

Fort Wayne, Ind. – An ordinance to begin the process to condemn Aqua Indiana's water utility in southwest Fort Wayne will be introduced to City Council at its meeting on Tuesday, Dec. 11.

Initial discussions on the condemnation ordinance could occur at City Council's final meeting of the year on Tuesday, Dec. 18.

Last month, Fort Wayne Mayor Tom Henry announced the City would move forward to condemn Aqua's water utility in southwest Fort Wayne.

A recent independent audit completed at the request of the Indiana Utility Regulatory Commission (IURC) was not favorable toward Aqua. The IURC declared that Aqua's decision making regarding fire protection was unacceptable. In addition, Aqua's master planning was again declared to be inadequate.

The City believes the recommendations in the audit can be accomplished with City Utilities as the owner/operator of Aqua's system or by the City working collaboratively with Aqua.

Mayor Henry's concerns about Aqua's inability to meet water demands during this past summer's drought and their lack of a suitable plan to meet the current and long-term needs of customers were verified by the audit.

Since Mayor Henry took office in 2008, he has been committed to finding a solution to water challenges faced by residents in the Aqua service area. Mayor Henry strongly supports efforts to provide residents with reliable and high quality water at an affordable price.

Mayor Henry has repeatedly emphasized that the City has done everything it can to reach an agreement with Aqua. To this point, the City and Aqua have not been able to agree on a better future of water service in southwest Fort Wayne.

During this past summer's drought, Fort Wayne City Utilities assisted Aqua by providing water to approximately 1,300 customers due to Aqua's inability to meet water needs and demands. Assistance from City Utilities might be necessary again if peak demands experienced this past summer return again next year.

Aqua currently serves 12,000 water customers in southwest Fort Wayne, with 70% of those customers residing inside City limits. To date, more than 20 neighborhood associations served by Aqua have separately submitted petitions requesting a change to City Utilities. By switching to water service provided by City Utilities, the average Aqua customer would save \$160-\$220 annually based on current and projected rates.

Even though condemnation is being pursued, the City will continue to be open to negotiations with Aqua in efforts to reach an agreement.