

Newington Sewer Commission 5/19/2021 APPROVED MINUTES

Meeting called to order at 9:00 am.

Present: T. Cole Chairman, R.Stern, T.Hazelton, Commissioners. D.Messier, J.Tolman, Utility Partners. M.Curry, Wright-Pierce Engineers.

Minutes: Minutes from 4/21/2021 reviewed. Motion by R.Stern to approve, seconded by T.Hazelton.

Public Comment: None

Treasurer's report: Enterprise Account balance for April was \$1,345,450.73. Operating Fund ending balance for April was \$950,259.15.

Manifest Approval: Discussion on Great Bay testing fees, City of Rochester is the fiscal agent for the coalition of communities. State of NH DES is requesting 2 separate payments for bond principal.

Motion made to approve the 5/19/2021 manifest by R.Stern in the amount of \$509,822.53. Seconded by T.Hazelton. All in favor, approved & signed.

Plant operators report: Flows are up from last year, sludge as billed. Preventative maintenance was performed per manufacturers recommendations and schedules.

Sewer bills will go out shortly, letter to rate payers included that details costs before and after one-time rate adjustment.

Motion by R. to send a letter with the sewer bills stating rates for 2021 and why they will be lower. Including estimated 2021 rates and how they were temporarily reduced. Seconded by T.Hazelton, all in favor, approved.

Sewer Commission portion of the Town Audit was successfully completed.

New Business: None

Old Business: New General Draft permit has arrived and is being reviewed by Wright-Pierce Engineers. There is a 30-day window to respond with comments, an extension to 60 days was requested and only 15 additional days were approved. Several documents to discuss; review of draft permit and a proposal from Wright Pierce to pay for technical assistance, videotaping, and assessing the system. Video and assessment were last completed 10-14 years ago.

M.Curry explained that this is the general permit to operate, not the Great Bay permit. It basically takes the information from the previous plant and updates it. The long overdue (12 years) draft permit includes a memo summarizing the difference and observations for the Town of Newington and now includes PFAS monitoring. The EPA would like the town to test influent, effluent, and biosolids. It is believed this is an EPA experiment to collect data. Monitoring for PFAS will have a significant cost implication. This will not go into effect right away as there is no approved testing method. Once a Federally approved testing method is in place the WWTP will have 6 months to comply. Public comment will end on May 25th and then the EPA will reply to comments. There are 66 communities in NH & MA underneath this general permit. It is hoped after the comment replies, the final form will be more digestible for each municipality.

There are 3 tasks to complete:

1. General permit assistance – creating a memo and submitting to the EPA
2. Collection systems management – The EPA has added a requirement for a documented plan. D.Messier already has a plan in place that fulfills this requirement, it only needs formal documentation.

3. Collection system mapping, operations & maintenance plan – a documented plan. Wright Pierce will work with D.Messier and the town to develop these documents. 2 maps completed within 12 months and 3 within 24-36 months. Do not have to do CCTV work now, just have the plan written. This is a multi-year plan on a capital plan level.

The draft permit is worded that the burden of cost is on the town. There are no specific regulations on this as PFAS testing cannot be done with any plastic products or the sample will not be clean. Further discussion ensued on the use of plastics and how the testing will need to be completed. The result from this may be moving towards making drinkable water from wastewater plants. Essentially this is a data gathering effort. The EPA does not know or have a solid idea on where significant PFAS are located or the degree at which they are passing through wastewater system on a community level. Newington is in an interesting position, as our outfall goes to the ocean, not to a drinking water source. There may hopefully be assistance at the state level for funding for this testing. Wright Pierce has added a comment requesting to only test once to determine what is in our wastewater but not continue to require expensive ongoing testing that will not provide additional data. Currently we do test annually for the State of Maine to use the Hawk Ridge disposal site as PFAS contamination in biosolids is an issue in Maine.

PFAS are found in plastics production like Teflon but is no longer in used in plastic production. It is a difficult problem that we must address as it was used in manufacturing for a long time. Biosolids and land application of them are what kicked this off. Biosolids were applied to cow fields, PFAS were found in cow's milk, and when researched it came back to WWTP's, especially land disposal of their sludge. Maine immediately cut it off, they set up rules to do it with testing. NH has a bit of a hold on where biosolids can be applied. If applied on a field, and then it rains, it can then spread. In theory PFAS levels should going down, but it is forever chemical, PFAS do not have natural microbial features to break down. Therefore, we need to test where we are at in 2021. We are only reporting results for now, there are no set PFAS limits, although those may come later.

The EPA knows the implications of applying this. There are no WWTP's in New England that can treat to drinking water capable and they know they cannot require that. Same as with nitrogen in Great Bay. They are looking at how to move in a stepwise fashion to identify where the PFAS are originating. PFAS will be individual plant testing, nitrogen will be community testing. Each community will need to respond to this federal permit. Discussion continued on how could or would it be done differently.

Motion by R.Stern to accept Wright-Pierce Engineer's suggestions for the Draft Small Permit and to authorize Chairman T.Cole to sign the agreement. Seconded by T.Hazelton, all in favor, approved

Motion by R.Stern to accept the proposal from Wright-Pierce Engineers for Engineering Services not to exceed \$20,410.00, seconded by T.Hazelton. All in favor, approved.

Further discussion on plastics in the wastewater collection system and possibly requesting annual PFAS testing for industrial sewer users. Draft permit has wording for requiring user testing.

Next meeting Wednesday June 16, 2021 at 9 am at the Wastewater Treatment Plant.

Adjournment: 10:12 am.

Respectfully submitted,

Gail Klanchesser