

Indian River County, Florida
Department of Utility Services
Board Memorandum

Date: March 27, 2020

To: Jason E. Brown, County Administrator

From: Vincent Burke, PE, Director of Utility Services

Subject: Suspension of Delinquency Charges associated with Utility Services through April 30, 2020, due to COVID-19

Background/Analysis:

On March 12, 2020, the Indian River County Department of Utility Services (IRCDUS) temporarily suspended the practice of disconnecting potable water service if a customer's account is past due. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, it is crucial that all potable water service within IRCDUS's service area remain on in order to provide essential water supply for cleaning and cooking.

With the recent stay home and social distancing requirements from local, state, and federal regulations, some of our customers may be affected financially if their job status changes. This affects their ability to pay for utility and other bills. On March 17, 2020, the Indian River County Board of County Commissioners (BCC) approved Resolution 2020-31, which delegated the authority to the County Administrator to execute all documents necessary to the proper functioning of the County until the BCC could meet to ratify those actions. To provide financial relief to those utility customers affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, under the BCC's authority from March 17, 2020, the County Administrator, under recommendation from the Director of Utility Services, temporarily suspended charging any new delinquency charges for water and sewer customers effective Monday, March 30, 2020, through Thursday, April 30, 2020.

This agenda item is to ratify those actions by the County Administrator and to seek BCC approval for the temporary suspension of delinquency charges (otherwise known as late fees), pursuant to Indian River County Code 201.08 (J)(4):

Delinquency charge. County shall charge an additional two dollars (\$2.00) plus one and one-half (1½) percent interest monthly (collectively "delinquency charges") on all outstanding balances including assessments, fees, charges, and other fees due (collectively "underlying charges") if payment is not made in full by each payment deadline date; provided, however, that the utilities director may waive some or all delinquency charges in connection with the reactivation of service of an existing account, where (i) payment in full of all underlying charges and delinquency charges would work a hardship to the customer, and such waiver is determined to be in the best interests of the county, and (ii) such waiver results in the immediate payment in full of all underlying charges and any delinquency charges which are not waived.

Funding:

Revenues from delinquency charges are recorded in the Utilities Operating fund. It is estimated that \$75,000 in revenues will not be recorded as a result of this recommendation.

Account Name	Account Number	Amount
Penalties	471034-343540	\$75,000

Recommendation:

Staff recommends that the Board of County Commissioners ratify the actions taken by the County Administrator under Resolution 2020-31 and temporarily suspend the Indian River County Department of Utility Services' charging of delinquency charges under section 201.08(J)(4) of the Indian River County Code Of Ordinances through April 30, 2020.