

M A N I T O B A                    )     Order No. 60/15  
  )  
THE PUBLIC UTILITIES BOARD ACT    )     June 11, 2015

BEFORE:     Susan Proven, P.H.Ec, Acting Chair  
              The Hon. Anita Neville, P.C., B.A. (Hons.), Member

ORDER VARYING BOARD ORDER No. 59/12  
                                  FOR  
RURAL MUNICIPALITY OF ALEXANDER  
GREAT FALLS STANDPIPE RATES

### **Summary**

By this Order, the Public Utilities Board (Board) varies Board Order No. 59/12 for the Rural Municipality of Alexander (RM) bulk water rates.

Details can be found in clause 3 of the attached Schedule "A".

### **Application**

On May 10, 2012 the Board issued Order No. 59/12 setting revised water and sewer rates for the RM of Alexander, including the bulk water rates.

On April 24, 2015 the Board received a letter from the RM requesting that the Board review and vary the bulk water rate. The current rate is \$10.65 per 1,000 gallons on a prorated basis for all quantities greater than 500 gallons, and \$5.30 for any quantity of 500 gallons or less. This rate was effective January 1, 2014.

The RM requested the Board change the rate to \$13.75 per 1,000 gallons, available to purchase in 200 gallon increments for \$2.75. The request was made to increase the rate to one that would be similar to the amount that a connected household pays, which is \$14.00 per 1,000 gallons. The \$.25 per 1,000 gallon difference is due to the limitations of the coin operated system used to dispense bulk water at the Great Falls Standpipe.

### **Board Findings**

After considering the information filed and Board Order No. 59/12, the Board approves the request to vary the Order. Schedule A to By-law No. 14/12, clause 3 shall be amended to read as follows:

All water sold in bulk by the Rural Municipality shall be charged for at \$13.75 per 1,000 gallons.

The Board will require the RM to submit the By-law once it has been amended and received third and final reading.

Board decisions may be appealed in accordance with the provisions of Section 58 of *The Public Utilities Board Act*, or reviewed in accordance with Section 36 of the Board's Rules of Practice and Procedure (Rules). The Board's Rules may be viewed on the Board's website at [www.pub.gov.mb.ca](http://www.pub.gov.mb.ca).



**SCHEDULE "A"**  
**RURAL MUNICIPALITY OF ALEXANDER**  
**GREAT FALLS WATER AND SEWER UTILITY**  
**WATER AND SEWER RATES**

**SCHEDULE OF QUARTERLY RATES:**

**1. COMMODITY RATES PER M.G. (1,000 GALS)**

	<u>Water</u>	<u>Sewer</u>	<u>Water &amp; Sewer</u>
All Water Consumption 2012	\$17.55	\$10.00	\$27.55
All Water Consumption 2013	\$13.75	\$10.30	\$24.05
All Water Consumption 2014	\$14.00	\$10.65	\$24.40

**2. QUARTERLY MINIMUM CHARGES**

Notwithstanding the Commodity Rates set forth in paragraph 1 hereof, all customers will pay the applicable minimum charges set out below, which will include water allowances indicated.

**(a) Water & Sewer Customers Rates 2012**

<u>Meter Size</u>	<u>Group Capacity Ratio</u>	<u>Water Included (Gallons)</u>	<u>Customer Service Charge</u>	<i>Commodity Charges</i>		<b>Total</b> <u>Quarterly Minimum</u>
				<i>Water</i>	<i>Sewer</i>	
5/8"	1	3,000	\$15.00	\$52.65	\$30.00	\$ 97.65
3/4"	2	6,000	\$15.00	\$105.30	\$60.00	\$180.30
1"	4	12,000	\$15.00	\$210.60	\$120.00	\$345.60

**(b) Water & Sewer Customers Rates 2013**

<u>Meter Size</u>	<u>Group Capacity Ratio</u>	<u>Water Included (Gallons)</u>	<u>Customer Service Charge</u>	<i>Commodity Charges</i>		<b>Total</b> <u>Quarterly Minimum</u>
				<i>Water</i>	<i>Sewer</i>	
5/8"	1	3,000	\$15.00	\$41.25	\$30.90	\$ 87.15
3/4"	2	6,000	\$15.00	\$82.50	\$61.80	\$159.30
1"	4	12,000	\$15.00	\$165.00	\$123.60	\$303.60

**(c) Water & Sewer Customers Rates 2014**

<b>Meter Size</b>	<b>Group Capacity Ratio</b>	<b>Water Included (Gallons)</b>	<b>Customer Service Charge</b>	<i>Commodity Charges</i>		<b>Total Quarterly Minimum</b>
				<i>Water</i>	<i>Sewer</i>	
5/8"	1	3,000	\$15.00	\$42.00	\$31.95	\$ 88.95
3/4"	2	6,000	\$15.00	\$84.00	\$63.90	\$162.90
1"	4	12,000	\$15.00	\$168.00	\$127.80	\$310.80

**(d) Water Only Customers**

Minimum charge will be the same for each meter size as shown, in Clause 2(a), 2(b) and 2(c) but the Sewer Commodity Charge will be excluded.

**(c) Sewer Only Customers**

The minimum charge will be the same for each meter size, as shown in Clause 2(a), 2(b) and 2(c) but the Water Commodity Charge will be excluded.

**3. BULK SALES RATE**

All water sold in bulk by the Rural Municipality shall be charged for at \$13.75 per 1,000 gallons.

**4. SERVICE TO CUSTOMERS OUTSIDE L.I.D. LIMITS**

- a. The Council of the Rural Municipality of Alexander may sign agreements with customers for the provision of water and sewer services to properties located outside the legal boundaries of the Unincorporated Community of Great Falls. Such agreements shall provide for payment of the appropriate rates set out in the schedule, as well as a surcharge set by resolution of Council, which shall be equivalent to the frontage levy, general taxes and special taxes for Utility purposes in effect at the time, or may be in effect from time to time, and which would be levied on the property concerned if it were within these boundaries.
- b. All costs of connecting to the Utility's mains and installing and maintaining service connection will be paid by the customer.

**5. BILLINGS AND PENALTIES**

- a. Accounts shall be billed quarterly, and shall be due and payable the last working day of the month following the month in which the bills are issued. A late payment charge of one and a quarter percent (1 ¼ %) per month shall be charged on the dollar amount owing after the billing due date.

## **6. DISCONNECTION**

Service may be disconnected and discontinued immediately and without further notice as per the PUB Order 127/08, Condition Precedent for the provision of reasonable notice to customers prior to disconnection.

## **7. RE-CONNECTION**

Any service disconnected due to non-payment of account shall not be reconnected until all arrears, penalties and a reconnection fee of \$30.00 have been paid.

## **8. OUTSTANDING BILLS**

Pursuant to Section 252(2) of The Municipal Act, the amount of all outstanding charges for water and sewer service are a lien and charge upon the land serviced, and shall be collected in the same manner in which ordinary taxes upon the land are collectible, and with like remedies.

## **9. HYDRANT RENTALS**

The Unincorporated Community of Great Falls will pay to the Utility an annual rental of \$100.00 for each hydrant connected to the system.

## **10. WATER ALLOWANCE DUE TO LINE FREEZING**

That in any case where, at the request of the Municipality, a customer allows water to run continuously for any period of time to prevent the water lines in the water system from freezing, the charge to that customer for the current quarter shall be the average of the billings for the last two previous quarters to the same customer, or to the same premises if the occupant has changed.

## **11. FUTURE WATER AND SEWER UTILITY CAPITAL PROJECTS**

The proposed new rates include a provision for the replacement of meters, as necessary, throughout the existing system. This installation will include Outside Readers and potentially the installation of Automatic Readers depending on Installation Cost compared to Budget.

Additionally, it is the intent of the municipality, over the next 3-years, to ensure the provision of potable water, which meets the regulatory requirements of the Province of Manitoba. It is the desire of the municipality, if at all possible, to have this problem addressed, as per the agreement with Manitoba Hydro, on or before the 31<sup>st</sup> day of December, 2012.

The cost of these improvements is estimated at:

- a. Meters
  - \$7,000.00/year starting in 2011 and ending in 2014
  
- b. Provision of Potable Water
  - 2011 – Negotiate a Source of Potable Water
  - 2011 – Initiate the necessary Engineering
  - 2012 – Commence Construction
  - Unfortunately at this time there are no preliminary cost estimates for this work.

## **12. RATE REVIEW PERIOD**

The proposed rates, included in this study have been budgeted to be in effect for a 3-year period (January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2012 to December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2014) and be reassessed at the conclusion of this period of time. This plan will ensure that the rates charged reflect the actual costs to run the Utility as the Great Falls Water & Sewer Utility expands in size and/or the number of customers and that the rates remain fair to the customers.



### **13 SEWAGE SURCHARGES**

- a. There may be levied annually, in addition to rates set forth above, a special surcharge on sewage having a Biochemical Oxygen demand in excess of 300 parts per million, to be set by resolution of Council.
- b. A special purchase for substances requiring special treatment shall be charged based on the actual costs of treatment required for the particular sewage or industrial waste.

### **14. WATER METERS**

- a. All customers of the Utility, connected to the Water Utility, shall be metered.
- b. Any new residential customer shall be required to have the meter installed by a qualified plumber certified by the Province of Manitoba, at their sole cost. The certified plumber shall be responsible to:
  - i. Install the meter plus the appropriate Meter Reading mechanism as provided by the Utility; and
  - ii. Ensure that the installation is inspected by the Utility's representative and secured in such manner as established by the Utility.
- c. Ownership, inspection and maintenance of meters shall remain the responsibility of the Utility System. Commercial meter maintenance will be the responsibility of the Utility System but will be billed to the Commercial User.
- d. Upon inspection, if it is found that the security mechanism has been altered in any manner the owner of the property shall be assessed a fee of \$100.00 to ensure an accurate reading, inside meter and outside reader plus re-securing the meter.

### **15. METER TESTING CHARGES**

- a. Any consumer desiring and requesting their meter be tested for accuracy shall deposit with the Rural Municipality of Alexander the sum of \$25.00, which shall be retained by the municipality if the meter, when tested, is found to register within the allowable limits of variation from accuracy. If the meter shall be found to register in excess of allowable limits the deposit shall be refunded and the consumer's account adjusted.
- b. The allowable limit of variation shall be four percent (4%) of average flow.