

UNAPPROVED MINUTES

SARATOGA COUNTY SEWER COMMISSION No. 1
MINUTES OF August 29th, 2024
3:00 PM at the SCSD # 1

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Chairman Bisnett, Commissioner Doyle, Commissioner Smassanow, Commissioner O’Hara, Commissioner Scirocco, Commissioner Lansing, Commissioner Fillion, Commissioner Butler

COMMISSIONERS EXCUSED: Commissioner Hotaling

ALSO PRESENT: Dan Rourke P.E., Executive Director; William Bills, Maintenance Manager, Andrew Marsden, Assistant Maintenance Manager; Alex Yacobucci, Assistant Chief Operator, Petra Holden, County Attorney.

Chairman Bisnett called the meeting to order. Pledge led by Commissioner O’Hara

PUBLIC COMMENTS: NONE

CHAIRMAN’S COMMENTS: NONE

Chairman Bisnett asked for a motion to approve the July 26th, 2024 minutes.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES of July 26th, 2024. *Commissioner Doyle made a motion to approve the minutes of July 26th, 2024. Commissioner Lansing seconded the motion. No discussion. The minutes of July 26th, 2024 were approved: 6 Ayes, 2 Abstain, 1 Absent, 0 Nays.*

2025 SCALE OF CHARGES

Chairman Bisnett mentioned that there was no Public Comment but stated that he and Dan had a brief conversation regarding the Scale of Charges with an increase of \$ 5.00, but we are actually a little short. It seems we are running a little on the negative side and Dan and I discussed it, so when it comes time to talk about it maybe go \$ 6.00 which would make it a little closer to running even.

Executive Director Rourke went over some budget highlights and the proposed scale of charges.

The commission would then make a motion to set a Public Hearing at our next Commission meeting and to publish the Scale of Charges. This is the first meeting where we kind of go over everything and set what we would like for the Scale of Charges for 2025.

Executive Director Rourke stated that in the information on scale of charges and revenue he had a proposed rate increase of \$5.00, but as Frank stated maybe we might want to look at something more than that. Our total 2025 revenue base is a little over \$ 27.9 million dollars. The \$ 5.00 number was taken from what we have talked about in the past for the 7-8 year look out that we have done with the financial model.

It is approximately 2% of our weighted average right now. Our weighted average is about \$ 2.83 per user, but as you can see and as Frank stated our budgeted 2024 revenue was \$ 27,514,000.00. So, there is a little bit of difference there. It is not what we would like to see and that is because there is a decrease in Global Foundaries flow at that point

In the past we have looked at some comparable rates, as I stated the weighted average for our sewer is \$ 2.83 per unit, now if we add our collector fee in which is \$ 50, that collector fee coincides with if we own the pipe in front of the unit, (there is about 27,000 of those in the county) so if we add that in that is about a \$ 3.30 average rate. I correlated those to a cost per thousand gallons based on a 73,000 gal per year usage for an average user.

Executive Director Rourke stated he did some comparisons and everyone is slightly different and slightly unique. Rockland County is probably the best comparison for us and as you can see if you include that \$ 42 per unit, just like we include the \$ 50 you can see we are still solidly \$ 50 less than their rates.

There was a brief explanation regarding the financial model that we have been doing since 2018, it is a relatively an inexpensive tool, about \$ 5,000.00 to get it updated but it is a great tool. He also discussed a non-profit NACWA, National Association Clean Water Agencies and they come out with the national average for sewer bills. Raftelis advised with the 2% increase we are we in the ball park.

There was a brief discussion on debt services and funding and Executive Director Rourke advised that we are AA+ rating.

Executive Director Rourke advised us that Global Foundaries has verbally agreed to help pay for part of the ammonia project. He stated he wants to talk with the county attorney's office in regard to them signing an agreement.

There was then some discussion per Commissioner Butlers question of how do we project revenues based on the way restaurants open and close. The rates do not get reduced unless demolished, or have a fire or a different company goes in for a different use. So that property owner is paying for sewer as if that restaurant is online.

Executive Director advised he liked what Frank said earlier we can do the \$ 6.00 this year and reconcile next year. Commissioner Scirocco stated that does make more sense.

Executive Director Rourke also advised to keep in mind there are certain variables that are not totally vivid yet to us. Mainly debt service being one. We do not know until we go out to bid what our rate will be for the bonds.

Executive Director Rourke stated that the statute says that the Commission establishes fair and equitable rates and he thinks \$ 6.00 is fair and equitable for the size and the scale of the operation, the useful life of the equipment here and the growth of the county. Our system only grows every year with dedications, pump stations, CPI inflation, so it is more than fair. Attorney Holden advised from a legal perspective we are fine.

Executive Director Rourke thinks this is a good starting point, and again if any variables come in and it is shows any of our thoughts of where we would be in three years is way off because of either market rates or anything like that, then I think we handle it at that time.

Motion to Approve the 2025 Scale of Charges and Set the Public Hearing - *Commissioner Fillion made a motion to set a Public Hearing for the, Proposed of Scale of Charges, Commissioner Scirocco seconded the motion. No discussion. Approved 8 Ayes, 0 Abstain, 1 Absent, 0 Nays*

2020 CAPITAL PROJECTS

HVAC Upgrade at WWTP – Executive Director Rourke gave a status update. The demolition of 2 units and the installation of units has begun. Based on their schedule it has them hopefully completing the project by the end of the year.

Saratoga Springs Pump Station and F.M Evaluation and Design – Executive Director Rourke gave a status update, that this project has been moving slow for about 2-3 months. We are waiting for the HVAC units. There has been some General Contractor issues with the Engineer. The Executive Director stated he is thinking about requesting a new schedule from the contractor.

2021 CAPITAL PROJECTS

Secondary Clarifier Gate and MCC Replacement – Executive Director Rourke gave a status update. We have finally gotten an anticipated delivery date of April or May for the completion date of 4/2025 with clarifiers 1,2, & 3. We have budgeted some additional extra costs in next year's budget for the project as well. Some of the Change Orders we have to implement for the MCC building (that was unforeseen). We are going to replace some of the RAS VFD's as part of this project and replacing some of the RAS pumps, the VFD's (variable frequency drives) have been failing.

2022 CAPITAL PROJECTS

Biosolids Handling Facility –Executive Director Rourke gave a status update. We had the 60% design meeting yesterday which had a lot of good stuff and a lot of questions that still need to be answered. I technically do not think that we are at 60%, based on what I saw from the engineer yesterday, so this is another project I am going to request an updated design schedule to understand what they think is actually feasible. I do not see them being done and ready to bid for quarter 2 of 2025

Ammonia related WWTP Upgrades – MOTION TO APPROVE CHANGE ORDER. Per Executive Director Rourke this change order is what we have been discussing for the tank aeration 5-8. We have now gotten to a point to execute the change order for \$ 3,200,000.00

MOTION TO APPROVE CHANGE ORDER. *Commissioner O'Hara made a motion to approve the Change Order, Commissioner Doyle seconded the motion. Approved 8 Ayes, 0 Abstain, 1 Absent, 0 Nays*

Strategic Infrastructure Planning and Financing – MOTION TO AMEND AGREEMENT Executive Director Rourke gave a status update for motion to amend agreement for \$100,000.00 which would bring the contract to \$ 260,000.00. This is mainly in relation to our capacity issues. We had a good meeting with DEC Engineer in regard the trunk and interceptor capacities and what they need to seat for developments and future growth in the county. The model needs to be updated, either quarterly every six months annually, so will pay for that cost and for costs related to other minor sewer projects

MOTION TO AMEND AGREEMENT *Commissioner Doyle made a motion to amend the Agreement, Commissioner Scirocco seconded the motion. Approved 8 Ayes, 0 Abstain, 1 Absent, 0 Nays*

2023 CAPITAL PROJECTS

Spa Park Station Upgrade and South Broadway Design – Executive Director Rourke stated finalizing plans for the Spa Park pump station that we are going to try something a little bit different for our contracting specifications. We have always used a county front end. We are going to use EJCDC for this project as a test, it is a smaller project so they are putting together EJCDC documents. (Engineers Joint Contract Documents Committee). Basically, it is industry wide standard front end that most municipalities use. I spoke with county attorney’s office, purchasing, DPW, Chad. I think we want to eventually move everything to EJCDC, it gets updated every 5 years. We do have to purchase the documents for a few thousand dollars, but they look at what was good and bad in the front end, (general conditions). South Broadway design we received the memo on that, they came up with it cost us 1.5 million for that project and in the budget, we budgeted 1.2 million and again that is the South Broadway extension down to Driscoll Road.

2024 CAPITAL PROJECTS

North Side Primary Clarifier Upgrade – Executive Director Rourke stated they are still finalizing bid package for this installation. Goal is to be out to bid in the next couple of months.

Town of Wilton Force Main Capacity Upgrade Design – Executive Director Rourke request meeting with the engineer on where they stand. We did meet with Department of Corrections and toured Mt. McGregor facility (the prison) and we are working with them to see if any I & I issues there as well as part of this project.

Building 7 Roof Replacement (Clamshell Building at the Plant)- Executive Director Rourke stated the fully executed agreement has been received, so will be looking to kick this project off very shortly.

Lakeview Landing Sewer Rehab – Executive Director Rourke stated this contract is out to the contractor to review and execute.

Process Control and Washout Testing – MOTION TO AMEND AGREEMENT – Executive Director Rourke stated this project has been dormant for a bit. This is the engineer who helps with process control who takes our data from the wastewater plant. That is one aspect of it, the other is wash out testing which is take our bio mass run it through a test and the results through a model and it will tell you if you have healthy nitrifiers, if they are high they are healthy or if they are low they are not healthy. Ours our low and that is part of the reason for the ammonia upgrade. The additional amount was \$ 85,157.00 and the original contract amount was \$ 237,050.00 so that brings the total contract to \$ 322,207.00.

MOTION TO AMEND AGREEMENT *Commissioner Butler made a motion to amend the agreement, Commissioner Doyle seconded the motion. Approved 8 Ayes, 0 Abstain, 1 Absent, 0 Nays*

ATTORNEY REPORT

NONE

DEDICATIONS

NONE

Executive Director Rourke thanked everyone. A motion to adjourn was made by Commissioner Butler, Commissioner Butler seconded and passed unanimously.

**Next meeting September 26th, 2024
9:00 A.M. at the Board of Supervisors
40 McMaster Street, Ballston Spa, NY 12020**

9:00 AM Public Hearing

9:15 AM Commission Meeting