



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

**Date:** July 1, 2009 **Time:** 8:30 AM **Location:** Town Hall **Chair:** Councilmember Gary Anderson  
**Attendees:** Councilmember Anderson, Councilmember Rebecca Nunn, Town Manager Tom Saunders, Assistant T.M. Marshall Sebra, Chief WWTP Operator Pat Chenoweth, Utilities Manager James Seagle, , Mr. Bill Rosenbaum, Engineer, Town Attorney Chris Stamm

**Visitors:** Dennis Mountcastle of Mountcastle Homes, Inc., Bob Schepker of McMahan Homes Inc., Tom McMahan of McMahan Homes Inc., John Martin, attorney for Our Northern Neck, Inc., Jones Felvey of Our Northern Neck, Inc., Cundiff Simmons of Simmons Newsom P.C., Bob Crickenberger of Simmons Newsome P.C.

### **Notes on Discussions:**

1. Mr. McMahan told the committee that the developers of the Grace Hill subdivision in the southern section of town is in default on its major loans and the principal developer, Mr. West, has recently declared personal bankruptcy and is suffering with poor health. According to Mr. McMahan, the bank that holds the loans has not responded to requests for funds sufficient to complete the unfinished sewer lift station, which he thinks will take \$80,000 to complete. Mr. McMahan, speaking for his company which is a builder of two model homes in Grace Hill, and Mr. Mountcastle, whose company built and owns the other model home in the development, said that “private funds” can be found to complete the lift station but that the new investors would want their money back, with interest, in the form of utility connection fee 50% refunds. The committee said it would look into this and get back to the builders.
2. Mr. Felvey spoke to the committee about his planned subdivision for moderate income people off of Black Stump Road. He indicated his position that the force main installed along BSR is in fact on his property and therefore his property and he can't be forced to pay to connect to it. He also stated that he shouldn't have to build a lift station any larger than is needed for his forty unit subdivision plus nine or so lots along BSR per a request from Lara Burseson, the Town Manager at that time. The committee agreed to consider Mr. Felvey's request.
3. TM Saunders reported the following:
  - a. Saunders, Rosenbaum and Chenoweth met with DEQ officials in Richmond June 30 to discuss questions related to the towns upcoming VPDES permit renewal. Much was learned that will be useful in the application process.
  - b. Clay Holcomb of Chesapeake Boat Basin has expressed renewed interest in connecting his business at the end of Waverly Avenue to the town's WWTP but indicated he can afford to wait a few months to find out if the town plans to install its long-discussed sewer outfall to Indian Creek.
  - c. An employee at the WWTP was discharged last week due to poor

- performance and failure to make progress towards licensure. Steps are being
- d. The water line extension along Mary Ball Road is complete and undergoing pressure and bacteriological testing and may be live as soon as July 9. Two separate residents along the line are expected to connect immediately. The committee reiterated its position that any connections made at this time will require connection fees. The possibility of refunding these fees if the town receives CDBG funding was discussed and it was decided to wait until we have a clearer picture of the grant outcome before making a decision.
  - e. A property owner along Black Stump Road has inquired about water and sewer service to her property if she decides to build or subdivide. The committee agreed with staff's assertion that water service is available and would have to be used but that sewer service is not currently available and the property owner will be within her rights to install private septic systems.
  - f. 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.
  - g. 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.
4. Chairman Anderson asked if letters have been sent to the businesses on Main Street that are connected to the private sewer line that runs beneath the old R. E. Michels building to inform them that blockages or other problems with that line will not be the town's responsibility. TM Saunders said they have not been sent but that he will work on them this week, once he has had a chance to study the town ordinances and county regs governing grease traps.
  5. Council member Nunn asked Mr. Rosenbaum to look into the town's water and sewer rates with an eye towards perhaps a tiered set of rates that would lower costs for users of very low amounts of water but raise them for high volume users.
  6. Utilities Superintendent Seagle reported that two new stand-by generators have been delivered to replace the 1972 models currently serving the Harvey Lane and Norris Pond lift stations. The committee authorized Mr. Seagle to investigate donating the old units to the Rural Water Works Association.

**Recommendations to Council:**

**Recommended for further study:**