



AGENDA
WATAUGA CITY COUNCIL
WORKSHOP MEETING
MONDAY, NOVEMBER 9, 2020
CITY HALL COUNCIL CHAMBER, 7105 WHITLEY ROAD
5:30 PM

This notice is posted pursuant to the Texas Open Meetings Act. Notice is hereby given that a **City Council Workshop Meeting** of the City of Watauga, Texas will be held at which time the following subjects will be discussed and may be acted upon.

COVID-19 PRECAUTIONS

The operation of a municipality is an Essential Service. The Texas Governor's Order, with the guidance of DSHS Commissioner Dr. Hellerstedt, allows all persons in Texas to obtain essential services, but directs the public to do so by minimizing in-person contact with people who are not in the same household and direct the implementation of social distancing, good hygiene, environmental cleanliness and sanitation. Therefore, the following social distancing rules apply to the public attending this meeting:

- 1) Any member of the public attending the meeting shall maintain a six-foot distance from others (except for those you live in the same household). City Staff and City Officials shall practice social distancing to the extent able without interfering in the ability to carry out the essential governmental functions to be conducted at this meeting.
- 2) To enter City Hall to attend this meeting all persons must wear a face covering (i.e. a cloth mask that effectively covers the mouth and nose with more than one layer of fabric) or equivalent device.
- 3) Attendance in the Council Chamber will be limited to allow for the public in attendance to practice social distancing. Seating may be assigned.
- 4) Coughs and sneezes must be covered with a cloth or tissue, which should then be properly disposed of or washed, and shall not be exposed to others.
- 5) Public courtesies such as handshakes or other greetings shall be respectfully avoided.
- 6) Any member of the public approaching city representatives, whether they be city staff or elected or appointed officials must maintain six-foot social distancing.

Any person who fails to comply with the COVID-19 Precautions may be removed from the meeting.

CALL TO ORDER

ROLL CALL

PRESENTATIONS

1. Presentation, discussion on, and provide direction to the City Manager on Utility Billing

ADJOURNMENT

Meeting Notices and Reservation of Rights

The City Council may retire to executive session any time between the meeting's opening and adjournment for the purpose of consultation with legal counsel pursuant to Chapter 551.071 of the Texas Government Code; discussion of personnel matters pursuant to Chapter 551.074 of the Texas Government Code if the requisite information is otherwise posted; deliberation regarding real property pursuant to Chapter 551.072 of the Texas Government Code; deliberation regarding economic development negotiations pursuant to Chapter 551.087 of the Texas Government Code; and/or deliberation regarding the deployment, or specific occasions for implementation of security personnel or devices pursuant to Chapter 551.076 of the Texas Government Code (as applicable) when determined necessary by the to address a subject matter on the agenda. Action, if any, will be taken in open session.

This agenda has been reviewed and approved by the City's legal counsel and the presence of any subject in any Executive Session portion of the agenda constitutes a written interpretation of Texas Government Code Chapter 551 by legal counsel for the governmental body and constitutes an opinion by the attorney that the items discussed therein may be legally discussed in the closed portion of the meeting considering available opinions of a court of record and opinions of the Texas Attorney General known to the attorney. This provision has been added to this agenda with the intent to meet all elements necessary to satisfy Texas Government Code Chapter 551.144(c) and the meeting is conducted by all participants in reliance on this opinion.

Attendance by Other Elected or Appointed Officials: It is anticipated that members of other governmental bodies, and/or city council, boards, commissions and/or committees may attend the meeting in numbers that may constitute a quorum of the body, board, commission and/or committee. Notice is hereby given that the meeting, to the extent required by law, is also noticed as a possible meeting of the other body, board, commission and/or committee, whose members may be in attendance, if such numbers constitute a quorum. The members of the city council, boards, commissions and/or committees may be permitted to participate in discussions on the same items listed on the agenda, which occur at the meeting, but no action will be taken by such in attendance unless such item and action is specifically provided for on an agenda for that city council, body, board, commission or committee subject to the Texas Open Meetings Act.

NOTICE

THIS FACILITY IS WHEELCHAIR ACCESSIBLE AND ACCESSIBLE PARKING SPACES ARE AVAILABLE. REQUESTS FOR ACCOMMODATIONS OR INTERPRETIVE SERVICES MUST BE MADE 48 HOURS PRIOR TO THIS MEETING. PLEASE CONTACT THE CITY SECRETARY'S OFFICE AT (817) 514-5825, OR FAX (817) 514-3625.

I, Andrea Gardner, City Secretary for the City of Watauga, hereby certify that this agenda was posted on the bulletin boards at City Hall, 7105 Whitley Road, Watauga, Texas, on Friday, November 6, 2020, before 6:00 p.m., in accordance with Chapter 551 of the Texas Government Code.

Andrea Gardner

Andrea Gardner, City Secretary





FINANCE DEPARTMENT

UTILITY BILLING OPERATIONS

NOVEMBER 9, 2020





Sandra Gibson,
Director of Finance

Debra Defriese
Utility Billing Administrator
1.00FTE

Sonia Cano
Morgan Roper
Utility Billing Representative
2.00FTE

Brad Harston
Connor Hubbard
Jake Galindo
Taylor Karkkainen
Water Service Field Representative
4.00FTE

■ Finance – Utility Billing and Collections

OUR MISSION



Utility
Billing

We strive to provide customers the best service possible for prompt administration on their utility accounts. We continually seek ways to raise the level and quality of customer service provided by our office.



What do we do on a daily basis?

Utility billing is your point of contact for starting or stopping water, sewer and garbage service in the City of Watauga.

Utility billing is responsible for preparing and mailing the monthly bills for these services and posting payments to the utility accounts.

CONTACT US

Debra Defriese
Utility Billing Administrator
[Email](#)

7105 Whitley Rd.
Watauga, TX 76148

Phone: 817.514.5705

Hours
Monday – Friday
8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

SCOPE OF SERVICES - UTILITY BILLING

CUSTOMER SERVICE
(Phone calls, Front line window)



Over 13,000
Phone calls
per year

WORK ORDERS



Over 2,600
work
orders/year

INITIATE/CLOSE ACCOUNTS



1,300 new
accounts/year

BILLING SERVICES & MONTHLY REPORTING



Just under 100,000
bills each year &
11,000 late notices

METER REPLACEMENTS



Over 1,600
meter
replacements
since 2014

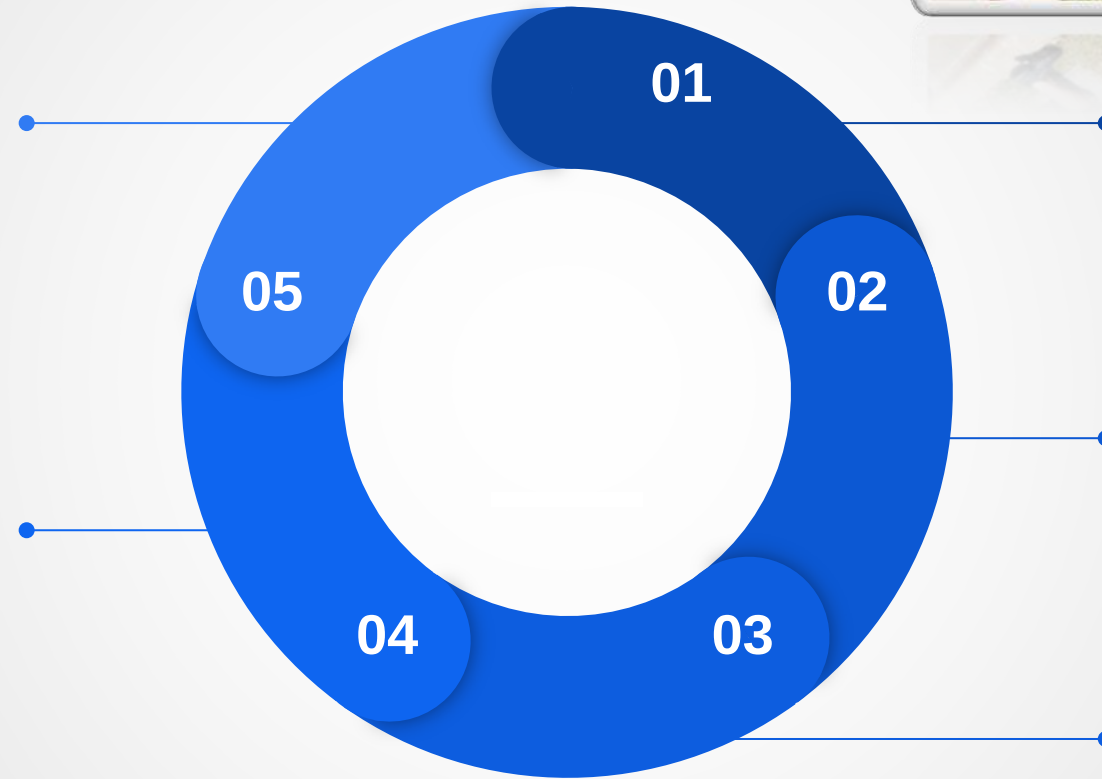
PROCESS BAD DEBT



Unpaid bills
that go to
collection =
\$40,000/year



UTILITY BILLING CYCLE



**Meters are Read
by Zone**

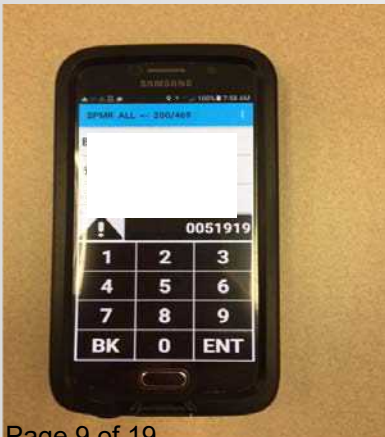
**Reads are
uploaded for
review**

**Work Orders
Processed**



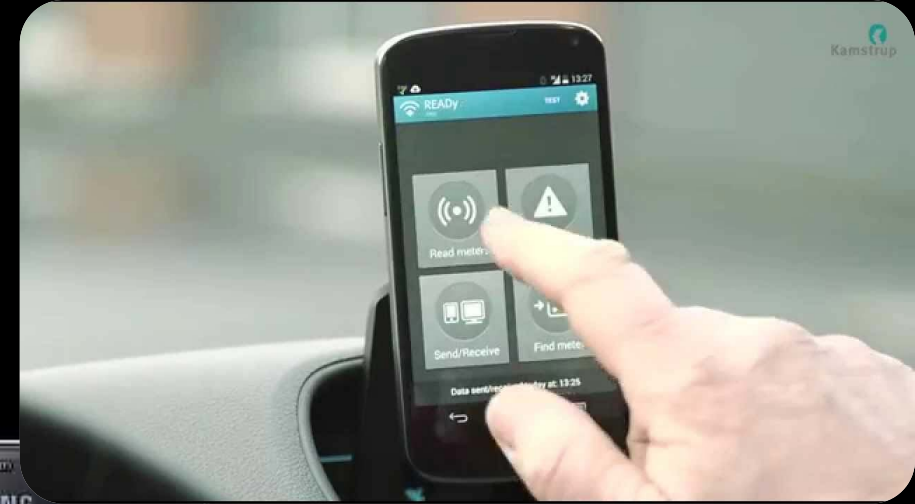
**Late notices are
sent if payment
not received**

**Bills are mailed/e-
mailed and due in
20 days**



SMART PHONE METER READING

- The GPS and photos help validate our readings and tracks meter reader progress on daily readings.
- . The GPS feature has benefited our asset management by allowing us to import the readings into GIS and plot the location of all of our meters.



**Take a photo
of a meter
with a high
audit alert.
No need for
a recheck
later.**

A DAY IN THE LIFE OF A METER READER

A FEW CHALLENGES IN READING CITY WATER METERS :

DIRT IN THE BOX



Dirt Removal.mp4



WATER IN THE BOX



Scope.mp4



WATER REMOVAL



Water Removal.mp4

GARBAGE COLLECTION AND HAZARDOUS WASTE

Waste Connections Provides trash, recycling and bulk services to the City of Watauga. Utility Billing bills for the services for payment to the contractor and finance manages the contract.

HHW Solutions provides household hazardous waste collection to Watauga residents. Utility Billing bills for these services for payment to the contractor.

Services Provided



- One Time Per Week MSW Trash Service .
* 95-Gallon Cart Provided By Waste Connections.
- One Time Per Week Recycling Service.
* 65-Gallon Cart Provided By Waste Connections.
- Monthly Bulk and Brush Service Provided One Time Per Month, Up To 5 Yards Per Resident.
- 228 Commercial / Industrial Customers Multiple Days Per Week.



HHW SOLUTIONS

Eco-Safe, Eco-Simple, Eco-Friendly

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Why is my bill so high?

- Possible Leak—Our office will check this for you or show you how to check your meter. The City offers a leak adjustment to aid with the financial impact of a leak.
- Change in consumption (new family member, etc.)
- Check the service dates on bill – this will show your consumption period. Summer months are typically higher usage with irrigation.

Does the City estimate water consumption for billings?

- No, meter readers read your meter each month with the smart phone meter reading device. Your reads are kept on file that show the exact date and time/read of the meter.

2020 TECHNOLOGY INITIATIVES



E-bills –
January 2020

IVR (Pay by
Phone) July
2020

Credit Card
Auto Pay
January 2020

Tyler Notify –
In progress

2021 TECHNOLOGY INITIATIVES



Tyler Notify
implementation

Continue
automation
processes
through website

Meter
Replacement
program
continuation

Customer Portal
(Research)



E-BILLS

You got mail!



Allows for customer to receive electronic bill by e-mail versus in the mail

- Benefits include e-bills receipt by customer more quickly
- Link to newsletter and payment portal
- Postage savings to City

<https://www.municipalonlinepayments.com/wataugatx/utilities>



PAYMENT OPTIONS

Automatic Draft

No Cost

Pay On-line –
Quick Pay or
Monthly

Fee based

Pay by phone
(new!)
1-866-279-2720

Fee Based

At City Hall
Payment Window
or Drop Box

Free

By Mail
(postage)

<https://www.municipalonlinepayments.com/wataugatx/utilities>

Council Retreat Items for Follow-up



RECOMMENDED TIMELINE –



Utility Deposits January, 2021

Senior Discounts June, 2021

Utility Rate Review July, 2021

Merchant Fee recovery January, 2022

Tiered Rates - Review July, 2023

COUNCIL DIRECTION NEEDED ON TIMELINE

QUESTIONS

