

APPROVED MINUTES

SARATOGACOUNTYSEWER COMMISSION No. 1

MINUTES OF JUNE 4, 2020

3:00 PM at the TOWN OF STILLWATER TOWN HALL

881 Hudson Ave., Stillwater, NY 12170

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Howe, Bisnett, Cannon, Doyle, Keegan, Loewenstein, Thompson

COMMISSIONERS EXCUSED: Hotaling and Fillion

ALSO PRESENT: Dan Rourke P.E., Executive Director; Anne Gorman, Confidential Secretary; Assistant Chief Operator, Gene Hutchings; William Bills, Maintenance Manager; Michael P. Naughton, Assistant County Attorney

Chairman Howe welcomed everyone to the June 4, 2020 Saratoga County Sewer Commission meeting.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: Led By Commissioner Keegan

PUBLIC COMMENT: None

CHAIRMAN'S COMMENTS: Chairman Howe said during the last three (3) months and through the whole COVID crisis, Executive Director Rourke has been running with limited staff at the Sewer District. He asked Executive Director Rourke to share a few words with the Commission explaining what he has been doing with staffing and how he has been handling providing uninterrupted service during the pandemic.

Executive Director Rourke said when the pandemic started around March 16, 2020 our directive was to cut staff where applicable and we decreased staffing down to 50%. The maintenance department went down to approximately 20% staffing and we ran things that way for quite some time. He said Maintenance Manager Bills and Assistant Maintenance Manger Marsden put a lot of effort into scheduling and trying to figure out exactly who could come in and when they could come in. One thing he found surprising was a lot of development did not stop. Applications and plan reviews continued to come in and we were able to process applications and send reviews out in the same amount of time as before. On May 18, 2020 we went back to 100% staffing and were required to notify Human Resources (HR) as well as the County Administrator's Department with a safety plan. Our safety plan included: wearing masks when unable to maintain 6 feet distance, providing hand sanitizer and disinfectant to all employees, disinfecting trucks at the end of shifts, and all employees needed to sign off that they understood the safety requirements. All our employees understood, signed a safety form and those forms were forwarded to HR. Executive Director Rourke said we are doing pretty well back at 100% staff. The Department of Public Works (DPW) is 100% as well but that is not true for the whole County. He said we could very well need to go back to the intense scheduling and decreased staffing that we were doing prior to May 18th but for now, we are back to full staff and all in all it has been good.

Chairman Howe inquired if there have been any illnesses with employees that we know of. Executive Director Rourke said no. There have been a couple of scares but no illnesses. He informed there are protocols in place should any employee need to get tested. He said one thing with Assistant Chief Operator

Hutching's operations department is we cannot allow the operators to not come in. We got creative with alternating operators to take EMS time (as non-essential employees) which allowed operations staff to take a day off to get some rest because we were already short staffed. He said the operators were very appreciative and with that being said, there have been no illnesses. Executive Director Rourke said there are still concerns if someone was to become ill but protocols are in place to isolate and/or test any employee if needed. He added that essential or non-essential that ability is always there for any of the current state testing sites.

Chairman Howe thanked Executive Director Rourke for his leadership.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES of May 7, 2020. *Commissioner Keegan made a motion to approve the minutes of May 7, 2020. Commissioner Bisnett seconded the motion. No discussion. The minutes of May 7, 2020 were approved. 5 Ayes, 1 Abstain, 3 Absent, 0 Nays.*

Executive Director Rourke informed for clarification that this meeting, the previous meeting and any meeting where we are unable to allow the public to attend, a full transcript of the meeting is needed. He said Confidential Secretary Gorman will prepare a verbatim record of what is said at the meeting and that will be posted on the County website along with the regular minutes.

2018 CAPITAL PROJECTS

Regional Biosolids Handling Facility – Executive Director Rourke gave an update and reported we worked through the digester sizing, mixing and material options. There are a few technical questions that need to be answered before we can be wrapped up with all of the required pre-design work. One thing he has brought up month to month is our bond resolution, which he is holding off another month on as we do not know exactly if the SEQR needs to be amended through the full Albany County Legislature or not. He said he did not want to have the Commission and Board of Supervisors (BOS) approve something that is not finalized through the Albany County process yet but there is still plenty of time for that to be done for our Environmental Facilities Corporation (EFC) financing submission.

Ammonia Related WWTP Upgrades – Executive Director Rourke reported we are still attempting to make the pilot function as best we can. We are getting to a point where we have begun instituting some designs in parallel because the pilot does not seem to be operating to the original design expectations so we are working to get that done. He said we had deadlines for both consent orders with NYSDEC and the EPA for May 29, 2020 and May 31, 2020. He informed that those dates were obviously not met and in his report he submitted a request for a three (3) month extension for both consent orders. He said he heard back from the EPA and that extension was granted but he has not heard back from NYSDEC yet. Executive Director Rourke said he assumes he will get a favorable response from NYSDEC which would bring us to the end of August to get that report done. He added there will be more to report on that as we figure out which way the project is going to go technology wise.

*Commissioner Cannon entered the meeting at 3:10 P.M.

Interceptor Rehabilitation Design – Executive Director Rourke reported he is still reaching out to some municipalities to set up meetings regarding the project. He said we have had a few meetings and have talked with a few Towns but there are two (2) big ones we still need to meet with are the City of Mechanicville and City of Saratoga Springs as they will be the most impacted by this work. Those meetings have yet to be scheduled but they are coming. The design engineer is approximately 85% complete with the design, so as

soon as we get input from City of Mechanicville and City of Saratoga Springs we will be ready to go to bid soon after that. Within that timeframe we will also need to get our bonding team and bond council on board to make sure that funding is in place and that require action from this Commission as well as the Board of Supervisors (BOS) but we are not at that point yet.

Chairman Howe inquired about the ammonia levels and if there have been any spikes in the last six (6) months. Executive Director Rourke said its level to a slight increase right now and added that Global Foundries has not slowed down their production during COVID. He asked Chief Operator Hutchings to elaborate more on that. Chief Operator Hutchings said we are seeing a periodic spike here and there with the samples but they have been staying level. Some days are in the 60's (Parts Per Million, PPM) and other days in the upper 60's but it is periodic of what is coming in. Executive Director Rourke added some of that is based on our influent flow for influent concentrations. He also said one interesting factor is we are seeing a slight increase in flow and possible biochemical oxygen demand (BOD) loadings during this COVID pandemic. He said we are not sure what it is attributed to it but is assuming because more people are at home right now but that is only speculation at this point. He informed he has not dove into the data yet to verify that, but he does feel as if we have seen some more consistence higher BOD loadings as well as more consistent higher flows and that will be investigated, more for his own edification as he finds it very interesting.

2019 CAPITAL PROJECTS

Knox Woods (HM) and Riverside #1 (ST) Pump Station Upgrades – Executive Director Rourke informed we are looking for a motion to award this project that Chazen Engineering has been doing the design on. He said a recommendation letter from the engineer was attached to the agenda packet. Also attached were the bid results on the second page of that letter. The low bids were from Trinity Construction in the amount of \$359,583.00 and CKM Electrical Services in the amount of \$111,815.00. He said these costs do not include the costs of the pumps, controls, rails, etc., which all in is approximately \$160,000.00 bringing the total project cost to approximately \$631,000.00. Executive Director Rourke said the total cost is below the original budgeted amount of \$750,000.00 and therefore he recommended awarding to the two (2) low bidders for this project. Chairman Howe entertained a motion for the award.

Commissioner Thompson made a motion to forward a recommendation to the Board of Supervisors to award Contract No. 1 (General Construction) to Trinity Construction in the amount of \$359,583.00 and Contract No. 2 (Electrical) to CKM Electrical Services in the amount of \$111,815.00 for the Knox Woods and Riverside #1 Pump Station Upgrades. Commissioner Cannon seconded the motion. No Discussion. Motion passed: 7 Ayes, 2 Absent, 0 Nays

Interceptor Rehabilitation Phase VIIA – Executive Director Rourke reported the project is approximately 99% complete. There is only a little bit of restoration required as well as some odor control manhole inserts to be installed. He did not have the final contract price yet, but said he will let everyone know as soon as he has the negative change order that we are expecting for some unused quantities. He said all in the project was successful. He informed that we needed to provide some additional paving that was unexpected due to some unintentional cracking that occurred throughout the Round Lake section and both the Planning Department and the Village of Round Lake are very appreciative of our willingness to correct the issue. The planning department is drafting a letter taking full responsibility of any warranty issues the trail may have in this section in the future and Executive Director Rourke said it was a good compromise.

2020 CAPITAL PROJECTS

Environmental Benefit Project (EBP) – Executive Director Rourke said a motion was moved last month for the payment resolution for this project and the vendor is continuing to progress with the Coordinated Electrical System Interconnection Review (CESIR) study that is required by NYSEG before interconnection and working with subcontractors to perform the work.

Storage Building/HVAC and Roof Replacement Design – Executive Director Rourke gave an update and said we are waiting for the contracts to be drafted by the County Attorney’s office and executed so we can schedule a kick off meeting with Greenman Pedersen, Inc. (GPI) who was awarded the contract last month.

Emergency Repair Work – Executive Director Rourke informed there are two (2) Emergency Repair projects that were unplanned for 2020. He said these were not necessarily capital projects that were planned but it seems we have at least one (1) of these each year that needs to get done.

The first one is a force main break on Route 236 in the town of Halfmoon; it is an 18” force main on Grooms Road that handles a lot in the Town of Halfmoon and the Town of Clifton Park that comes to the WWTP. He said there were pictures in the agenda packets depicting the condition of the pipe and we are going to end up replacing approximately 1,100 feet of that bad pipe. He said he does not have the total cost yet but it is not going to be an inexpensive endeavor and he wanted to inform the Commission. Additional discussion involved age, size and condition of the pipe and plans for the repair. Commissioner Loewenstein asked Executive Director Rourke to put things in perspective for the Commission. Executive Director Rourke said the break was found during a Variable Frequency Drive (VFD) installation and repair at the pump station, both pumps kicked on at the same time and water shot up out of the ground a section that had never run pressurized before suddenly became pressurized and that’s when we realized there was an issue. Executive Director Rourke said he felt we didn’t have time to wait as it is right next to a State Highway. He informed that eventually there will be an appropriation from the fund balance for the repair. He did not have the exact cost but said the fund balance was somewhere in the \$16-18M dollar range and is healthy enough to take the hit. Chairman Howe said we all know the system is ageing but you do not think of aging after 17 years with pipes in the ground but that is the reality. Executive Director Rourke agreed and added that 17 years is very quick and unexpected for a pipe to fail.

Executive Director Rourke said the second repair needed this year that we started to plan for with the Storage Building/HVAC and Roof Replacement Design is a section of the roof in our administration building, above the conference room at the WWTP. A test was performed to measure the percent of moisture of the insulation and it is basically as bad as it can get. In addition there are some concerns with employees of some possible mold. Executive Director Rourke said our hope was that we could do our HVAC upgrades at the same time but unfortunately we do not have the option to wait and it needs to be repaired because of concerns voiced not only to him but others within the County as well. Again, he does not have costs on those repairs but they are out to bid and hopefully we will be awarding that next month. Chairman Howe asked if a mold test had been done and Executive Director Rourke said no, but agreed it may not be a bad idea to get one done. He said costs for both projects to be completed is somewhere in the \$1M dollar range and he would have more to report and act on that by next month’s meeting or by the August meeting.

Chairman Howe asked if there were any questions on these two (2) repairs.

Commissioner Doyle mentioned with regard to the pipe failure that he has seen this happen in the past and it can be caused by the acidity of the soil. He mentioned that putting anodes in the soil can help protect metal

structures from corroding. He also said putting special insulation around the pipe can protect it as well. He said it may not be a factor but is something to look at if we have time. Executive Director Rourke replied that was a great point and he would look into how to get the testing done, assuming it is a relatively inexpensive test in addition to the numbers we are talking about today. He said it is a good point and maybe we will look at our collection system to see where we have the same type scenario, including this section and get that test done. If there is an acidity issue, possibly there is a cheaper repair and we can save the pipe prior to a future failure.

ATTORNEY REPORT – No Report

DEDICATIONS – None

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Commissioner Bisnett and seconded by Commissioner Thompson. No discussion. The motion passed unanimously.

**NEXT COMMISSION MEETING
Thursday, July 9, 2020
3:00 P.M. Place TBD**