

**PUBLIC HEARING  
WATER RATE INCREASE  
Council Chambers  
JANUARY 20, 2010**

The meeting came to order at 6:00 pm. Present: Mayor – Don Banning, Council: Fran McCully, Gary Rose, Phil Fisher, City Attorney Mark Fennessy, and City Clerk Sandra Johnson.

**GUESTS:** Harry Whalen – Rural Water, David Fisher, Barbara Pence, Dennis Dupuis, Jayne Brown, Steve Garrett, John Clogston, Steve Bowen, Jerry Wandler, Marilyn McDougall, Clint Taylor, Susie Taylor, Becki Garrison, Tracy Rebo, Shelly Nicholls, Nancy Wagner, and Keith Wagner.

**HARRY WHALEN:** Mayor Banning introduced Harry Whalen. Whalen gave a small talk on his background experience and went on to state that Troy is required by law to have public hearing when it involves rate changes and that is why this one is being held.. Whalen quoted MCA 7-7-4424, which states that water and sewer departments must be self sustaining, and this is done by charging for the service. Right now the basic rate for residential water service is \$34.50. When Phase I of the water project was done the State mandated that water meters be installed. Going into Phase II of the water project we have been monitoring water usage. The City has looked at several options and has decided that the charge for water usage would be \$.93 per 1000 gallons of water used after 6000 gallons given for winter usage and 10,000 gallons given for summer usage. He gave handouts to the interested parties. The City of Troy has received grant money for this project of \$1,498,750 and \$277,500 that is a 20 year loan. Steve Garrett asked if Troy had a trunk line system. Whalen replied; no. Troy doesn't have just one line, there are distribution lines. Steve Garrett said it should be based off usage not the size of the pipe going in. Whalen asked to finish, then everyone should understand when he is done. Whalen continued. Guest Marilyn McDougall and Becky Garrison stated that 10,000 gallons is not enough for summer months. Whalen explained what is happening to the water when you over water. It is wasted. Jerry Wandler stated that when the lawn is watered, it goes back into the aquifer, and if the lawn is not watered it doesn't stay green. He said that to keep the lawn green he'll have to pay twice as much as he does now. The council does not have a choice to change anything right now. MCA 69-7-111 states that anytime an adjustment is made, the council must have another public hearing. Garrett asked the council if they want a brown town. Councilman Phil Fisher said no, that is not what is wanted, but you have to ask, do we want to have a water system? Yes, but we must have the funds to meet the standards set by the State government; to provide clean water, and to be able to cover the loan. Fran McCully stated that people will start conserving. The first thing to do is to stop the overuse. Don Banning advised that the city will check out the pipes for anyone, for leaks, just call. Dennis Dupuis gave an

example of water leakage and how much it would be for even small leaks, which can be a lot. You just don't realize how much water flows through even a small drip. Harry Whalen gave out water conservation sheets.

Other guests present asked why their water usage was higher, and then were lower. The answer is not one easily answered because it goes by the residence, and the people that live in that residence. Everyone is different. There was also discussion on the timing of starting the charge for usage. It was said that some people may not have time enough to take care of any leak before they have to start paying; that more time was needed. The discussion led to asking about adding a couple more months before charges would be processed and sent out. The Council advised they would take their comments into consideration.

Harry Whalen closed the Public Hearing at 6:56 p.m.

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Donald C Banning, Mayor

ATTEST:

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Sandra Johnson, City Clerk/Treasurer