

**Newington Sewer Commission 7/21/2021      APPROVED MINUTES**

Meeting called to order at 9:01 am.

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

**Minutes:** Minutes from 6/16/2021 reviewed. Motion by R.Stern to approve, seconded by T.Hazelton.

**Public Comment:** None

**Treasurer's report:** Enterprise Account balance for June was \$1,345,788.04. Operating Fund ending balance for June was \$927,717.73.

**Manifest Approval:** Motion made to approve the 7/21/2021 manifest by R.Stern in the amount of \$49,517.26. 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.

Newington received a reminder form letter from NH DES about expiring operator licenses. D.Messier and S.Knight are currently licensed through December 2021. Wastewater operators need 2 CEU's (20 hours) every 2 years. Due to COVID most training in 2020 was cancelled. Both have attend in-person training in Franklin, NH and will complete their training for CEU's this fall. Licenses will be renewed before they lapse.

Wright-Pierce has sent grant pre-application to NH DES for the Force Main project.

**New Business:** The Sewer Commissioners received a letter from a commercial rate payer requesting assistance on their bill due to leaking water pipes that went undetected. The Commissioners noted that the Portsmouth Water Department bills monthly and a sudden increase in their water bill should have alerted them to a potential problem. Leaking toilets and faucets can cause larger water bills and that water runs into drains that lead to the WWTP. Increased water bills have led other rate payers to look and correct problems at their locations. The Sewer Commission is not responsible for maintenance of pipes or water flows at ratepayers' locations. Additionally, the Sewer Commission has adjusted all 2021 sewer bills to provide relief to rate payers.

Motion by R.Stern to not adjust their sewer bill, seconded by T.Hazelton. All in favor, approved. A letter will be sent to the rate payer

**Old Business:** General draft permit comments sent to EPA, waiting for final permit. Wright-Pierce is finalizing sections of the Total Nitrogen Permit.

There are 2 permits for the WWTP, the general permit and the nitrogen permit. The general permit covers traditional pollutants. Because Great Bay has been identified as having a nitrogen issue, there is a separate permit to set limits. This month Wright Pierce is finalizing the third section of the nitrogen permit.

M.Curry from Wright-Pierce spoke on the second section of the draft nitrogen permit, non-point sources of nitrogen around Great Bay. Non-point sources can include storm water run-off, leaf litter, fertilizers, and over-full catch basins. Newington has joined with other municipalities to form the Municipal Alliance for Adaptive

Management (MAAM) to pool efforts and collaborate. D.Messier is on the Executive Committee. Dover Engineer G.Young is the point person for this. She has put together a template that M.Curry and D.Messier have used for the next submission. Newington is all set for meeting nitrogen level requirements. Section 2 is really about land use, and we are fortunate to have planning regulations that limit non-point discharge such as stormwater mitigation.

Basically, the EPA wants to know what municipalities are doing to limit nitrogen on the non-point side and will give nitrogen credits for taking action. They are looking for an 11% reduction in nitrogen which we currently meet due to the plant upgrade. We are ahead of their 5-year outlook. Things that we can do to further decrease nitrogen would be public education on fertilizers, leaf litter collection programs, and cleaning culverts. The EPA is asking municipalities to self-police themselves with these efforts. The Adaptive Management program requires municipalities to put into writing what they are currently doing and detailing what they plan to do. M.Curry will put together a list of suggestions for additional steps that can be taken. Proposal from Wright-Pierce to cover as-needed engineering assistance with this discussed.

The question of whether a municipality can regulate fertilizers on private property was raised. The wording of the permit requirements will give municipalities the legal base to regulate what private properties can use. Future municipal regulations could also specify what types of septic systems can be installed on properties near Great Bay. Newington can also claim nitrogen credits for reducing or eliminating grass clippings and leaf litter dumping in Great Bay.

Discussion turned to cleaning catch basins. In some communities like Dover, they vacuum out catch basins and the waste is then treated. Dover is building a catch basin debris treatment facility. Buildup of sand, gravel, dirt, leaves, and grass prevent the catch basin from working properly and it becomes a straight drain to Great Bay. The buildup is where nitrogen levels increase and limiting solids from flowing into Great Bay will help. Currently Newington is in a good position with non-point discharge but there are future steps that can be looked at.

A copy of the final letter will be shared with the Sewer Commission. The final copy will include what other towns are proposing which can give us a roadmap for the next 5-10 years.

The WWTP is currently discharging 1.7-2.4 pounds of Nitrogen daily. Our permit allows us to discharge up to 15 pounds. We can apply and gain points for our decreased nitrogen discharge.

Motion by R.Stern to approve the proposal from Wright-Pierce for nitrogen permit monitoring not to exceed \$4,500. Seconded by T.Hazelton, all in favor approved.

Next meeting Wednesday August 21, 2021, at 9 am at the Wastewater Treatment Plant.

**Adjournment:** 9:51 am.

Respectfully submitted,

Gail Klanchesser