



Minutes of February 5, 2019

A meeting of the Wausau Water Works Commission was called to order at 1:30 p.m. in City Hall on February 5, 2019. In compliance with Wisconsin Statutes, this meeting was posted and receipted for by the Wausau Daily Herald on February 1, 2019.

Members present: President Mielke, Commissioners Herbst, Gehin, Force.

Others present: Eric Lindman, Dave Erickson, Scott Boers, Valerie Swanborg, Anne Jacobson, Steve Opatik, Becher Hoppe; Tonia Speener, Clark Dietz; Ken Ligman, Becher Hoppe.

1) Approve Minutes of the January 8, 2019 Meeting.

Force had asked about our involvement with the Wisconsin River Discharge Group at the last meeting and Lindman had advised that we were going to pursue that. Has anything else happened with that? Lindman advised nothing formal has come out. They haven't provided anything further since what was presented in January. They will keep us informed and we are monitoring the APWA updates from legislators as well.

Force moved to approve the minutes of the January 8, 2019 meeting. Seconded by Gehin and the motion carried 4-0.

2) Director's Report on Utility Operations.

Force asked about the LSL replacement funds still available. It's indicated that these funds must be used by 2020. Is there an update on our plan to spend this money on lead line replacements in a particular area or will we continue to follow the policy we've had which was to replace lead lines as we replace the street infrastructure? Lindman advised right now we are following the reconstruction projects and the notices will go out this spring for this year's reconstruction projects; 1st Ave., Thomas St. and Towline Rd. This will allow those homeowners to apply to get their services replaced. He had spoken with Boers and Sell that once we know which services will be replaced this spring for those reconstruction projects we should continue to move down the list rather than waiting again for next year. If there are other state funds that are allocated, it would look better if we have expended our funds rather than hanging on to them.

Force asked if the \$69,000 left from 2017 will lapse at the end of this year or if it continues to be available. Boers advised the deadline to use those funds will be June of 2020. We will not have any issues expending those funds this summer.

Gehin asked if the meeting at the Tech has been set. Lindman advised it hadn't but he is anticipating mid-February.

Mielke advised that Wednesday, February 20 at 10:00 a.m. in the Council Chambers, he and Lindman will be giving a presentation for the media regarding the infrastructure, in particular what is going on with the Water and Wastewater and the possible costs. This has been presented

numerous times to the media and the neighborhood groups. Most of the feedback has been positive.

Lindman advised when we look at the updates for the water and wastewater plans, part of the water plan would be our conversations with the Village of Maine and the water agreement. Mielke had mentioned that we did have a conversation on that and it happened fairly quickly. This has been drafted and a copy was emailed out to the commission. Back in 2007 the water agreement was initially approved by the commission and then on to council. We are doing an amendment to that agreement now that Brokaw is part of the Village of Maine. If they could bring forward any comments once they review, the plan is to be taken to council next week.

Mielke advised their meeting with Village of Maine was positive and is hopeful things can move forward.

Lindman advised on the contested discharge permit, the DNR did accept that case and that is good news on our part. They did request a stay on the judicial review.

Force asked if there was anything new regarding the phosphorous issue and the Green Bay Adaptive management program. Lindman advised there has not been. The article came out in the local press, he felt there was some information missing and how that compared to Wausau and what we are proposing to do. Force asked if the best way to reach the DNR regarding this is to go through the Wisconsin River Discharger Group. Lindman advised he feels this is the strongest way to get our message across. We are proposing to have a meeting with the DNR for some additional incentives for regionalization. Phosphorous regulation for municipalities is another issue that could be opened up at that meeting as well.

Force asked if they think the local legislators understand. Mielke responded he believes so but we will be talking to them again soon regarding this amongst other things. Lindman stated he thinks they get lobbied heavily from the agriculture side and don't hear from us enough.

Mielke advised that according to the City Attorney, the Director's Report is not an actionable item, we simply accept it and put it on record.

3) Request for Approval of a Sole Source Purchase of a Truck Chassis.

Boers advised this is to replace our sludge hauling truck. It was brought to his attention that this may not have been worded correctly. The total price for the truck is \$118,198.00, they are offering a \$13,000.00 trade in value, bringing it down to \$105,198.00. Mielke asked how old the other one is, Boers advised it is a 2001.

Motion by Gehin to approve the purchase. Seconded by Herbst. Motion carried 4-0.

4) Discussion and Possible Action on Marathon County Contract Agreement for Mercury Reduction Program.

Erickson said this is essentially the same agreement we've had for the past several years. The one difference is that this is for five years rather than one with the option to terminate it. He recommends that we approve it. Gehin asked if the Rib Mountain metro has a similar agreement. Erickson responded yes, it's the same agreement. We're working together, Rib Mountain metro, the Health Department and ourselves.

Motion by Herbst to approve the agreement. Seconded by Force. Motion carried unanimously 4-0.

5) Discussion and Possible Action Regarding WDNR Notice of Noncompliance: Flow Rate Underreporting's.

Erickson advised that we've discussed several times before about the issues with the SCADA system computers and the program itself. There were a number of intervals where we didn't have complete data on our influent flow meter and that's required on our permit. There is

no limit but is important information to evaluate the performance at the plant. A letter has been received from the DNR and we need to reply. Our immediate response will be that we are measuring the flow manually every morning on working days. There are 3 things that are in the works; assuming our preliminary design is approved, we'll have new influent meters and they'll be able to give us more information but that is approximately 3 years down the road. We've also been working with a local electrical firm to place a temporary stop gap measure in between but that will take some time as well. We've also worked with another firm, which would only be a matter of weeks, to order a digital device that will record the flow so we can download it to the computer. The cost is only a couple hundred dollars.

Force asked if there were any fines associated with our noncompliance. Erickson responded no, he didn't believe so. One thing he had considered after writing the letter of response was regarding the second option and whether we really need to put that in there. Once we say we're going to do it, it's hard to say we're not going to. We may not want to commit to more than what is required.

Gehin said he gets the impression that we only had 28 reported in March and 20 in April. Are we not giving estimated numbers? Erickson responded that up until a year ago, when we'd have problems like this he would just estimate the influent flow based on the effluent meter but our new DNR basin engineer doesn't want it that way. If we don't have the data from the meter, he wants it blank because we didn't record it. So there is no estimating using the effluent. We've gotten quicker on responding with manual reading however if it's over a weekend we will have incomplete data for 2 days.

Gehin asked who is saying we can't come up with an estimate. Erickson responded he can kind of understand because if we estimate it, it masks that we are having a problem. It's reasonable for them to ask what we will be doing to take care of the problem.

Force asked when these temporary fixes will be in effect. Erickson advised the recording device has been ordered and it will be programmed and set up in a few weeks. We've been working with the electrical firm but they've been busy and it's going slower than what he had anticipated. We may want to consider going with another firm however, the recording device will meet their demands.

Gehin asked if they've been in contact with us regarding this all year or did it come out of an annual inspection. Erickson advised we haven't had an annual inspection since this engineer started with the DNR in June/July of last year. He's relatively new and does things different but there is logic to it.

Motion by Force to approve the draft letter to be sent. Seconded by Gehin. Motion carried 4-0.

6) Discussion and Possible Action Regarding Septic Hauler Rates.

Erickson advised that over the last several months it was recommended that we raise our rates by 20% and that resolution went to the City Council but it didn't specifically address the portion that covers septic rates. In looking at it, we were going to raise those rates by 20% but we are already quite a bit higher, maybe charging less and hauling more is a good business strategy. His thought is for the time being or until the rate study is complete, we keep the rates where they are at.

Mielke asked the last time these rates were increased. Erickson responded the last increase was in 2011 or 2012.

Motion by Gehin to approve the septic hauler rates. Seconded by Herbst. Motion carried 4-0.

7) Discussion and Possible Action Regarding Design of River Crossing Siphons.

Lindman explained that in the packet is a drawing of where the proposed new siphon lines will be placed. The one on Sturgeon Eddy is going to a separate location and cross further west. The one that crosses near the Thomas Street Bridge crosses fairly close to where it is currently.

Opatik explained that the existing siphon on Sturgeon Eddy kiddie corners into a portion of the wastewater plant where new sludge storage building will be. This is also the siphon that had plugged. The existing siphons are single pipes, the new ones will match existing code with 2 pipes. The Sturgeon Eddy crossing will have a 12" and 18" diameter pipe, the Thomas Street Crossing will have a 14" and 24" diameter pipe. Proposed construction is to bid everything this spring. If we have favorable prices we could award construction of both, if we don't have a favorable price, the intent would be to only construct the Sturgeon Eddy crossing this year. We would have to relay a sewer down Sturgeon Eddy and down Memorial Park Road. Memorial Park Road has a very high retaining wall and that has been taken into consideration for the layout of the piping. This, along with timeframe for construction, will be discussed with City staff in the upcoming days. Access to Memorial Park would be shut down for a couple of weeks and it may be beneficial if that work were delayed until later in the summer or after Labor Day.

Force asked what the reason is for the 2 lines rather than 1. Opatik explained the primary reason is so if one plugs you have another one. The differing sizes are to be sure you have a sufficient velocity in the pipes.

Force asked if the old siphon just sits. Ligman advised we have the choice of keeping them as an emergency type pipe or abandoning them. Mielke reminded everyone that these pipes go back to the 1930's. Opatik added that this is also the only way wastewater is moved from the East side of the river to the plant.

Force asked how the pipes are laid on the bottom of the river. Opatik explained the existing ones are buried and the new ones would be as well. The plan for installation is to open cut. There would be an excavator on a barge, basically dig a trench and lay the pipe. They've looked at directional drilling or boring but the preliminary soil borings indicate that the soil is too granular.

Force asked if the construction will disrupt boat traffic on the river. Opatik advised there would be and they need to come up with a traffic control for boaters and that is a permit they need to apply for through the DNR.

Gehin asked if there would be a portion of the river open to traffic. Ligman responded that for 95% of the time they would not block the entire river. When it comes to installing the pipelines, the pipes will float and they will construct them as one long noodle. They will float them across and slowly introduce water to force them to sink. For that process at each location, traffic would be blocked.

Gehin asked why we couldn't go diagonally across so we wouldn't have to close Memorial Park Rd off. Ligman advised it's the depth of cover. Going diagonally we come across more shallow water for a longer period of time so the cost would go up dramatically. The plan is to put the excavated material next to the trench in the river however, they may be forced to haul it off site until they put the pipe down and then bring it back. A longer route would run up that cost exponentially. Going down Sturgeon Eddy and down to the park is about \$100,000 to \$200,000 cheaper than going diagonally.

Gehin asked what size pipe we will be installing for the gravity sewer at the plant. Opatik responded that the existing line is a 30" line and will be replaced with 36". They're also in touch with the owners of the downstream dam and there is a drawdown scheduled for some time this year and that may be favorable for construction if they can coordinate that.

Force asked if we have a cost on this. Ligman advised for Sturgeon Eddy the cost is \$1.8

million and for Thomas St. the cost is \$1.2 million. Lindman advised we budgeted one of these crossings for 2019 and the other for 2020 however, if there is a benefit for us to move forward with both this year, we would have to come back with a budget modification.

Force asked if we would be disrupting any residential properties. Opatik advised we would not, it should all be installed within the City right of way.

Gehin asked if we will have to put collars around the pipes to keep them in place. Ligman advised we will.

Motion by Herbst to approve the design of the river crossing siphons. Seconded by Force. Motion carried 4-0.

Mielke opened the meeting for public comment.

Dennis Urbanek, 1505 Pine View Ln.:

Regarding the Donohue study draft A of the wastewater facilities plan, he sees the Village of Maine and Brokaw are included in the population base. He doesn't believe that there is enough people there to spend a huge amount of money and suggests that be deleted.

Regarding the present permit. He believes the DNR has not followed the methodology that they utilized in the 1979-1980 Wisconsin River study where waste load allocation numbers were generated and permitting levels were provided to the point sources along the river. Since that study, many paper mills have shut down and his sense is that the upstream capacity of the river is substantially higher and we should be able to take advantage of that. He thinks we should not remodel but rebalance what we already know.

Regarding the scope of the study and the fact that there have been a number of exceedances at the wastewater plant, the root causes have not been addressed in the report. This is something that should be considered in the design going forward. All sort of things happen but he thinks we should make sure we engineer around any root causes of those exceedances.

Part of the scope he feels is very unclear is when we talk about BOD. What is the plant design? Is it at maximum flow, maximum BOD, maximum waste load allocation or is it at average or minimum? This should be identified for all of the parameters and it should be easy to do a piping and instrument diagram showing the 3 levels. This would assure that the design is understood and agreed to by the operating and engineering personnel of the city. Some of the alternatives can be very capital expensive and the decision should be made ahead of time for that design point.

A comment on the pass/fail approach. He finds it unusual that everything is a pass/fail at the plant. Everything can't be a fail and there are some things that are operating quite well. We seem to have a good track record at meeting the compliance requirements. He feels the capital cost discussion is very brief. The exclusions aren't defined and the probability for completing the project for \$80 million is not defined. If this goes forward he suggests getting an \$80 million guarantee from Donohue. When you look at the estimate, 30% of the cost is for unidentified items. There could be errors, omissions, contingencies and training. Is it in the estimate or isn't it. He believes the operating and maintenance costs will also increase due to more equipment, more systems and more processes.

His suggestion is to update the scope. It is important to have a meaningful and valid cost estimate.

Gehin concurs with Urbanek's feelings on the waste load allocations. He always got the impression that if a mill went out we would have more share of the river, however the tables have not been changed. Erickson confirmed that is correct. The study on the discharge limit should be taking that into consideration. He thinks that would need to be reviewed with the

engineers at Donohue.

Gehin asked about PENTA. He knows we tested it previously but isn't sure of the results. That is why we put bands on the inside of the interceptor sewer to minimize infiltration. Lindman advised he really couldn't find any information. We haven't put this together and shared with the DNR yet but we will to see if there are any solutions. We are required to monitor PENTA even though there is no limit. We are typically higher than Wauleco. It seems odd. Erickson isn't sure how significant the numbers are, we report to the DNR every month and there hasn't been concern.

Gehin asked about the Mercury. The levels coming into the plant in relation to what leaves is significantly less. What happens to the Mercury? Erickson advised whatever comes in has to go out either in solids or liquids. Gehin wondered if we could do a calculation of the pounds leaving in the solids vs. liquids and see how close we are compared to what goes in. Erickson advised that can fluctuate but they could do that.

Force asked if the questions Urbanek asked about the waste load allocation should be brought to the DNR. Lindman advised he will have to talk to Donohue about that. Force asked that it be on the next agenda if possible. Also, as far as some of the other concerns that Urbanek has raised. Can some of these be categorized and discussed at a future meeting? If there are some points that should be addressed now is the time to do it. Lindman advised that this is the facilities plan and not a design plan. It is an overview of what the needs are, a higher look. It is our intention to have more details and through comments, we can tailor our presentation on what people want to see.

Mielke advised we will bring it forward as he doesn't want any questions down the road. Now is the time to discuss it.

8) Adjourn.

There being no further business to discuss, motion was made by Gehin to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Herbst. Motion carried 4-0.