



## **Council Committee Notes - Water/Sewer**

**Date:** August 5, 2009 **Time:** 8:30 AM **Location:** Town Hall **Chair:** Councilmember Gary Anderson **Attendees:** Councilmember Rebecca Nunn, Town Manager Tom Saunders, Chief WWTP Operator Pat Chenoweth, Utilities Manager James Seagle, , Mr. Bill Rosenbaum, Engineer, Absent: Councilmember Gary Anderson

**Visitors:** Mr. Tom Barany, Hill's Quarter resident and water system customer

### **Notes on Discussions:**

1. TM Saunders reported the following:
  - a. The staff position open at the WWTP has not yet been filled but further interviews are scheduled.
  - b. He has been advised by someone representing USDA-Rural Development that new grant money may become available in the next year and the town should prepare a grant application to be near the head of the line for funding if the money materializes. He will continue to investigate and report to Council any developments.
  - c. Staff training to operate the radio water meter system has been postponed until later in August. The town's equipment is ready.
  - d. The dispute between Mr. Felvey and Mr. Self over the ownership of a sewer force main on Black Stump Road is still under review and discussion. Mr. Felvey gave T.M. Saunders a tour of his project this week. Most of the roads and storm management basins have been roughed in and sewer and water line supplies have been delivered to the site.
  - e. The need to have an engineer evaluate the School Street lift station before Council responds to the KFD request for land behind the fire house was discussed and Mr. Rosenbaum was requested to make the evaluation.
  - f. The completion contract for water well #3 is being re-bid as directed by Council at its last meeting. Bid documents have been requested by three firms and bids are to be opened on July 10 at 2 PM.
2. Mr. Rosenbaum reported the following:
  - a. Gammon Well Company should have their performance bond in place any day now for the Well #3 completion job.
  - b. The people at VDH who are responsible for reviewing the Entertainment Center water line submittal aren't returning phone calls and have taken far longer than they should to approve the plans. If they don't respond today Mr. Rosenbaum and T.M. Saunders will take more vigorous steps to procure a response.

3. Utilities Superintendent Seagle reported the following:
  - a. Noel's Electric has performed some preliminary work to install the new generators at the lift stations and should return soon to finish the installation. Once he has done his part Mr. Seagle will contact the vendor so they can do their initial start-up procedures.
  - b. He has been monitoring and inspecting the work that the contractor at the Entertainment Center (bowling alley) has been doing to install and connect a gravity sewer line from the E.C. to the town line across the ravine. So far, so good, but vacuum testing is to follow.
4. WWTP Operator in Chief Chenoweth reported that the only standby pump at the plant has been installed and a new back-up pump ought to be ordered. A quote of \$13,320 has been obtained from Sydnor Hydro in Richmond for a 20 HP pump that is compatible with our existing equipment. A fourteen to sixteen week delivery schedule is the best available. After a brief discussion it was agreed to recommend to Council that the pump be ordered.
5. Mr. Tom Barany asked the committee if the Mary Ball Road Neighborhood Improvement Project, recently announced in the newspaper, would increase the town's debt and eventually result in increases in the Town's water and sewer rates. Mr. Barany expressed his opinion that the out of town rates are already very high, to the extent that they create a negative effect on lot and home sales in Hill's Quarter. He argued that by lowering water and sewer rates the town would increase the number of customers and thereby actually increase revenues for the system.
6. Discussion of the possibility of a tiered system of water/sewer rates per a request by Council member Nunn at the last Council meeting. Mr. Rosenbaum presented a brief report he wrote, addressing this question, that outlines various possible consequences of changes to minimums, etc. Council member Nunn asked staff to determine what it will take to develop a more full-blown study of the existing rate structure.

**Recommendations to Council:**

Approve the purchase of a 20 HP backup pump for the WWTP for \$13,320 from Sydnor Hydro of Richmond.

**Recommended for further study:**

Investigate the ability of the Bright System Accounting software to export water system data to spreadsheet software so "what if" scenarios can be investigated vis-à-vis a tiered system of utility rates.