussing the process of providing resources to the public. Ms. Massey stated the strategy to create a webpage is in process to provide details of the AMI, how the meters works, how the meters are read, and how to access the portal. Ms. Massey also shared the City's plan to contract a public relation expert for community engagement and outreach.

Upon motion by Committee Member Ralph King, seconded by Committee Member Jimmy Davis, after full discussion and the question being put to the Committee, the Advisory Committee voted unanimously to approve Recommendation 5 & 8 in the Raftelis Report.

- iii. Recommendation 11: Create designated morning and afternoon call-takers to streamline CSR workload.

Upon motion by Committee Member Jimmy Davis, seconded by Committee Member Julie Ward, after full discussion and the question being put to the Committee, the Advisory Committee voted unanimously to approve Recommendation 11 in the Raftelis Report.

- iv. Recommendation 16: Continue engaging Tyler Technologies to resolve inefficiencies and errors in New World.

c. No Opinion Put Forth; There was no discussion or decision made on this item.

- i. Recommendation 9: Reorder billing cycles
- ii. Recommendation 12: Transition to a centralized staffing structure over time.

- IV. **Input, Discussion, and Possible Action;** There was no discussion or decision made on this item.
 - a. **Disagree**
 - i. Recommendation 10: Enhance delinquent account communications
 - ii. Recommendation 14: Pilot a 4-10 schedule for meter-to-cash staff.
 - b. **No Opinion Put Forth**
 - i. Recommendation 6: Consider alternative options to the 32-30 Plan.

- V. **Input, Discussion, and Possible Action (Time permitting);**
 - a. **AMI** – Further discussion of the AMI project implementation plan.
 - b. **Recommendation 6; Consider alternatives to the 32-30 Plan.**

- VI. **Input, Discussion, and Possible Action:** Information requests, set next meeting goals, date/time and agenda.
 - a. Information requests from the Committee may require external or extraordinary resources, with related costs; discuss process for Council / staff review and approval of these resources.

Chairman Saboe moved the continued discussion on the Raftelis' report for the Advisory Committee meeting to be held on Thursday, March 11, 2021 at 4 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

Meeting was adjourned at 6:05 p.m.