

**ORANGE COUNTY SEWER DISTRICT NO. 1 ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MINUTES**

**TUESDAY, APRIL 9, 2019
2:15 P.M.**

PRESENT: Peter Tuohy, Chairman,
Michael Amo, Katie Bonelli, Barry Cheney, Laurie Tautel, John Vero

ALSO

PRESENT: Antoinette Reed, Legislative Counsel
Langdon Chapman, County Attorney
Joseph Mahoney, Senior Assistant County Attorney
Erik Denega, Commissioner, Department of Public Works
Mary Beth Bianconi, Partner/Senior Project Manager, Delaware Engineering, D.P.C.
Anthony Cardone, Supervisor, Town of Monroe
Frank Palermo, Supervisor, Town of Woodbury

Mr. Tuohy called the meeting to order at 2:15 p.m. and asked everyone to stand for the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag. All committee members were present with the exception of Mr. Vero who arrived at 2:20 p.m.

Mr. Tuohy stated that last month they heard the historical overview of the Harriman WWTP and an overview of the Delaware Engineering study, including longevity improvements needed at the Harriman WWTP. Mr. Tuohy asked Mr. Chapman if there have been any updates since the last meeting.

Mr. Chapman stated that they had no new updates from the D.E.C. They did hear from the Regional Administrator Lopez from the EPA who would like to have a meeting set up with the Rockland County officials and Congresswoman Nita Lowey. This could hopefully encourage the D.E.C. to take a region wide approach which is what they have been advocating for several years.

Mr. Cheney asked what Congresswoman Lowey would be interested in getting out of this meeting.

Mr. Chapman responded that Rockland County has the same concerns that they do. It should be a regional impact study, not just the Harriman WWTP that has to spend all the tens of millions of dollars. There are other causes associated to the upper Ramapo besides what we discharge.

Mr. Cheney pointed out that included discharges that occur in Rockland and Mr. Chapman concurred. Mr. Chapman added that Rockland views what we view that the poultry plant is a significant source of contribution of the chlorides. We should treat pollution at the source, and it should be treated. This should not be put on the ratepayers of district one.

Mr. Touhy asked if it has been confirmed and determined by the D.E.C.

Mr. Chapman replied that he did not hear anything new from the D.E.C. They reached an impasse with the D.E.C. and went to the EPA who have been receptive.

Ms. Tautel asked if local representatives have been included on this meeting.

Mr. Chapman replied that it was an EPA organized meeting so it would be something for them to determine. They can suggest the state officials to get the D.E.C. to adjust their position. The D.E.C. has put all the burden on the taxpayers of Orange County to fix this problem. He noted that was public record.

Mr. Tuohy requested Mr. Chapman to have him added to all correspondence that may be sent out on behalf of the committee and Mr. Chapman agreed to do so.

Ms. Bianconi discussed the idea of capturing some flow from the Harriman WWTP and sending it for treatment and then to the Hudson River. In order to figure that out they need to see how much flow and as of now they are looking at three million gallons and five million gallons a day. They seem like large numbers, but the diversion is costly. The trunk sewer just to get to the Hudson River would be about 13 miles of sewer which is a big project and does not include a treatment facility there. They are thinking about it long term over the next forty years so they need to consider a reasonable projection in growth in the county. They need to discuss with the D.E.C. discharge requirements. She handed out the fact sheet for the current draft permit (see original minutes) which describes the changes and why. They are in a data gathering phase and still trying to understand what things are and what the potential can be. They are going to request the D.E.C. to provide two different analysis, one at 3 MGD and one at 5 MGD. The Harriman facility is a 6 MGD facility and they have a draft SPDES permit that adds a lot of treatment criteria which will increase the cost of the facility if they need to be addressed. If they make the facility larger there will be additional impacts which will increase the cost even more.

Ms. Tautel stated that the purpose of the committee is to review the draft facility plan that was submitted. She pointed out that she has only reviewed executive summaries and wanted to know when she would be able to review the actual draft.

Ms. Bianconi responded that it was very large, but she will definitely get a copy to the committee via file sharing in a PDF format which is bookmarked.

Mr. Denega mentioned that he had the plan with him at the last meeting, but it is enormous that is why they started with the executive summary. He pointed out that the draft did not include the alternatives that Ms. Bianconi's office is working on now.

Ms. Bianconi reviewed the longevity and capital plan improvements (see original minutes) and noted that the budget figure increased to \$25 million. She mentioned that the improvements are intended to address the odors and explained the headworks on the building and how it worked. The operators at the plant are very challenged trying to balance the water between the tanks and there is not a good way to do it. Flow splitting and being able to control that with a computer is important.

Mr. Denega stated that they will come up with a summary later on to show what is in the capital plan and where they are at with the money, what was planned for and what is now planned.

Ms. Reed pointed out that last year the Legislature authorized bonding for several projects and wanted to know if any of the projects included in the \$25 million.

Ms. Bianconi responded that the projects that are underway are not part of the \$25 million.

Ms. Reed asked if they would come in for funding the entire \$25 million or would it be in phases for longevity.

Mr. Denega explained that he would like to outline the intent of the plan and get an understanding of the big picture. They would come in with the engineering costs ahead of time and try to move in a comfortable pace to determine how quickly they release the money.

Ms. Bianconi stated that the operation at the plant will need to be adjusted to accommodate the construction so they will set up a detailed sequence as to how the work will be done.

Mr. Tuohy asked about the new headworks and the possibility of connecting that into train 1.

Ms. Bianconi explained that the water stays within train 3 and it reduces the capacity. It would go back to the headworks which would increase the capacity of train 3 simply by putting in a pipe which is a cheap solution. When it goes back to the headworks, flow splitting so it can be decided how much water goes where.

Mr. Cheney stated that there is a step being taken as part of the longevity plan to address the headworks and asked if there was a plan for addressing the solids handling.

Ms. Bianconi replied that the solids handling facility is fine and operating well. What would be addressed would be the building that it is housed within which will now have odor control.

Ms. Tautel asked if they researched D.E.C. and Environmental Facilities Corporation (EFC) Wastewater Treatment Grant Programs.

Ms. Bianconi responded that she, Mr. Mahoney and Mr. Griffin met last week and discussed looking at the availability of low-cost financing and grants. The EFC runs something called the Clean Water State Revolving Fund (CWSRF). The county has used CWSRF funds in the past for loans and the loans through that program are financially beneficial. She added that there is also the Water Infrastructure Improvement Act which would provide up to 25% or \$5 million of an eligible capital portion of a project like this one.

Mr. Denega pointed out that they can work with the Planning Department because they help them with grant applications.

Mr. Amo stated that they have a lot of information and would like to know do they manage it and use it as a committee.

Mr. Denega explained that they would like to move forward more quickly with the longevity improvements because that part of the process works more independently than the bigger picture improvements. They will get the information they need to put together a legislative request and bring it to the Physical Services Committee.

Mr. Mahoney stated that a public hearing will be needed because it is a district. If this is to be paid with fund balance, then we can proceed directly to the work. If being paid by county bonding then there needs to be an application to the comptroller which will take time. That process will take longer so he suggested moving forward quicker.

Ms. Reed explained that the Legislature would do a notice of intent and a bond resolution for the preliminary studies to fund the SEQRA. She noted that she did not want to get bogged down with SEQRA. She confirmed with Mr. Mahoney if that was how he envisioned the process.

Mr. Mahoney confirmed yes, it is.

Ms. Bianconi explained that as part of the SEQRA process, this being a Type 1 action, they need to prepare part 1 on an EAF, the Legislature needs to state their intent to act as lead agency and then wait 30 days. She did not anticipate getting bogged down with SEQRA on the longevity improvements. That is separate from going to the Hudson River which would be a more extensive SEQRA review because it is a different process. If they were interested in submitting a grant application this year they need to act quickly because if the timeline is the same for SEQRA purposes, the timeline would be the same. She recalled that last year the applications were due in September. This takes a long time because they want it done correctly and it is a time consuming process.

Mr. Mahoney added that he was uncertain if the Comptroller application is entering into a contract so he would like to review that to see what protocol is.

Ms. Reed asked if the preliminary bonding to do preliminary design to hire the engineer to get information.

Mr. Mahoney replied that he did not think they need bonding to do the initial preliminary work.

Mr. Tuohy stated that he would like to take a tour of the Harriman WWTP and requested Mr. Denega to check availability at the end of April.

On the motion of Ms. Tautel, seconded by Mr. Vero, the meeting adjourned at 3:24 p.m.