

Priorities – Water and Sewer Operations Continue to be Neglected while rate payers pay more.

Water and Sewer Rate payers are currently paying \$1.7MM to pay for the “estimates” of time spent by city staff on enterprise operations and issues. With the \$1.1MM debt payment rate payers are contributing more than \$2MM to the city. Yet there is literally not one priority to be discussed for the next six months that relates to water and sewer.

The quote below is from the letter to rate payers from the city manager explaining why we need to pay substantially more for water and sewer:

“Additionally, with lower rates we have not invested enough in maintaining our systems. Many parts of our systems are at or near the end of their useful life. This increases the risk of failures that could result in residents not having water or sewer service for several days.”

It was discussed repeatedly that we had not done a study of our infrastructure for years and it needed to be prioritized. The Water master plan study is in the category described as insufficient staff time to address and priority to be discussed in February. The Sewer Plan is on hold.

In public comments, I have asked repeatedly for the money that was misappropriated from rate payers be returned to rate payers. I’ll add to that now, I want fixing our water and sewer system to be the #1 priority for the city until a plan is in place, funded and being implemented. It is unacceptable to have a water rate study completed more than a year from now. The city needs to run the water and sewer enterprises in a businesslike way or find someone who can.

Someone suggested it might be time to ask the California Public Utilities commission to investigate. The city has admitted the dependability of our water system is at risk and yet there is no urgency to act.