

Minutes – Council – April 30, 2026

Minute No. 258

Report – Executive Policy Committee – April 21, 2026

Item No. 11 Water and Sewer Rate Relief and Debt Payment

COUNCIL DECISION:

Council concurred in the recommendation of the Executive Policy Committee and adopted the following:

1. That the Public Service be directed to use the water and sewer budget variance as follows:
 - A. Freeze 2027 sewer volume rates at the approved 2026 rate of \$4.53 per cubic metre and freeze 2027 water volume rates at the approved 2026 rate of \$2.17 per cubic metre, subject to the City having commitments with the federal and provincial governments for NEWPCC Upgrade: Project 3 funding.
 - B. Address affordability by setting aside \$1.1 million in one-time funds for utility bill assistance and report back to Council in 180 days with recommendations on how to best allocate the amount toward utility bill assistance for low-income Winnipeggers.
 - C. Direct the remaining budget variance to retained earnings to offset the debt requirement for NEWPCC: Project 3.
2. That the Proper Officers of the City be authorized to do all things necessary to implement the intent of the foregoing.

Minutes – Council – April 30, 2026

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DECISION MAKING HISTORY:

Moved by His Worship Mayor Gillingham,

That the recommendation of the Executive Policy Committee be adopted.

Moved by Councillor Mayes,

That the item be referred to the Standing Policy Committee on Water, Waste and the Environment.

Lost

The motion for the adoption of the Item was put.

His Worship Mayor Gillingham called for the yeas and nays, which were as follows:

Yea:	His Worship Mayor Gillingham, Councillors Allard, Browaty, Chambers, Duncan, Eadie, Lukes, Santos, Wyatt and Sharma	10
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Nay:	Councillors Dobson, Durand-Wood, Gilroy and Mayes	4
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Absent:	Councillor Orlikow	1
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Carried

David Grant submitted a communication in opposition to the matter.

EXECUTIVE POLICY COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:

On April 21, 2026, the Executive Policy Committee submitted the matter to Council.

Moved by Councillor Browaty,

WHEREAS the Financial Status and Forecast Report to December 31, 2025 shows a positive budget variance of \$67 million for water and sewer operations;

AND WHEREAS the variance is tied to several factors, including increased metered consumption, conservative consumption modelling, strong population growth, weather, the timing of meter readings, mail service delays and increased accuracy of metering technology;

Minutes – Council – April 30, 2026

Report – Executive Policy Committee – April 21, 2026

DECISION MAKING HISTORY (continued):

EXECUTIVE POLICY COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION (continued):

AND WHEREAS the annual dividend paid by the Water and Sewer Utility into the General Revenue Fund was capped, per Council's March 2025 direction, at budgeted annual levels approved in the 2024 to 2027 Multi-Year Budget;

AND WHEREAS the budget variance allows the City to offset a portion of its debt requirement for North End Water Pollution Control Centre (NEWPCC): Project 3 upgrades and significantly reduce related debt servicing charges;

AND WHEREAS it similarly allows Council the opportunity to address affordability pressures related to utility rate increases;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:

1. That the Public Service be directed to use the water and sewer budget variance as follows:
 - A. Freeze 2027 sewer volume rates at the approved 2026 rate of \$4.53 per cubic metre and freeze 2027 water volume rates at the approved 2026 rate of \$2.17 per cubic metre, subject to the City having commitments with the federal and provincial governments for NEWPCC Upgrade: Project 3 funding.
 - B. Address affordability by setting aside \$1.1 million in one-time funds for utility bill assistance and report back to Council in 180 days with recommendations on how to best allocate the amount toward utility bill assistance for low-income Winnipeggers.
 - C. Direct the remaining budget variance to retained earnings to offset the debt requirement for NEWPCC: Project 3.
2. That the Proper Officers of the City be authorized to do all things necessary to implement the intent of the foregoing.