

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

**WEDNESDAY, JUNE 26, 2019
2:15 P.M.**

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

ALSO

PRESENT: L. Stephen Brescia, Chairman
Antoinette Reed, Legislative Counsel
Langdon Chapman, County Attorney
Joseph Mahoney, Senior Assistant County Attorney
Erik Denega, Commissioner, Department of Public Works
Robert Gray, Deputy Commissioner, EF&S
Anthony Griffin, Principal Sanitary Engineer, Department of Public Works
Mary Beth Bianconi, Partner/Senior Project Manager, Delaware Engineering, D.P.C.
Neil S. Dwyer, Mayor, Village of Monroe

Mr. Tuohy called the meeting to order at 2:17 p.m. and asked everyone to stand for the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag. All committee members were present.

Ms. Bianconi provided the committee with an updated timeline (see original minutes). She noted that it was a summary to set the stage as to how they are advancing, and this particular timeline focused on longevity improvements. After more discussion they will add in how this rolls into the expansion which will be added into the schedule. She reviewed the sequence of events and wanted feedback from the committee to see how it flowed in order to have time to review, go before the Physical Services Committee and the full Legislature. According to the timeline this would be ready to construct the project in 2021-2022. When there are so many steps it takes time and once they add in the expansion, the dates will move further into the future. She explained that many of the steps are driven by the county law process and review by the State Comptroller which can take up to three months. The Comptroller's office wants to make sure that the expenses are reasonable and that it is in the public's interest. Besides bonding, there are low cost financing and grants that they can look into.

Ms. Bianconi refreshed the committee on the draft facility plan which was presented in two volumes. The first volume discussed the Harriman Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP), its condition, how it functions, capacity, meeting regulatory requirements, evaluating different alternatives to increase the capacity from 6 mgd to 9 mgd, and it included longevity improvements. The second volume was a regional approach, an expansion approach focused on looking outside and see what other options there are. They plan to expand the options in more detail to include going to the Hudson River. The amended report is what will be presented in September.

Mr. Amo asked how they can monitor this as they move through the steps and as they get to capacity. Is there something they can do as a Legislature so they do not get to that point and prevent the county from being sued.

Mr. Chapman explained that the 2010 agreement states that when it reaches 85% capacity, they need to do what they are doing now, in fact, they are ahead of what they are supposed to be doing in terms of meeting their legal obligation. Historically, it has always been, lets make Harriman WWTP bigger, but County Executive Neuhaus suggested to look at different options. That is when they started to look at Goshen and the Hudson River. In the midst of all of this the Town of Palm Tree came into existence which will create a lot more zoning changes and they are all entitled to the same exact services that the people who have been in the district for years. All the proper steps are being taken and meetings are being held, the moment there is a pause in productivity, he will request an attorney client session.

Mr. Tuohy commented on the statements made about going to Goshen or to the Hudson River. He asked if those municipalities were ready, willing and able. Has anyone spoken to them. He noted that there was a recent change in leadership in New Windsor which could affect it but wanted to know if they would have more information by September.

Ms. Bianconi stated that there is an option to send wastewater from the service area elsewhere which could be to an existing treatment plant so they would become a customer, and they are looking at purchasing land and building another wastewater treatment plant. It is a logical thing to consider and they need to expand by three to five million gallons, which is a substantial expansion. They looked at Goshen Sewer Plant for under a million gallons and they have that capacity. To send three to five million gallons to an existing facility, there is not an existing facility today that could accommodate that. They do need to reach out to the municipalities. They need to start discussions with the municipalities but in order to have a good discussion they need to conduct studies which is what they are actively doing now. They do plan to reach out to those communities to see if they would consider what they propose. This would be before September.

Mr. Tuohy asked if Ms. Bianconi could address the long form SEQRA document and the ramifications it may have on the timeline.

Ms. Bianconi explained that it would be subject to state environmental quality review act which is anything that is undertaking, approved or funded by a public body in the state. The longevity improvements are an unlisted action, a Type I action which will open the doors for the county to apply for future funding. The county will be lead agency and will be able to conduct the SEQRA review.

Ms. Bianconi mentioned that they need to add potential financing. They need to make sure the public is aware of potential costs. They plan to bond in full, which is not a bad thing to do because it is worse case scenario. To apply for a grant and then bond the rest assuming you will be awarded the grant money is not good because you want to inform the public of the correct dollar figure. They also need to add in the cost to a typical single family or two-family home. They need to reach out to the municipalities who are not in the district and help determine what the user impact of the debt service is to the users in the communities. She asked the Legislators to work with them to set up meetings with their communities so they can talk about this and what the user impact values are. She suggested that they set up meetings after the Fourth of July week which would be the week of July 8th.

Mr. Griffin addressed the rate payer impact and gave an example of a \$250,000 value of a property which would be about \$40.00 per year which would increase taxes for the longevity improvements multiplied by thirty years.

Mr. Griffin addressed meters and stated that they have the approval for a public hearing, and it is in the best interest of the public to move forward with the project. Once that is complete with the Legislature, they will put it out to bid.

Mr. Tuohy confirmed that this was for six meters and Mr. Griffin confirmed that was correct.

Mr. Cheney asked if the bid was going to include installation and maintenance and is it a long-term contract for the provider.

Mr. Griffin explained that this was for the installation of the infrastructure and then there will be a second bid for the installation of the equipment for measuring the flow, so there will be two bids.

Mr. Vero asked if they were smart meters.

Mr. Griffin responded that they are smart meters and will be hardwired.

Mr. Cheney asked if the meters are being read by us or is there a contract with someone to do that.

Mr. Griffin explained that the outside users are responsible for providing them with reports. They thought that it would be a good idea to have a third party do all the meters, which is a discussion they should have down the road with the Moodna Communities, in addition to the rate payers.

Mr. Cheney mentioned that for the purpose of accuracy across all communities, that is something they should be controlling, it is not something that should be left in their hands.

Mr. Griffin agreed with Mr. Cheney's statement.

Ms. Reed reviewed the Action, Description and Timeframe categories on the summary schedule Ms. Bianconi provided. She noted that after the committee meets with their respective municipality to address the user cost impact analysis, all that information will need to go before the Physical Services Committee, in a fully executed legislative request, by July 17th at 5:00 p.m.

Ms. Bianconi stated that they would like to have it by then, if they do not then they will need to adjust the schedule.

Mr. Tuohy mentioned there was a conflict with the July 16th meeting and he would like to change it to July 18th, requesting feedback from the committee. All committee members were fine with the change.

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