



## Agenda Memorandum

**Contact:** Clif Custer

**Subject:** Code of Ordinances (Fee Schedule Amendment)

### Summary:

Amendment of Fee Schedule to include a \$100.00 fee for Public Works conducting on-site flow tests of water meters to resolve contested water bills and water usage amounts.

### Background Information:

The City of Richwood employs Sensus water meters in the form of iPerl mag-meters for calculating water usage for most connections within the city. The majority of the iPerl meters within the city range from  $\frac{3}{4}$  to 1-inch in size. These water meters historically have failed in one of two ways.

1. Water meter begins calculating in reverse resulting in negative usage amounts.
2. Water meters will cease to work due to a dead battery.

Contrary to this fact, during any given month Richwood could have several residents contest their water bill amounts due to increased usage. Aside from Richwood's ability to see usage for all addresses in real time, the final step to proving flow accuracy for residents is by conducting a flow test of the meter. This test is a final method of communication with residents regarding their current water bill that provides on-site, real-time accuracy check of water flowing through the water meter that residents can witness.

Flow tests are conducted using a 5-gallon metric and run 3 separate times with results documented. Although these tests are simple in nature, they do take labor hours to perform and document. Unfortunately, this method of testing flow accuracy of water meters has become a regular occurrence for residents wishing to contest their water bills with most of the bills averaging \$5.00 - \$10.00 more per month than the resident's average water bill.

Currently the flow tests conducted by Public Works in the field accomplish several things.

- Provides Billing Personnel with an additional option to prove meter accuracy aside from just providing software-based usage information.
- Allows customers/residents a real-time test of their water meter that can be witnessed and in which the results are documented.
- Allows Public Works to conduct an on-site assessment of water usage while observing the water meter for flow during times of no perceived usage and assess property for any signs of leaks.

In lieu of these benefits, Richwood needs to be reimbursed for these flow tests. Based on information provided by other cities, similar tests are charged at \$100.00 per test. This amount will ensure reimbursement to Richwood for time spent conducting and documenting test results but will also ensure that only the most serious inquiries will go as far as to have the test conducted.

**Issue:**

None

**Fiscal Impact:**

None

**Recommendation:**

Motion to amend Appendix B of Richwood Code of Ordinances to include fees for flow tests of city water meters.