

August 11, 2016

Town Hall Dates - "Smart Grid Initiative Informational Meeting"

The City Shavano Park will host two town hall meetings in September regarding CPS Energy's plan to deploy their Smart Grid Initiative (SGI) in Shavano Park. The town halls will allow citizens an opportunity to learn about the planned program, ask questions, voice concerns, and learn more about the opt out option.

- Thursday, September 22 from 6 pm to 8 pm at City Hall
- Saturday, September 24 from 10 am to 12 pm at City Hall

Smart meters, also referred to as AMI meters, will replace both electric and natural gas meters over the 1500 square mile CPS Energy service territory. In June 2016, CPS Energy informed us that they would begin installing smart meters within the city during summer/fall of 2016. In response to citizen concerns, the City of Shavano Park requested CPS Energy delay implementing the smart meter program for six months. CPS Energy agreed to the delay in deployment and agreed to host town halls in order to better inform residents of the program and their options –including opting out and maintaining existing meters.

Several citizens and advocate groups warn of issues and dangers associated with Smart meters to include: higher billing costs; health hazards from radio frequency waves; data security vulnerabilities; fire hazards to the home; too much control retained by CPS Energy; and privacy intrusions.

CPS Energy disputes these dangers and their position is there are numerous benefits to the customer and the utility company. Customers will benefit as digital automation will provide a platform for faster outage detection and restoration of power, fewer site visits by CPS Energy technicians, reduced estimations, remote connections, numerous customer programs and a secure online portal called "My Energy Portal". The utility will benefit from remote meter reads, quicker move in/move outs, enhanced customer service, improved safety, lower emissions and operational cost savings.

"Opt Out" Option: CPS Energy offers an opt out program that allows customers to exchange the AMI meter for an OMR or a non-communicating meter. If a customer chooses to opt out **prior** to AMI meter installation, there is no upfront cost, but a monthly charge of \$20. If a customer elects to participate in the opt out program, the customer must contact CPS Energy to communicate their decision. As the installation period draws nearer, at some point CPS Energy customer's will be sent an opt out form – those that want to opt out must fill out and return to CPS Energy.

Here to Serve!

Bill Hill
City Manager