

Code Modification Summary:

Overview

In 2018, the Water Operational Fund was provided a \$1.2m loan from the General Fund to pay the City of Columbus for back charges due to a slow running meter. The water rate increases to cover both the additional expense of a fully operational meter and the General Fund repayment were spread out over the past 3 years to reduce any sharp spikes in rates. Water operational rate increases are expected to normalize starting in 2022. Sanitary Sewer Capital Improvement rates are increasing to cover current and future sanitary sewer evaluations, improvement projects, and other projects to improve and maintain reliable service.

To cover the final water operations payback increase, additional projects within our sewer system, operational expenses, and the City of Columbus rate increases, we are proposing a 4.9% rate increase. This rate increase equates to a \$3.36 increase per month or \$10.08 per quarter based on average consumption (4,000 gallons per month). Even with this proposed increase, our 2021 rates will remain competitive and will fall mid-range compared to the current 2020 rates of surrounding communities.

Because of reduced staffing levels and the pandemic, our ability to fully transition to monthly billing was delayed in 2020. However, this project continues to move forward and we anticipate that we will be able to finalize this transition in the 2nd Quarter of 2021. Below is a summary of the related proposed code changes.

TITLE THREE – PUBLIC UTILITIES

Section 919.03 Water and Sewer Internal Review Board Appeal Review Procedure

- Updated language that all applicants do not need to attend the board meeting unless specifically required by the board. A majority of applications are standard reviews that do not require any additional input from the applicant. The applicant may still attend the board meeting at their request. The change would streamline the review process for both the applicant and the City.

Section 921.11 Sewer Rental Rates

- Sanitary Sewer Operational Rate: **\$7.95/1,000 gal** (was \$7.68/1,000 gal in 2020)
 - The City of Columbus continues to offer a pass-thru 20% low-income discount.
- Sanitary Sewer Capital Improvement Rate: **\$0.84/1,000 gal** (was \$0.66/1,000 gal in 2020)

- Sanitary Sewer Capital Improvement rates are increasing to cover current and future sanitary sewer evaluations, improvement projects, and other projects to improve and maintain reliable service.
- Columbus Consent Order (CCO): The City of Columbus is under a consent order with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to separate their combined storm and sanitary sewers. Because the satellite communities utilize Columbus' sewer system, we are all responsible to contribute to these projects. The revenue that we collect for this consent order is passed-thru to Columbus, and Gahanna does not keep any of this money. CCO Rate: **\$9.09/ERU/qtr** (was \$8.91/ERU/qtr in 2020)

CHAPTER 929 – WATER CONNECTIONS AND RATES

Section 929.10 General Provisions

- Updated language to clarify that the wire connecting the transmitter to the meter is the property owner's responsibility to maintain in good condition.

Section 929.12 Water Rates

- Water Operational Rate: **\$8.79/1,000 gal** (*was \$8.43/1,000 gal in 2020*)
 - The City of Columbus continues to offer a pass-thru 20% low-income discount.
- Water Capital Improvement Rate: **\$0.33/1,000 gal** (*was \$0.30/1,000 gal in 2020*)
- In 2018, the Water Operational Fund was provided a \$1.2m loan from the general fund to pay the City of Columbus for back charges due to a slow running meter. The water rate increases to cover the additional expense of a fully operational meter, and the general fund repayment was spread out over the past 3 years to reduce any sharp spikes in rates.

Section 929.14 System Capacity Charge

- Updated Capacity Charge chart adding a 10" diameter tap to match the rest of the section and actual tap sizes in the water system.

Section 929.15 Private Fire Protection Service

- Updated unmetered fire line rate using 2021 rates.

CHAPTER 941 – GARBAGE AND RUBBISH COLLECTION

Section 941.15 Pickup and Disposal Fees

- Curb Pickup Rate: **\$60.51/Quarterly** (*was \$55.44/Quarterly in 2020*)
- Carryout Service Rate: **\$120.51/Quarterly** (*was \$115.44/Quarterly in 2020*)
- Pickup and Disposal rates are based on contract terms and include the recycling processing fee.