

WORK SESSION MINUTES – WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 5, 2020

STATE OF KANSAS)
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CITY OF KANSAS CITY)

Mr. Johnson, Ms. Lawson, and Ms. Austin answered questions from the Board regarding their responsibilities during the rate hearings.

Item #5 – Customer Service Policies – Johnetta Hinson

Ms. Hinson gave a PowerPoint presentation on the Customer Service Policy Review (attached).

Ms. Lawson, Mr. Johnson, Ms. Hinson, Ms. Freeman, Ms. Austin, and the Board discussed the Review and questions were answered.

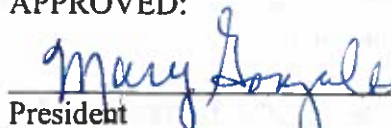
Motion was made to adjourn the meeting at 6:02 P.M. by Ms. Gonzales seconded by Mr. Bryant and carried.

ATTEST:



Secretary

APPROVED:



President





Customer Service Policy Review

February 5, 2020



Customer Service Policy Review

- 4.01 Requests for Service

- Removed wording from 2nd Paragraph

~~Requests by all new customers for utility services must be completed at the office of KCBPU.~~ All current customers who have a good credit rating or better and are current with their utility bill may make a new request by telephone or BPU web site when available. There is a service fee charged by KCBPU to process information, obtain a credit report, and set up an account as set out in the Fee and Deposit Schedule. This fee is paid with the first billing. Picture identification is required and a Social Security Number is requested.

- Reworded 4th Paragraph

The property to be serviced must qualify for service. If a property failed inspection or is determined to be unfit/unsafe for service, ~~a request for service will not be accepted~~ **service will not be provided.**



Customer Service Policy Review

- 4.02 Discontinuing Service

- Added 2nd and 3rd Paragraphs

Customers of one or more of the utility services provided shall be subject to the provisions of this policy. Any contract made for services shall continue in full force and effect during its term. Services shall be discontinued by customer in accordance with the terms of the contract. If no terms are specified, customer may discontinue services upon giving KCBPU notice at least one business day in advance. In case no such notice is given to KCBPU, the terminating customer shall be responsible for all services supplied until such notice is given to KCBPU. In the case of rental property, the owner may contract in writing for services to be continued automatically in owner's name, with full responsibility for payment of all services thereafter delivered, when services are terminated at the request of any tenant.

When a change of occupancy or any other change of legal billing responsibility occurs on any service being rendered by KCBPU, the notice of this change shall be given to KCBPU by the customer at least one business day prior to the change.

The outgoing customer shall be responsible for all service rendered until the notice of change has been received by KCBPU.



Customer Service Policy Review

- 5.01 Security Deposits

- Removed wording in 3rd and 4th Paragraphs

Deposits are assessed in an effort to ensure that all utility invoices are collected, which assists in keeping rates from unduly increasing.

All customers will be subject to a maximum deposit. The deposit can be reduced if the customer supplies KCBPU with approved personal, identifiable information. If such information is provided, the deposit may be determined by a sliding scale based on the credit rating of the applicant. The scale will be determined by using a credit rating service utilized by KCBPU.

~~KCBPU recognizes that receiving personal information from customers requires responsibility of maintaining privacy and security of each customer. In an effort to meet this responsibility KCBPU has established guidelines in an “Identity Theft Program Policy” and the Privacy Policy.~~ Personal/business information is necessary for KCBPU to know the customer and provide a basis of extending credit to the customer for their services.

~~KCBPU reserves the right to transfer any previous unpaid balance or terminate any service connection if KCBPU later discovers that the customer or any person living at the service address owed a debt to KCBPU that was not resolved at the time of application.~~ (This paragraph was moved to section 7.01)



Customer Service Policy Review

- 5.03 Non-Residential Service Applicants
 - Removed the list of non-residential applicants (ex. Partnerships, Limited Liability Companies, etc.)
 - Added wording about possibly not assessing deposit due to Governmental entity, registered 501(c)(3) or establishing and maintaining bank draft.

Applicants may have a deposit equal to the sum of two-and-a-half times the highest bill over the past twelve months at that location. The deposit can be reassessed every six months.

The deposit may be waived for Governmental entities or a registered 501(c)(3).

Applicants may not be assessed a deposit if they sign up for and maintain automatic utility bill payments by bank draft. If the customer cancels the automatic payment or incurs an insufficient funds transaction, a deposit will be assessed.



Customer Service Policy Review

- 5.05 Credit of the Deposits

- Removed wording about a credit balance being refunded to the customer

If the customer has incurred more than two penalty assessments during the two year period (Residential deposits) or three year period (Non-Residential deposits), the credit may be delayed. Upon review of the most current twelve-month period the deposit will be credited when no more than two penalty assessments have occurred.

Residential deposits may be credited to the customer's account with interest two years after the customer has paid the deposit. The interest is determined by the Kansas Department of Administration, Municipal Services, and K.S.A. 12-822 and as amended.

Non-Residential deposits may be credited to the customer's account with interest three years after the customer has paid the deposit. The interest is determined by the Kansas Department of Administration, Municipal Services, and K.S.A. 12-822 and as amended.

~~Refunded deposits shall be applied to the customer's account. Any credit balance resulting from the deposit application will be refunded to the customer upon request. Deposits are not transferrable from one service address to another.~~





Customer Service Policy Review

- 7.01 Individual Liability
 - Reworded 3rd Paragraph

Where two or more persons join in one written or oral application or contract for utility service, such persons shall be jointly and individually liable and shall be billed by means of a single periodic bill mailed to the person designated on the application to receive the bill.

KCBPU may request the names of each adult occupant residing at the location where residential service is being provided.

~~Whether or not the utility obtained a joint application, where two or more adults are living in the same residence~~ When someone is added to an existing account, they shall be jointly and individually liable for the bill for utility service supplied, as well as past delinquencies at any service location.

KCBPU reserves the right to transfer any previous unpaid balance and/or terminate any service connection if KCBPU later discovers that the customer or any person living at the service address owed a debt to KCBPU that was not resolved at the time of application.



Customer Service Policy Review

- 11.05 Waiver of Late Payment Charge for Customers in Special Circumstances
 - Previously

For certain customers on fixed income who are charged a late payment penalty, they may submit an application (Form No. 9-2820-M) to KCBPU requesting a waiver of the penalty charge. The customer must receive a monthly government or retirement check, such as social security, Disability, and present proof of receipt.
 - Now

Customers who are at least 62 years of age and meet the federal poverty guidelines may submit an application and proof of income to KCBPU requesting a waiver of the late payment charge. Future late payment charges will be waived if the application is approved.



Customer Service Policy Review

- 16.01 Disconnection of Service

- Added wording so Disconnection and Restoration are in same section

If the “amount due now” as indicated on the bill is not paid on or before the due date, a late payment charge as determined by KCBPU may be added to the bill. A courtesy phone call may be attempted to notify the customer of a late payment. Non-payment of the bill can result in disconnection of service.

When an account is in non-payment status, a notice is given that utility services may be eligible for disconnection; this is a “Disconnection Notice”. A courtesy second phone call may be attempted to notify the customer of a pending disconnection. Payment must be made before the cutoff date noted on the bill to avoid being disconnected. Any previous unpaid amount is eligible for disconnect at any time.



Customer Service Policy Review

- 17.01 Cold and Hot Weather Rule
 - Added wording for cold weather time period, time forecast will be checked and information about payment arrangements

During summer months, on any day when the National Weather service forecasts the temperature will rise above 95 degrees Fahrenheit, or the heat index will rise above 105 degrees Fahrenheit, KCBPU will not disconnect electric service for non-payment of bills.

During the period of November 1st through March 31st, KCBPU will not disconnect Residential electric customers for non-payment of bills when the National Weather Service forecasts the temperature will remain at or below 32 degrees Fahrenheit for 24 hours. KCBPU will check the weather forecasts daily between 8:00 AM and 9:00 AM. Water service can be disconnected at any time.

To avoid being disconnected, the customer must contact KCBPU to check eligibility and establish a payment arrangement. Please refer to Payment Arrangement section for additional requirements.



Thank You

