

Burns Harbor Sanitary Board

Minutes of Wednesday, July 21, 2021

The Burns Harbor Sanitary Board met in regular session Wednesday, July 21, 2021 at the Burns Harbor Town Hall. The meeting was called to order by President Toni Biancardi at 7:00 p.m. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Roll Call:

Toni Biancardi.....	Present
Dan Marsh.....	Present
Larry Fabina.....	Present
Wilbur Oudman.....	Present
Jim Constantine.....	Present

A quorum was attained.

Also present were Superintendent William Arney, Attorney Clay Patton of Patton Law, LLC, Engineer Jeanette Hicks of Global Engineering and Land Surveying, LLC and Deputy Clerk Corinne Peffers.

There was one audience member in attendance at the Burns Harbor Town Hall.

The meeting was made available to the public in accordance with Governor Holcomb's Executive Orders, most recently Executive Order 21-19 with Zoom.

Approval of Minutes

Marsh made a motion to approve the Minutes of June 16, 2021. Oudman seconded the motion. All in favor vote. Motion passed.

Correspondence

Biancardi informed the board that Clerk-Treasurer Jane Jordan forwarded her information about a safety grant. We are eligible to apply for up to eighty percent of a purchase price for safety equipment or safety programs that would reduce worker's compensation injury exposure. It can cover things like confined space entry equipment and we can submit for reimbursement as well if we have already purchased things.

The board is in agreement that we should apply.

Arney said we can price out new harnesses for confined space entry because ours are old and can't be recertified. We do have one good one. They cost about \$400-\$500 each.

Sanitary Report

The board reviewed the report and there were no questions.

Wastewater Treatment Plant Report

Fabina had nothing to report.

Engineer Report

Hicks reported that she had a question funneled through Engineer Shem Khalil from Building Commissioner Jack McGraw. She said here was a question that came from Great Lakes Engineering regarding the Shadyside Mobile Home Community expansion, and that came from the state, probably IDEM, regarding the placement of the private septic tanks that are being used in that expansion. They are within the building setback lines that are shown on the plans, and the question was that the state wants a letter of approval and it's okay that they're within the setback. To me those are building setback lines, that wouldn't apply to anything underground and that's what Shem and I were thinking. I was just going to go through the code maybe one more time to see if I saw anything.

Biancardi asked if they want a letter from this board.

Hicks said he didn't say specifically who they want the letter from and it was Jack asking the question, so it makes me think that if it came from, Jack's office, it would be sufficient.

Biancardi asked why are they putting in septic tanks.

Hicks said I believe it's called an absolute system so the effluent from the septic tank then goes into their private lift station, which then eventually gets pumped into Lift Station #1.

Biancardi asked if that is acceptable.

Hicks said yeah, there are systems like that. I don't know why they chose that system.

Arney said both mobile home communities in town are like that.

Hicks said from Shem and I discussing it we didn't see an issue.

Old Business

Waive Late Penalties due to COVID-19

Attorney Patton said the public health emergency declared by Indiana Gov. Eric Holcomb was extended through the end of July, 2021.

Constantine made a motion to reinstate late penalties and water shut off procedures if Gov. Holcomb lifts the public health emergency executive order, but if he renews the public health emergency executive order, late penalties will be continue to be waived during public health emergency. Oudman seconded the motion. All in favor vote. Motion passed.

Fiber Optic Path

Bryan Donley with Insite, Inc. sent a proposed fiber optic path near Rak Road. Mr. Donley had a conflict and couldn't be in attendance tonight to discuss but he plans on attending the August meeting.

Biancardi recapped that this is the same person that asked last year about a possible fiber optic path that would run within our sanitary sewer easement. The board discussed the proposed drawings and the need to clarify whether or not we have recorded sanitary sewer easements in the plan area.

Hicks said I'm not a lawyer, I would say let's pretend that you had a recorded easement there and it's for the exclusive use of sanitary, I wouldn't think that property owner could grant an easement in that same space if there's already one that's exclusive. How does that work?

Attorney Patton said it depends on what the language of the easement says.

Biancardi said I remember our conversation also was we wouldn't want a line on top of the sewer line in the event that we had to dig something up.

Constantine said I'd be concerned if we let a company, even fiber optics or gas company, get close to our sewer system, you're now going to make us liable if we have to make a repair job on our sewer line there and we hit wherever someone else puts in. If we say no to other things going in our easements, we don't have to worry about it.

Biancardi said I think there's another route that they can take with the path. I understand wanting to save on expenses.

Hicks and Arney said the proposed path changed from last year. It may just affect private property.

After further discussion, board consensus was to tell Mr. Donley that he can come in August to discuss the proposal and that we need to research and find any easements in the proposed plan area.

Infrastructure and/or Improvement Projects

Biancardi reminded the board that this item is on the agenda to keep us thinking about large projects we may want to do. There are grant funds available from American Rescue Plan Act, and then again next year with the State Water Infrastructure Fund (SWIF). There is a stormwater repair plan on Haglund that will cost about \$170,000, so, if you think of a project or something that needs improvement in the system that might qualify, please keep that in mind.

Constantine asked how the new truck was coming along and Arney responded we have a new delivery date of August 16, 2021.

New Business

Kurt Jordan, Potential Residential Sewer Connection

Kurt Jordan of 293 Riverside Drive was in attendance to discuss connecting to the sewers. He submitted a letter and two drawings to the board outlining the complexity of the project, and is requesting that the board extend the tap/lateral 100 feet down the road directly across from the proposed grinder pump location, and provide a grinder pump for the project.

Mr. Jordan addressed the board and said I am looking at the possibility of connecting to the town sewer system and I understand the lateral tap-on is for that is right there on my property line and I guess the board could certainly say that that fulfills your responsibility in that regard. But, this particular project has several mitigating features that make it quite a challenge and somewhat interesting. The tap-on point is at the extreme corner of my lot, and the house drain exits the house in exactly the opposite corner. So, I'd have to make two 90-degree turns to head in the proper direction. In addition, the terrain is such that there is a difference in elevations, so we'd have to go uphill from the house drain pipe to get up to the tap-on location. Another issue, is that we would probably have to come up the road, which I think would be the easiest way to do that, and there's water lines there and other things. My property description does have road and utility easements as part of the description. So, I'm here to ask the board for some assistance in getting the project successfully completed. I included some pictures, I apologize for the choppiness of the color image, I had to patch several pieces of pictures together to get the distance, and then I included a line drawing that uses some of the elevations provided by the engineer to show the location of where the exit point from the house would be all the way up to the tap-on location.

Constantine asked if we know what the depth of the line is. The engineer report said 9.2.

Hicks said the lateral is 3.5 feet down from the ground elevation. So, we took that off the as-built, because the lateral is buried and we didn't dig it up. So, the as-built said that the lateral bury depth was 3.5 foot down so we took ground shots around that area, so the lateral elevation should be at about 618, which he does show on here. So, 618 is where we've provided the lateral to tie on to, and his plumbing comes out under his garage floor. We estimate at maybe a foot under the ground floor, so maybe at 616. So, where the plumbing comes out is already approximately two foot below where the lateral is to tie on. Now the only thing that is not shown, and wasn't in my report, is the sewer across the street is probably a little bit deeper than a lateral but I don't recall exactly how much, let's just say it's at 670. It's not going to be deep, though, and I don't know if you can remember even being out there. It's not a deep sewer. So, I think, to get where his plumbing comes out to the lateral where it is, or even the lateral back at the sewer where it taps on, you're going to need a pump, to pump it. So, I don't see how he's going to get away with no grinder pump, and I don't think that's what he's saying necessarily. I'm just giving you kind of an overview.

Constantine stated he could have some problems with back pressure, couldn't he?

Hicks said those grinder pump stations are designed for that. There are check valves. Most probably you would be outletting into the lateral that was provided for him.

Oudman asked if the lateral is a gravity flow from that point on. Hicks responded yes, the lateral is a gravity flow into the sewer, which is on the other side of the street.

Arney said he may have been okay, like Kurt said, had it been planned, and he was able to come out the opposite side of the structure, but with two 90-degree turns, as you know that's bad for plumbing. So, for him to do that and to get the fall still from the rear of his property, it's almost impossible.

Hicks said that and he has a bathroom at the lower level.

Constantine said if there's a bathroom at the lower lever you have to have a grinder pump in the house.

Hicks said even if he for some reason changed plumbing and came out the other side of the house, he'd have to have an injector pump in his house for that lower-level bathroom.

Biancardi asked the picture that he provided with the tap that's up at 618 feet, is that the only option to connect? Or his only best option?

Jordan said there's nothing.

Hicks said the sewer doesn't extend any closer to his house at all.

Marsh said may I ask why you decided at this point to go to the city sewer versus a septic?

Jordan said I'm getting older and I am retired. It does require some amount of maintenance, the line that goes up towards the septic is right underneath two mature oaks and about every year or two, I have to send something through there to clean out the roots, and while I'm doing that now, I'm not 20 years old anymore. So, now's the time to do that while we're not having any problems and we can take our time and do that project as opposed to it being an emergency.

Constantine said so basically the cure for this is to run that line another 100 feet down along his property line for a good tap into it straight out of the garage. There's one alternative, right? He could put in his own lift station because it's a matter of getting it from one end of the property to the other end without having two 90-degree turns.

Hicks said I think to extend any gravity line even his lateral closer to him, we may run out of cover. I think the best thing to do is have the pump pump that far, and you can probably put in two 45-degree turns to minimize the 90. Let's say you could get gravity a little bit closer, you can't get gravity that far over, you might be able to squeeze a tiny bit of gravity out of there but what's that going to do? That's not going to change the fact that you need a grinder pump station to tie on.

Biancardi asked so in terms of infrastructure, the best option is to work with what's there, the way that it is, like the tap and all of that.

Arney said I think the best option is to bring it down as an extension of a force main. So, where we are talking about that tap is, like Jeanette was saying, that where that pump is pushing it to get it away from his property into where that current gravity line is. So basically, we're going to pump and dump into that gravity line.

Hicks said which is I think to answer her question, work with what's there, force main to that point. I don't know if it's better to run it on the north side of Riverside Drive, but there is a water main on the south side of Riverside Drive and you are supposed to stay ten feet away from water main with sanitary.

Jordan said, she is right the water line runs on the house side of the road, so it would probably have to go on the opposite side.

Hicks said I was thinking the water main ran on the other side of the road and Jordan said it was located and marked.

Hicks said if the water main is on the house side, it would make the most sense to cross the road to the south side of the road and connect to the lateral. But you are still having to pump roughly 100 feet.

Arney said which is not abnormal.

Marsh asked where the grinder pump would be located at.

Jordan said on the left-hand side of the house, there's a small grassy area and Jeanette did say it should go in that area.

Hicks said it seemed to be a nice area because his plumbing comes out about where the shed is, and that ground is a little bit higher, not that that makes any difference for what we would be doing, but to get it out of the front lawn ... he's got trees there. This pit is six to eight foot deep. Why disturb those trees if you can help it. You were even talking about moving your plumbing to exit out of the garage floor.

Jordan said the biggest problem are those trees and if you tap into the line there, it wouldn't solve my root problem. So, I would want to come on the other side of the trees to be safe.

Marsh asked if the trees along the road would cause a problem going into the tap point.

Jordan said that's why it would have to go into the road. There would be seven or eight mature trees that would probably die and that would add expense to the project.

Biancardi asked in terms of infrastructure, everything where it is is where it would be in connecting? The right path to get there is what would have to be determined?

Hicks said right. I think that working with a contractor and getting their boots on the ground experience and ask them how are they going to install this. Are they going to have a drill rig that they could drill under and not tear up the pavement? Because we are talking about going under the pavement and crossing to the other side. That would be nice from the town's perspective to not have to tear up the road.

Arney asked if it's typically a two-inch for that line.

Hicks said I gave him 1.25 inches or 1.5 inches. The pump outlet said 1.25 inches. It could be a two-inch but it would change the pump specs.

Constantine said when he tied on, it was suggested that he tie on to the line upstairs, so if there are any problems, it never comes back into the house because you are already above ground level, so that ejector pump is pumping up about ground level, then it's a gravity feed out.

Arney said we know he is going to need a pump and one of the things he is asking for is if we are willing to extend that from the tap point to his tie in point approximately 100 feet away and purchase a grinder pump.

Jordan said I don't know what the going rate is right now for sewer lines, but it will be upwards of \$20,000 to run the line in addition to the expense of the pump.

Biancardi stated I did some research on pumps. I know when the system first came on, the town purchased three pumps and ended up selling the third one to someone. I don't know since then if we have purchased pumps. The park was looking at putting one in, and I don't know if their pump is different, but it was almost \$7,000.

Biancardi said the board needs to take the request under advisement. It's a unique situation.

Oudman said correct me if I am wrong, but twenty years ago when the system was put in, the people that wanted connected got connected. Is that the way it was when the system was put in? Some people opted not to.

Biancardi said there was a period of time that you didn't have to pay the tap-on fee and you could connect.

Biancardi asked Jordan if he recalled when they ran the lines if they couldn't put a tap closer to you?

Jordan said it is my understanding that they were going to run the line all the way down Riverside and down Westport but I think the pressure of the pump going under the river made it impossible so they instead changed it to go back toward the property on the corner towards Meadowbrook.

Biancardi asked Jordan if there was rush to connect and he said there is no rush.

Marsh asked for clarification if he is asking us to move the tap-on point down the hill closer. Hicks said you can't extend it because you would have to slope it and the ground is falling so you would be coming out of the ground.

Biancardi said which is probably where in lies the problem, the reason it is the way it is.

Jordan said it is the lay of the land. It would not be a gravity-fed main.

Marsh said so he is going to have to have a pit with a grinder pump to get up to the existing pump.

Jordan said that is correct, I understand that.

Marsh and Biancardi said so he is still looking to see if we would consider purchasing the grinder pump and get up to the tap-on.

Jordan said it's probably going to be very expensive. I have other questions about maintenance. If I put that in, then I would be responsible for that 100 feet of line, but in the future that may be a problem not only for me, but for the other property owners.

Attorney Patton suggested that Jordan should get some quotes.

Constantine asked Jordan if he had a full basement.

Jordan said he has a partial basement. There is the garage and another room right next to it that is ground floor, with a bathroom and the rest of the house is upstairs.

Constantine said what I am looking at is why you can't run, put your grinder pump in the garage, and you pump up to your upper level with your two-inch pipe, and come out the other side of your house.

Jordan said all of the pipes exit the other side.

Constantine said your cast iron pipe going out to the septic tank comes out the wrong side of your house. Expense-wise, wouldn't it be easier to run it PVC from, I want to say the left side of your house, through the rafters out the other end of your house. Then you are above our sewer line. Hicks asked if everything is accessible to change the flow to the other side of your house.

Arney said he may not have access to do that.

Biancardi recommend that we take it under advisement. There can be ideas tossed around, something might come out a little bit different that is advantageous to the project.

Attorney Patton said historically if there is precedent that's been set for the town to purchase the grinder pump, I just don't know once you purchase it, and it's theirs, are they responsible for the maintenance. The things don't last forever.

Biancardi that is something I would want to look at. I don't know, I would have to look at the minutes to see if we have purchased one since the original purchase, but I believe we have had some people connect that have had to purchase grinder pumps.

Attorney Patton said you would need documentation to say who is the owner, who is responsible for replacement, etc.

Arney asked is the starting point to have Kurt get a quote for the work? Then we could consider if we can do a portion or not. At least that will let us see the project.

Jordan said he will get quotes.

Biancardi asked Jordan to get quotes and provide them to Peffers and then we can organize a small non-quorum group of us to start looking at it and report back.

Approval of Claims with three (3) or more signatures

Oudman made a motion to approve claims with three (3) or more signatures. Marsh seconded the motion. All in favor vote. Motion passed.

2022 Budget

Biancardi reminded the board that because we are utility, we do create a budget for ourselves because that is good practice, but we are not bound like the Council because our budget is not tax funded. So, they have to set the budget, appropriate funds, etc. In the past what we have done is budget exactly what we think we are going to spend. We are now in budget time. Bill and Corinne have worked on the budget and then shared it with the board. We can still spend on a large purchase if we need to. Council budget meetings are August 9 and 12, so at the next meeting the board will be provided a budget. If we have questions or want to add something in or change it, we can make that request.

Spending Review

The board reviewed the report. Arney said I was going to have Corinne move some money from Labor Wages to Part-time Wages.

Biancardi said we need to make sure that we are getting our twenty-five percent from the Street Department that we are putting into the budget for those guys. It looks like the majority of the work they are doing for us is pump readings and maybe call outs.

Arney said some call outs and maintenance. We had to go pull the transducers yesterday, so I made sure to grab a laborer. I had to pull him off a mower.

Biancardi said and we talked about that, we need to prioritize.

Arney said I can't only have one guy around a pit, so someone had to help.

Biancardi asked Arney to relay that back that we are a little bit light on the hours. I know that you are leaning on a part-time person and maybe that's something that we need to talk more about at budget.

Delinquencies

The board reviewed the report. Delinquencies are ticking upward.

Flow Report

The board reviewed the report and there were no questions.

Good of the Order of the Community & Any Other Business

None.

Announcements

The next meeting will be held at 7 p.m. on Wednesday, August 18, 2021.

Adjourn

Constantine made a motion to adjourn. Marsh seconded the motion. All in favor vote. **Motion passed.**

Meeting adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

Submitted by: Corinne Peffers, Secretary

APPROVED August 18, 2021

Toni Biancardi, President

Corinne Peffers, Secretary