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1909-1966

64 cm. textual records

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Minutes for a Water, Light and Telephone Board exist for the period 1903 to 1906. This Board, appointed under the Municipal Waterworks Act, the Municipal Light and Heat Act, and other related Acts, had managed the Waterworks, Electric Light and Telephone Systems of the City. The Board of Commissioners (1903-1906) received reports and handled the tendering and purchasing process for improvements in the above areas.

In July 1909, By-law 703 made provisions for a public vote to determine whether the Board of Water and Light Commissioners would be abolished. Under the proposed By-law, Council would assume responsibility for these operations. In the same month, Council passed a procedural By-law (#709) which outlined the duties of a Public Utilities Committee as a committee of council. Reporting to Council, the Committee was required to make recommendations to Council regarding the operation, maintenance, construction and rates for waterworks, electric light, telephone and street railway services.

The number of utility related by-laws passed during the period indicates that the late 1800s and the early 1900s were a busy time for construction and management of utilities. In 1897, Council passed a first by-law to approve the levy for the construction of Waterworks, and various by laws were passed to acquire funds for further improvements to the electric lighting and telephone systems. By-law 840, passed in October 1911, governed the maintenance and management of the municipal electric light system; it established rates and terms of payment as well as procedures for establishing connections, and the regulation of the Electric Light Department. No similar by-laws appear to have been passed for the management of other utilities, though it is clear from the minutes that the Committee made recommendations to Council in a similar fashion for the management of its other utilities.

The Committee supervised the Manager of Utilities, handled tendering for purchases and received petitions for works by the public. They spent much time approving accounts and in discussing financial matters. Discussions included matters of installing and/or testing equipment, staff appointments and remuneration, public complaints and requests as well as agreements with suppliers. In overseeing the management of Waterworks, minutes include discussion of the Loch Lomond project in the 1920s. After the decline of the Street Railway system, the committee was involved when public transit was converted into bus services. Thereafter, it maintained administrative control of the new Transit Department. Minutes also record the receipt of reports from the Superintendent of Waterworks, the Manager of Electric Light and Telephone and the City Engineer. After 1915, minutes record some detail of the reports, such as the number of subscribers for a service and/or the financial status of the utility. Engineering reports tend to reflect the status of projects.

This series includes index 1911 to 1966, minutes of the Joint Committee Port Arthur Public Utilities Commission and the Fort William Public Utilities Committee after 1925. Also includes financial statements (1911) for water, telephone, and light services. Formerly known as the Board of Water and Light Commissioners

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Further Accruals are not anticipated.