City Water, Light & Power (CWLP) faces both environmental and financial challenges. The coal market is declining due to cleaner and cheaper sources of energy. New public health safeguards to protect water and air quality are being required, which will better protect the health & well being of Springfield residents.

HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES:

- CWLP disposes of coal ash—the waste left behind from burning coal—in unlined ponds at the Dallman plant. CWLP has known for years that it has a serious water pollution problem from these ponds at Dallman.
- In 2010, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency found arsenic contaminating groundwater at the Dallman ash ponds at nine times the Safe Drinking Water Act levels. Recent groundwater monitoring near the Dallman ash ponds also showed levels exceeding clean water standards for boron, cadmium, chromium, iron, lead, manganese and sulfate.
- Between 2012 and 2014, the Dallman coal plant exceeded its air pollution permit limit for opacity (a measure of particulate pollution) more than 7,000 times.
- New safeguards from the Environmental Protection Agency will better protect Springfield water by requiring the cleanup of our unlined & leaking coal ash ponds and setting stricter water pollution guidelines. CWLP is faced with decisions under these new rules and Springfield residents need a voice in the decision making process.

FINANCIAL CONCERNS:

Financial studies have shown that CWLP’s oldest coal boilers are losing the city money.

- The city’s own report, written by Burns & McDonnell called the oldest 2 boilers (units 31 & 32) “economically marginal.” This report said that these 2 units were not needed to provide energy for the city for the next 20 years and that coal ash rules (CCR) would cost $27 million before the end of 2020. The report also said that, under a base-case scenario, Units 31 & 32 would lose $40 million over 20 years.
- A 2015 study by Synapse Energy & Economics showed operating Dallman Units 31 & 32 lost the city at least $41 million dollars between years 2008-2013 alone. Synapse also found that the running of these two units would lose at least $40 million over the next 20 years. Because these units are older, they are more expensive to run.
- In order to save CWLP from a negative bond rating, CWLP restructured rates to favor big businesses and instead placed the financial burden on Springfield families.
• This year’s capital plan for CWLP estimates costs of $55 million dollars for coal ash for the next 5 years & another $51 million for the oldest 3 boilers (units 31, 32, & 33).

• CWLP promised the City Council and rate-payers that any savings from a new 2016 coal contract would be passed on to CWLP customers. But now CWLP says that the utility needs to keep the savings to pay for environmental compliance.

• With potential additional rate increases looming, together we feel these issues speak to the current environmental injustice that is present in our community. We are concerned that these rate hikes especially affect people of color and disenfranchised communities in Springfield. For these constituencies, as well as others, every rate increase—particularly those of questionable need—directly impacts their income.

WHY A PUBLIC PROCESS?
• CWLP is a source of pride for Springfield residents. Customers of CWLP are the community owners of the plant. Similar to shareholders in corporations, the community owners need to have an ongoing voice in the decision making process.

LONG-RANGE PLANNING:
• CWLP needs a long-range plan that involves the public and looks at costs and benefits of operating the Dallman coal plant—including the three oldest coal units.

• Every few months, CWLP comes to the City Council with major issues to be resolved (e.g., rate restructuring, bond ratings, investments in old coal units). CWLP is in a financial tailspin and needs to look once more at the overall finances of the Dallman plant to make an educated decision that puts the well-being of the city first.

• A long-range plan would include an objective and fair financial analysis which would assist the City Council in making long-term decisions about the Dallman coal plant.

• It would also address the need for equity in training and hiring people of color and low income individuals.