City of Carroll

112 E. 5th Street Carroll, Iowa 51401-2799 (712) 792-1000 FAX: (712) 792-0139

MEMO TO: Honorable Mayor and City Council Members

FROM: Mike Pogge-Weaver, City Manager

DATE: April 9, 2020

SUBJECT: Water and Sewer Utility Billing Modifications due to COVID-19

Due to the situation around COVID-19, two modification are recommended related to our water and sewer utility billing, specifically 1) waiving utility billing late fees and 2) suspending credit card processing fees for utility bill payments.

Waiving utility billing late fees

Due to the financial impacts from COVID-19, many individuals in our community are experiencing financial stresses that will make it difficult to make timely water and sewer utility payments. City Code 92.06 requires a one-time late payment penalty of ten percent (10%) for accounts that pay after the 15th day of the month or the next business day if the 15th lands on a weekend/holiday. To avoid adding additional stress during this time, it is recommended that the City waive this late payment penalty for the second quarter (April, May, and June) of 2020.

Suspending credit card processing fees for utility bill payments

When the City implemented the ability to accept credit cards for the payment of utility bills on September 22, 2014, by motion, the City Council implemented a credit card processing fee for face to face transactions of 2.5% and $2.50 per online transaction. With the closure of city offices due to COVID-19 and to encourage electronic payment to avoid staff exposure to COVID-19, the credit card processing fees have been suspended since March 17th, the same day city offices were closed. It is recommended that these fees be suspended until such time city offices reopen to the public.

STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS: Consider a resolution for Water and Sewer Utility Billing Modifications due to COVID-19.

RESOLUTION NO. _____

A RESOLUTION MAKING CERTAIN WATER AND SEWER UTILITY BILLING MODIFICATIONS DUE TO COVID-19

WHEREAS, due to the on-going situation surrounding COVID-19, some individuals in our community are experiencing financial stresses that will make it difficult to make timely water and sewer utility payments; and,

WHEREAS, waiving the required one-time late payment penalty of ten percent (10%) will provide financial relief for those facing financial stress; and,

WHEREAS, to protect the public and staff from COVID-19 the Carroll City Hall has been closed to the public and they are being encouraged to complete city business by electronic means; and,

WHEREAS, to encourage more electronic utility payments it is prudent to suspend credit card processing fees for utility bill payments.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Carroll City Council that the required one-time late payment penalty of ten percent (10%) for delinquent combined utility service accounts as outlined in Carroll City Code 92.06 is hereby waived for the 2nd quarter (April, May, and June) of 2020; and,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED by the Carroll City Council that the credit card processing fees for utility bill payments is hereby suspended starting March 17, 2020 and running until such time the Carroll City Hall is reopened to the public by the Carroll City Manager.

PASSED AND APPROVED by the City Council of the City of Carroll, Iowa, this _____ day of _____, 20____.

CITY COUNCIL OF THE
CITY OF CARROLL, IOWA

BY:_____
Eric P. Jensen, Mayor

ATTEST:

By:_____
Laura A. Schaefer, City Clerk