

The Union Daily Times

Warranty program targets water, sewer line repairs

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A warranty program that helps cover the costs of water and sewer repairs on private property is being endorsed by the City of Union.

Union City Council voted unanimously Tuesday to authorize Mayor Harold Thompson to have the city endorse the Line Warranty Program offered by Utility Service Partners (USP) under the sponsorship of the National League of Cities. Thompson said the program addresses the problem of the cost of water and sewer line repairs on private property. City personnel cannot repair water and sewer lines running between private homes and businesses and the city system. The Line Warranty Program is designed to help customers get those repairs done at reduced cost.

“We have a lot of situations around the city where our customers have a lot of problems with roots, collapsed lines, etc. between their homes and the city water meters and sewer taps,” Thompson said. “It’s been very expensive for those people to get those things fixed, so we’re going to join this program sponsored by the National League of Cities. The program is an affordable home protection solution for our residents to help them deal with the financial burden of unanticipated utility line repair and replacement costs that are not the city’s responsibility to repair. It’s sort of like insurance, they can join the program and whatever work needs to be done they can get it done at much less cost.”

Thompson said USP will employ local contractors to make the repairs, adding that USP representatives will be in Union in the near future to interview and select the contractors. He said utility customers who enroll in the program will be given a 24/7 customer service repair hot line number to report water and sewer line breaks.

Utility Director Joe Nichols said the program offers city utility customers warranties for water and sewer services at a cost of between \$4 and \$5 a month each.

In addition to repairing the lines, Nichols said USP will cover up to \$4,000 of the cost of water line repairs plus \$500 for sidewalk replacement. For sewer line repairs, USP will cover up to \$4,000 of the cost and up to \$4,000 for road repairs. Water line repairs cost an average of \$500 to \$1,500 while sewer line repairs can cost from \$3,000 to \$8,000.

Thompson said USP will administer the program at no cost to the city which will provide the company with a copy of its municipal seal, return address and other pertinent information it will need for the solicitation letter it will send out to the city’s utility customers advising them of the availability of the program.

In other business, council voted unanimously to approve second and final reading of a Flood Damage Prevention ordinance.

The ordinance, which is similar to one Union County is in the process of approving, is required by FEMA for the city to participate in the National Flood Insurance program. The ordinance is designed to promote health, safety and general welfare of the public and minimize public and private losses due to flood conditions.

Council also voted unanimously Tuesday to appoint Bobby Joe Gibbs, Lynn Eaves and Hutch Hall to the Planning Commission Board.

The board works closely with the City of Union Planning Department; meets to consider and make recommendations to council concerning zoning ordinances or resolutions; and makes regulations for the subdivision of land and appropriate revisions within its jurisdiction.

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