



WHERE COMMUNITY AND SPIRIT MEET®

## **WORK SESSION MINUTES**

A work session of the Kirkwood City Council was held on September 18, 2025, at 4:30 p.m. at Kirkwood City Hall, 139 S. Kirkwood Road, Kirkwood, Missouri. Present were: Mayor Gibbons, Council Members Jaksetic, Luetzow, McLean, Rheinnecker, Schaefer, and Zimmer. Also in attendance were Chief Administrative Officer Russell Hawes, Assistant Chief Administrative Officer David Weidler, City Clerk Laurie Asche, Director of Finance Mary Sprung, Public Services Director Chris Krueger, Water Superintendent Clarence Patterson, Director of Electric Mark Petty, Communications Manager Jessica Winter, and City Attorney Jackie Graves.

### **APPROVAL OF SEPTEMBER 11, 2025 WORK SESSION MINUTES**

Motion was made by Council Member Luetzow and seconded by Council Member Schaefer to approve the minutes of the September 11, 2025 work session meeting. The minutes were unanimously approved.

### **WATER DISTRIBUTION MASTER PLAN UPDATE**

City staff introduced consultants from Crawford, Murphy & Tilly (CMT) and Raftelis to present the final Water Distribution Master Plan Update. A full report was provided in advance, with hard copies distributed at the meeting. Presenters included Project Manager Adrian Eilers, Project Engineer Kelly Gorman (CMT), and Tom Buckley and Cameron from Raftelis.

#### **Summary of Presentation**

The presentation covered the following major topics:

- **Break Rate Data:** Comparison of Kirkwood's water main breaks with nearby systems, highlighting that small-diameter cast iron mains show significantly higher break rates. Soil and construction quality were acknowledged as contributing factors.
- **Non-Revenue Water:** Kirkwood's water loss remains in the mid to high 20% range, higher than national averages. A leak detection study is planned for 2026, and an American Water Works Association (AWWA) water audit was recommended.
- **Risk Ranking Database:** Consultants presented a risk model categorizing mains from very low to high risk. Council noted discrepancies, such as the recent Marshall Road 20-inch main break, which occurred on a pipe classified as low risk.
- **Replacement Rate:** A long-term replacement rate of 1.5% annually (approx. 2.24 miles per year) was recommended. This would replace all cast iron mains over the next 50 years.
- **Capital Improvement Plan:** Approximately \$6 million in annual investment was recommended, covering 29 identified projects grouped into priority categories.
- **Pump Stations & Supply Issues:** Variability in pressure and flow, particularly at the Marshall Road Pump Station, was identified as an operational concern, with recommendations for further study and possible upgrades.



## **Expanded Council Discussion and Questions**

Council members engaged in detailed questioning throughout the presentation. Key points included:

- **Soil Conditions:** Council asked if break data considered local soil types such as erosive soils and expansive clays. Consultants responded that these conditions can affect break rates but are not fully captured in system-wide models.
- **Marshall Road Break:** Members highlighted the recent large break on Marshall Road. Despite being rated low risk, it failed catastrophically. Consultants explained that even low-risk transmission mains can break, though infrequently.
- **Pipe Age Records:** Questions were raised about why accurate pipe ages were unavailable. Consultants explained that pre-1972 record-keeping was incomplete. Members suggested whether cameras or internal inspections could be used to better assess conditions.
- **Replacement Prioritization:** Several members asked whether project rankings accounted for sensitive facilities, commercial areas, or overall community impact. Consultants explained that factors like number of service lines and hydraulic benefit were included, but acknowledged prioritization is challenging when all projects show need.
- **Financial Concerns:** Council expressed concern about Scenario 3, which would require 10–12% annual rate increases, amounting to a 50% increase over four years. Questions were raised about hybrid approaches combining debt and cash funding.
- **Comparison with Missouri American Water:** Members noted that Kirkwood's current rates are only marginally higher than Missouri American's. Questions centered on whether selling the system would raise rates further, especially if Kirkwood was carved into a separate rate class.
- **Future Contract:** Discussion was held about the expiration of the Missouri American contract in 2042, and concerns about the City's negotiating position if alternative supply sources are unavailable.
- **Ownership vs. Sale:** Several members debated whether to retain the City-owned system or sell to a private utility. Pros included control, tax-exempt financing, and accountability; cons included high costs and increasing financial burden.
- **Public Reaction:** Members noted resident concerns over recent rate increases and emphasized the importance of clear communication about the reasons for future adjustments.

## **Citizens Advisory Group**

Mayor Gibbons reported that a citizens advisory group has been formed to review the Master Plan, evaluate rate impacts, and consider ownership options. Two Council members will serve on the committee. The group will meet regularly and issue recommendations to Council after studying the financial and operational implications. No deadline for final recommendations was established.



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**MOTION TO CLOSE THE MEETING**

Motion was made by Council Member Zimmer and seconded by Council Member Rheinnecker to close the meeting pursuant to RSMo Chapter 610.021 (1- Legal, 12 – Contract Negotiations, & 18 - Audit).

Roll Call:

Mayor Gibbons	“Yes”
Council Member Schaefer	Absent
Council Member Zimmer	“Yes”
Council Member Jaksetic	“Yes”
Council Member Luetzow	“Yes”
Council Member McLean	“Yes”
Council Member Rheinnecker	“Yes”

The meeting was closed. Council Member Schaefer joined the meeting

**MOTION TO OPEN THE MEETING**

Motion was made by Council Member Zimmer and seconded by Council Member Schaefer to open the meeting.

Roll Call:

Mayor Gibbons	“Yes”
Council Member Schaefer	“Yes”
Council Member Zimmer	“Yes”
Council Member Jaksetic	“Yes”
Council Member Luetzow	“Yes”
Council Member McLean	“Yes”
Council Member Rheinnecker	“Yes”

The meeting was opened. It was the consensus of the Council to continue the work session following the formal meeting.

**MOTION TO CLOSE THE MEETING**

Motion was made by Council Member Schaefer and seconded by Council Member Zimmer to close the meeting pursuant to RSMo Chapter 610.021 (1- Legal, 12 – Contract Negotiations, & 18 - Audit).

Roll Call:

Mayor Gibbons	“Yes”
Council Member Schaefer	“Yes”
Council Member Zimmer	“Yes”
Council Member Jaksetic	“Yes”
Council Member Luetzow	“Yes”



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Council Member McLean	“Yes”
Council Member Rheinnecker	“Yes”

The meeting was closed.

### **MOTION TO OPEN THE MEETING**

Motion was made by Council Member McLean and seconded by Council Member Zimmer to open the meeting.

Roll Call:

Mayor Gibbons	“Yes”
Council Member Schaefer	“Yes”
Council Member Zimmer	“Yes”
Council Member Jaksetic	“Yes”
Council Member Luetzow	“Yes”
Council Member McLean	“Yes”
Council Member Rheinnecker	“Yes”

The meeting was opened. Since no further matters were to come before the council, the meeting was adjourned.

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Laurie Asche  
City Clerk