

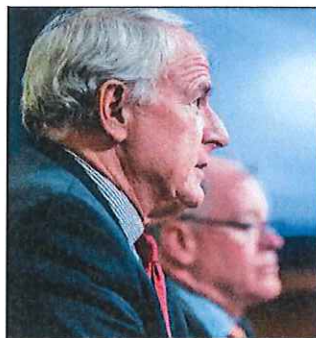
WAUKESHA WATER PLAN

Proposed contract gains unanimous approval in first Milwaukee hearing

Will head to full councils in both cities

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MILWAUKEE — Waukesha’s water contract withstood its first test before Milwaukee elected officials



Kenny Yoo/Special to The Freeman

Milwaukee Mayor Tom Barrett, left, speaks to the committee at Milwaukee City Hall as Waukesha Mayor Shawn Reilly, right, listens.

in the Steering and Rules Committee Tuesday and was unanimously passed without changes to the full Common Council.

Both Milwaukee Mayor Tom Barrett and Waukesha Mayor Shawn Reilly offered opening statements to the committee and described the effort that went into the months-long negotiation process between the two municipalities to iron out the inter-governmental agreement that will bring

Milwaukee a net benefit of \$42 million over 20 years.

“There have been high moments and low moments with what should happen here,” Barrett said of the negotiations. “But this is a great victory for both the people in Waukesha and in Milwaukee.”

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Kenny Yoo/Special to The Freeman

(Right) Waukesha Mayor Shawn Reilly and Milwaukee Mayor Tom Barrett discuss the water plan with the Milwaukee Steering and Rules Committee on Tuesday.

Water

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Barrett highlighted the \$2.5 million one-time sum that Waukesha has pledged to give Milwaukee in 2020 as part of the agreement, which he said could ideally be used to replace lead laterals leading to Milwaukee homes.

Negotiations over the water contract between Milwaukee and Waukesha ended last Friday, shortly after the Waukesha Water Commission unanimously approved it at its Thursday night meeting.

The contract and other attachments were released to the public shortly thereafter, detailing the water service area and maximum daily volume that Waukesha is allowed under the contract — described as a water-only deal.

'This was not a cozy deal'

Waukesha Water Utility and Milwaukee Water Works leaders answered questions from the members of the Steering and Rules Committee. Many focused on transportation and affordable housing plans in Waukesha, the water service area and Milwaukee's responsibility to build a pumping station near South 60th Street and West Cold Spring Road.

Milwaukee Common Council President Ashanti Hamilton said he and other aldermen have received numerous calls from constituents asking if transportation and affordable housing were going to be part of the negotiations.

When Milwaukee first expressed interest in providing Waukesha with Great Lakes water several years ago, they required Waukesha to submit a transportation and affordable housing study, which is standard process in intergovernmental agreements, said District 5 Ald. Jim Bohl.

Barrett responded that many of Waukesha's transportation issues stem from state transportation problems and instead steered the question toward the \$2.5 million that Waukesha promised to give Milwaukee in 2020 that will likely be used to replace lead pipes in the city.



Kenny Yoo/Special to The Freeman

Milwaukee Common Council President Ashanti Hamilton listens to Reilly and Barrett.

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"It's not exactly transportation, it's not exactly housing, but it's in the same spirit," Barrett said, adding that the lead pipes in Milwaukee have become a large social issue.

Reilly said the transportation system in Waukesha is actually vibrant and he and other elected city officials spend much time working on the housing issue. He said that putting those issues into negotiations over a water contract would "complicate things" and "cause some problems" among Waukesha aldermen.

Bohl offered a middle ground, saying the water contract would build a bridge that the cities can continue to cross to discuss other issues, like affordable housing and transportation.

Barrett was asked how he came up with the \$2.5 million figure for lead lateral replacement. He said that Waukesha and Milwaukee "arrived" at that number because they thought it was a sum they could sell to the respective Common Councils.

District 4 Ald. Bob Bauman pointed out that Waukesha would see major savings with Milwaukee water compared to other offers and asked if the \$2.5 million realized that.

Barrett countered that Milwaukee is also going to see a major benefit from the deal by way of \$42 million in net revenue in the

long run.

"This was not a cozy deal, there was a lot of back and forth," Barrett said.

District 11 Ald. Mark Borkowski — whose district envelopes the proposed pumping station area on South 60th Street and West Cold Spring Road in Milwaukee — said he will be looking for updates on the location before it's built because "those constituents need to be informed."

Waukesha Water Utility General Manager Dan Duchniak told Borkowski he's planning a town hall meeting in that area so residents can ask questions about the pipeline and water pumping station.

Under the proposed contract, Milwaukee would be responsible to pay for the pumping station and two miles of pipeline leading to Waukesha's pipeline hook-up site and it will cost between \$15 million and \$20 million, said Milwaukee Public Works Commissioner Ghasan Korban.

The contract now heads to the full Common Council in Milwaukee on Nov. 28 and Waukesha on Dec. 5 for final review and approval.

Hamilton called upon Waukesha District 4 Ald. Joe Pieper, who attended Tuesday's meeting, to give insight on what Waukesha's aldermen thought of the proposed contract.

"My sense is that this has support," Pieper said, adding that he couldn't predict if the council would offer unanimous approval on Dec. 5. "We are looking forward to this moving forward very quickly."