



Subscribe now for **\$9.99 FOR A YEAR** for a limited time only

TOUCHDOWN! ([HTTP://OFFERS.HATTIESBURGAMERICAN.COM/SPECIALOFFER?GPS-SOURCE=BEXXITSEPTEMBER&UTM_MEDIUM=OVERLAY&UTM_SOURCE=BOUNCE-EXCHANGE&UTM_CAMPAIGN=SEPTEMBER&UTM_CONTENT=NANOBAR](http://offers.hattiesburgamerican.com/specialoffer?gps-source=bexxitseptember&utm_medium=overlay&utm_source=bounce-exchange&utm_campaign=september&utm_content=nano-bar))

Council lowers water, sewer rates; adopts millage

Haskel Burns, American Staff Writer 8:26 p.m. CDT September 6, 2016



(Photo: File photo/Hattiesburg American)

The water and sewer rate hikes recently established to help pay for a new wastewater system for Hattiesburg are about to drop — significantly.

During Tuesday's Hattiesburg City Council meeting, council members voted 5-0 to amend two ordinances passed in April that raised the rates, cutting those rates by more than 20 percent.

"We had raised the rates 55 percent about a month or so ago, so we could meet the payments for the bonds to produce this \$130 million mechanical plant or land application — whichever one we were going to do," Council President Carter Carroll said. "Since we now have a reprieve on that, we are now going to lower those rates.

"With our aerators working at 100 percent, we have now gotten our lagoons back into compliance. So we don't have the deadline of two years to build this application, and we have more time to do this."

The new water rates, which took effect Sept. 1, are \$4.82 per 1,000 gallons for 1,000-100,000 gallons used, and \$4 per 1,000 gallons for more than 100,000 gallons used. A monthly minimum charge of \$16 has been

established.

Also effective Sept. 1, all residential water users — including motels, apartments and house trailers — are charged for sewer service at a monthly rate of 100 percent of their monthly water charge, with a minimum charge of \$16.

Water and sewer rates will increase incrementally after that, with rate hikes scheduled for Sept. 1, 2017; Sept. 1, 2018; and Sept. 1, 2019.

The previous water rates were \$6.27 per 1,000 gallons for 1,000-100,000 gallons used, and \$5.19 per 1,000 gallons for more than 100,000 gallons used. A monthly minimum charge of \$20.84 was in place. Residential water users also were charged for sewer service at a monthly rate of 100 percent of their monthly water charge.

Residents can expect to see lower fees beginning with their October bills.

"So instead of you having, basically, a \$15 minimum increase in your water and sewer, it's now only going to be \$5," Carroll said. "So I think we'll see that the ratepayers are going to take a lot of relief from that, and we're still going to be able to go forward with our ComSwip projects and our other projects dealing with our water and sewer."



HATTIESBURG AMERICAN

Council moves on with wastewater plan

<http://www.hattiesburgamerican.com/story/news/local/hattiesburg/2016/04/28/council-moves-wastewater-plan/83668406/>

In early August, City Council voted to go ahead with plans for the mechanical system after deciding that the previously chosen land-application method was no longer a viable option. That decision was followed by a meeting between officials from the city, Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality and Gulf Restoration Network, during which an agreement was made to stop the daily fines accrued by the city for failing to submit plans for a new wastewater system in a timely fashion.

"There are some other avenues that we may can look at," Carroll said. "The council is going to be looking at several other applications that we might do with our lagoons, to see if we can help further extend those without having to go full mechanical.

"We have to re-evaluate, and we have to find out what the new requirements from MDEQ are going to be. Then we will find out just exactly what we have to do. In other words, if they come back with minimum requirements, a polisher may be able to take care of what we need to do." ✕

In other action Tuesday, council got one step closer to finalizing the 2016-17 budget with a 5-0 vote to adopt an 0.81-mill increase for the proposed budget. Subscribe now for **\$9.99 FOR A YEAR** for a limited time only

TOUCHDOWN! (HTTP://OFFERS.HATTIESBURGAMERICAN.COM/SPECIALOFFER?GPS-SOURCE=BEEEXITSEPTEMBER&UTM_MEDIUM=OVERLAY&UTM_SOURCE=BOUNCE-EXCHANGE&UTM_CAMPAIGN=SEPTEMBER&UTM_CONTENT=KAROBAR)

The increased millage includes 0.5 mills for the city's operating Public Schools, 0.14 mills for the fire department of the police and fire departments, and 0.17 mills for Hattiesburg Public School District. For property owners, the increase will amount to approximately \$8.10 per year in additional taxes per \$100,000 of property.

Council members recently approved a .64-mill increase ([/story/news/local/hattiesburg/2016/08/17/council-approves-64-millage-increase-budget/88904436/](http://story/news/local/hattiesburg/2016/08/17/council-approves-64-millage-increase-budget/88904436/)), not counting the school district.

Council will vote whether to adopt a final budget in the coming weeks, after all council members and other city officials agree on final numbers.

Read or Share this story: <http://hatne.ws/2czpC5M>

Interested in a birth control you don't have to take every day?

[CLICK TO LEARN MORE](#) 