Minutes of Perrysburg Public Utilities Committee

Meeting Held June 26, 2024

CALL TO ORDER - 4:30 PM

The meeting was called to order at 4:30 p.m. by Chairperson Kevin Fuller.

ROLL CALL

Committee members present were Kevin Fuller, Rick Rettig, and Kerry Wellstein. Also present were Matt Choma, Director of Public Utilities, AJ Coleman, Deputy Director of Public Utilities, Mickey Shank, WWTP Manager, Joe Fawcett, City Administrator, and Tim Effler, Law Director.

CITIZEN'S CONCERNS

None.

APPROVAL OF 5/29/24 MEETING MINUTES

There being no objections, the minutes of the May 29, 2024 meeting were unanimously approved.

SEWER CREDITS TABULATIONS

Mr. Choma distributed the sewer credits tabulations since the last meeting. He said that there were three since the last meeting for a total of $364.44, and the year to date total is $5,880.47.

ADVERTISING FOR TWO UTILITY SUPERVISOR POSITIONS

Mr. Choma reported that they have advertised internally for two utility supervisor positions that will work under Brian Homer. He said that they have a field staff of fifteen individuals. Mr. Choma said there were five internal candidates and interviews are being held tomorrow. Mr. Fuller asked if they have an anticipated start date. Mr. Choma said if they choose internal candidates, it should be by the end of the summer. If they have to go externally, it will take longer.

CROWN CASTLE LEASE AMENDMENT

Mr. Effler stated that we have had a lease with Crown Castle, which is T Mobile, since 1999. He said this will be a continuation as their current lease is set to expire in 2029. The lease allows for six additional five year terms. Mr. Effler said rent is approximately $1,000 a month plus annual increases. He said they are offering a $20,000 signing bonus. Mr. Fuller asked if there are any changes to the lease, and Mr. Effler said just the name and terms. Mr. Rettig asked about the language for six additional five year terms. Mr. Effler said that a lot of times they don't want to sign a long term lease because they don't know what the technology will be years from now. Mr. Fuller asked where the pole is located, and Mr. Choma said it is in Rotary Park. The Committee

agreed 3-0 to move this on to City Council.

MICKEY SHANK WPC UPDATE

Mr. Shank said that he started at the Wastewater Treatment Plant at the end of 2020. He reviewed projects that were completed at the plant the three years after he was hired, including a complete SCADA system upgrade with iFIX operating system, preventative maintenance on the Siemens blowers, the UV system was rebuilt, work was done on the PW Tech dewatering system, and it has been running for the last three years, and they put a succession plan in place by hiring an assistant plant manager. He said that they recently purchased a Surface computer so the on call operator will be able to monitor the plant from home while on call. He said Matt Hess, the Assistant Plant Manager, is in the process of getting his Class IV license. Mr. Shank said that thanks to Dave Moore, the Safety Coordinator, who helped them completely revamp their safety program, they were awarded the OWEA Safety award for plants with 1-9 employees. This year they have installed roughly 2400 diffusers and rings to hold the diffusers which is vital in ammonia reduction, had the digesters cleaned and inspected, and they are working with IT on a preventative maintenance program to tie into the SCADA system that coincides with iFIX. Mr. Shank said that Bowling Green and the District use it, and it allows better tracking of maintenance. Mr. Shank said they partnered with TMACOG and Owens Community College to allow students to tour the plant and shadow the operators. He said that nine out of the 21 students took the exam and all nine passed. He added that normally the passage rate is under 30%. He said the bid package for the digester project will go out late summer, and they are also working on a zoning change for the Plant. Mr. Shank said they are going out for an engineering study for primary clarification upgrades. He said that they can't treat 24 mgd which they are now because of the storms, they can only treat 14-16 mg when it comes to the primary. Mr. Shank reviewed future projects that he thinks will have to be done in the next five to ten years including: cleaning the final aeration pass and it will need gatework done, primary clarifier installation to meet ten state standard, possible B & R engineering study, Clear Span, look at other means for biosolid disposal, a second PW Tech dewatering system, headwork screen, and at some point the UV system will have to be replaced because it is 15 or 16 years old. There was some discussion regarding the digesters being down next year, and Mr. Shank said we will be pressing primary sludge, but we will be immediately hauling it out. Mr. Fuller asked what are the most costly items on the list of future projects. Mr. Shank said the primary clarifier, dewatering press, B & R, and UV projects are probably the most costly.

OTHER BUSINESS

Mr. Fuller asked Mr. Choma about the water supply system - what really affects our water rates and how the water gets here. Mr. Choma explained that we are part of the Toledo Regional Water Commission, which came about as a result of the 2014 water crisis. The findings from that event were that the Toledo Water Treatment Plant needed a lot of repairs. At that time, the surrounding communities had different contracts, ending at different times, paying different rates. The members of the Water Commission are partners in the system and have a say about improvements at the

plant and in the water distribution system. He said that Toledo gets the water from Lake Erie, and it is treated at the Collins Park Water Treatment Plant. One of the findings was that there is not sufficient elevated tank storage in the Toledo system. There should be four two million gallon tanks within the system. Another finding was that we need an alternative water source. He said what that is going to be is a giant reservoir, and he believes a billion gallon reservoir is being proposed. He said that the water main taking the water from Lake Erie to the plant is in disrepair. All of these things go into the costs that determine the rates. He said that by 2028, the idea is for all the communities to be paying the same rate for water. Mr. Choma said the cost of water is 70% of our operating budget. 20% of the budget is staff and equipment, and 10% is for projects and responding to emergencies. For sewer, it is different because we have our own plant, but our focus is a lot of routine or planned maintenance on the plant, so we do it on a planned program instead of responding to failures in the system. We also have to eliminate SSO's per the EPA's DFFO's. In June 2026, we will present them with a plan to eliminate the SSO's. In some areas, there are no storm sewers, and we currently have no funding for storm sewers and that is why we are doing the feasibility study. Mr. Fuller stated that the Northwestern Water and Sewer District is a stakeholder in our community, and he asked how they factor in on the water side. Mr. Choma explained that there are two feeds for finished water. The first is a 16" main that comes down the Anthony Wayne Trail and goes under the Maumee River to the pump station on East Boundary Street. The second feed comes from the District. They act as a middle man; they purchase water from Toledo, and it goes through their master meter on East Broadway, down East Broadway, down past the Stellantis plant, ultimately to a master meter at Bass Pro Shop on Simmons Road. It travels under the expressway into a main that we own, that travels to the reservoir next to Mr. Freeze. For that, there is a cost that the District has. We pay them a surcharge based on the flow coming through the master meter at Bass Pro. Mr. Choma said that our system is a system of infrastructure owned by both the City and the District. The City used to be a village that was the square boundary and everything else surrounding it was Perrysburg or Middleton Township. So Wood County, the Sanitary Engineer at that time, built the infrastructure for water and sewer to service that area. The Wood County Sanitary Engineer evolved into the Northwestern Water and Sewer District, which still owns that infrastructure. As the City expanded, the municipal boundaries occupied some of those areas and the infrastructure was not transferred to the City. So those residents still have to pay operating and maintenance costs to the District even though the water is supplied by Perrysburg. As part of the agreement reached in 2001, the amount residents pay was reduced to 75% for sewer and 70% for water. This agreement expired at the end of 2021, but we have still been operating under the language. Mr. Fuller asked what the benefit of the agreement is. Mr. Choma said that the language about the 70% and 75% is in there, and there were lawsuits at that time that were settled with language that established how the two entities would work together and how the sytem would be maintained. Mr. Choma added that it is maintained mostly by our staff. Mr. Choma said that the volume of water that goes through the Simmons Road meter was supposed to be peak shaving, but as the City has rapidly grown, it has become a second primary source for half of the City. He said we are looking at other options for primary sources for the City. Mr. Fuller said that it seems like people are paying twice, and he

questioned what we can do to move forward with a plan to clean this up. He said that we are operating under the whims of other entities, and it may not directly be what our residents need. Mr. Choma acknowledged that the residents supplied by the South Boundary Pump Station are paying both the operating and maintenance fee to the District on their bills, and the wheeling rate which is factored into the cost of the water the City is providing. He said that we need to take a strong look to see what is in the best interests of our residents. He said that talks with the District have stalled, and this is complex, but not unsolvable. He said in his opinion, the agreement dramatically favors the District at the expense of our residents. He said we need to come up with something that is fair right now, fair in the future, and in our residents best interest. Mr. Fuller said that as we approach 2025 and are planning the budget, he would like us to consider what direction we might take, whether it's independence from the district if they won't sit down and work with us, to develop something or move in a direction that's going to benefit the City, because it's not fair. He said the residents should not be paying the price because we can't come to an agreement. He acknowledged that there are other projects at the WWTP, but he said we need to move on something in the interests of our residents. Mr. Choma said that we have a very good relationship with the District right now, and they want to take care of the rate payers too. Mr. Fuller said that we have the WWTP, and although we get water through a short section of their pipe, he feels we hold the cards with the WWTP. He said that he doesn't work for the District, he works for the residents of the City.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 5:21 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kevin Fuller, Chairperson
Public Utilities Committee

The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, July 23, 2024 at 4:30 p.m.