

## Notes from 5/22/2025 Sewer Authority Workshop

Attendees: Chairman Jim Malone, Ed Twine, Tim Stanton, Manager Dawn Scheller, Engineer Lance Hoover, Administrative Professional Pete Stotelmyer

Absent: Stephanie Brindle, Joe Creighton

Guests: Refer to sign in sheet.

Public Comment: None

The Notes from the April 24, 2025, Workshop and the unapproved minutes of the May 8, 2025, Sewer Authority Meeting were available for review.

Discussion Topics: Lance Hoover explained details of the UV Disinfection Project. It was designed by JHA Engineering, and it has been advertised for public bids. We currently have 5 contractors that have picked up plans for the general contract, and 2 contractors have picked up plans for the electrical contract. Sealed bids are due at the Borough Office by June 6 @ 10:00am, and they will be opened at that time. No action is taken at this time. The submitted bids will be reviewed to see that the requirements are met. The authority will have the information on the bids available to take potential action and possibly issue a Notice of Intent to Award at the June 12<sup>th</sup> Sewer Authority Meeting. A pre-bid meeting is scheduled for May 29 @ 9:00am, and this meeting is not open to the public. The pre-bid meeting is mandatory, so contractors are required to attend in order to submit a bid. Hoover explained that the current disinfectant system is very old, and it's been repaired multiple times. So, the sewer authority through DEP is in a position where there is no other alternative than to replace the system with a new and updated version. This system will be built in the same location as the current one. The authority is in the working stages with a consent order and agreement with DEP. The formalities are being worked out between the legal teams for both parties. Ultimately, the consent order will dictate the UV disinfectant project as well as a new wastewater treatment plant to be constructed. Members of the audience expressed concern about the water/sewer rate increases and issues with the water usage. Lance and the members of the authority stated that the workshop was being held to discuss sewer authority projects and wasn't focusing on water authority issues. They still fielded and answered questions from the audience concerning the water authority and provided responses.

The current wastewater treatment plant is 24 years old and was originally the treatment plant for the tannery. The life expectancy for these plants is 20-25 years. There have been multiple mechanical failures in recent years at the current plant. When asked if other cost-effective designs for the wastewater treatment plant besides an SVR were explored, Hoover stated that the lack of space is one of the reasons why other designs wouldn't be an option.

There is no room on the current sights to do a larger alternative. The sewer authority did a feasibility study on other options, and the SVR was determined to be the best route to go. An audience member asked about the loan with PENNVEST for the water treatment project. Manager Scheller said that this was a sewer authority workshop and topics for the water authority would not be covered. She did explain the details of the loan as well as explaining details of the budget were available at the office and on the borough's website. The members of the authority and staff members introduced themselves to the audience members. Manager Scheller detailed the ways that meetings held by the borough and its various entities are announced to the public. Member Twine addressed the current state of the infrastructure as well as the treatment plant facilities that need to be upgraded and how this will cause the rates to be increased. A member of the audience asked what will happen when people can no longer afford to pay their water bills. Another member asked why money wasn't put aside to cover the cost for the new projects given the knowledge that they would need to be replaced eventually. Member Stanton spoke in length about how the budgeting process for municipalities operates. It would have been difficult to present a rate increase to the public to be used for future projects. Manager Scheller explained the billing process, and a water meter was given to the audience to pass around for reference. Member Twine explained how to the audience how to read their meters. Lance Hoover explained the process of obtaining grants for projects and what are some of the determining factors that are used to include demographics of the municipality requesting the grant. Member Twine said that grants take time to acquire, and the sewer authority doesn't have anyone with the knowledge of how to write or request grants. Lance Hoover said the project will probably go through PENNVEST. They are provided federal money for municipalities for water and wastewater upgrades, lower interest rate loans than most banks, and provide more timely responses. PENNVEST does require the conceptual layout, cost estimate, and all necessary permitting completed before submitting an application package to them. He also mentioned that the new water and sewer facilities will increase capacity, maintain compliance with DEP and provide good quality water to the Borough. As far as the capacity for wastewater is concerned, the authority is permitted to treat 650,000 gallons per day, and the current daily average is 150,000 to 180,000 gallons per day. Lance Hoover said that staff is present 7 days a week to ensure that the equipment is functioning properly, and they have SOP's that need to be followed. Member Twine said DEP does an annual visit to make sure everything is up to standards. Manager Scheller stated that the money for the UV project will come from a reserve account, so no financing will be needed unless the bids come in higher than expected.

Going back to the UV system project, Hoover stated that UV equipment has been purchased ahead of time which saved money because of the contractor mark-up, and this will also save on construction time since the equipment is already in production.

Based on feasibility studies and early conceptual estimates, the cost of the new wastewater treatment plant should be in the neighborhood of 6.5-8 million dollars. The road to the wastewater treatment plant will be reconstructed and paved once the project is completed.

The Wet Well Aeration System is part of the UV project. This is required to provide oxygen to the wastewater that is released into the creek. This item is under review by JHA since they are the engineers for the project, and they should have a response on the aeration system in about a week.

With the heavy rainfall last week, flows sewer treatment plant exceeded one million gallons per day. What this means for DEP is we now have to identify this peak flow event as a basis of design as far as peak flows go. Exceeding the one-million-gallon mark means bigger and more expensive equipment may be required and possibly a change in design. DEP will have to make this determination. This subject should be under consideration at the next sewer authority meeting after receiving the report from DEP in the next few weeks.

The meeting adjourned at 12:45 pm.