

**CARROLL COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS  
MINUTES OF UTILITIES ADVISORY COUNCIL  
August 28, 2014  
Carroll County Government Office Building  
225 N. Center Street, The Reagan Room (Rm. 003)  
Westminster Maryland 21157-5194  
7 pm.**

Attendees: *Council*: Michael Wilmore, Chair; Steven Miller, Ellen Dix

Absent: Kevin Hann, Jeffrey Topper, Penny Gist

*County Staff*: Jeff Castonguay, Rizwan Ahmed, Robin Hooper, Wanda Brandenburg

Council members as well as County staff Robin Hooper/ Utilities Budget Analyst, Rizwan Ahmed/Public Works Specialist, and Wanda Brandenburg/Administrative Office Associate for Utilities were introduced. Mrs. Brandenburg took minutes for Mrs. Penny Gist in her absence.

### **Reports**

**Minutes from meeting of 3/27/14:** The minutes of the 3/27/14 meeting were approved as distributed by electronic mail on May 23, 2014. The Council, on motion of Mr. Wilmore, seconded by Mr. Miller, and Carried; (Ms. Dix voted “Aye”) approved the minutes of the 3/27/14 meeting. Ms. Dix inquired as to what the policy is on getting minutes out to Council members and posted to the web page since she received a resident complaint due to the length of time it’s taken to get minutes posted. Mr. Castonguay stated he would check into a policy.

### **Master Plan Updates/Revisions:** *Bramble Hills service area and well*

Updated 8/28/14: – Mr. Castonguay noted that a meeting was held on August 14<sup>th</sup> with residents. County and City officials were present to discuss what residents can expect during the transition process from the County operations to the City. The City plans to keep the current well as a main water source with Gist Road water main as a secondary system. A low flow valve will be installed to transition from the current well to the Gist Road water main in the event of loss of power or well equipment. The City is responsible from the North end of the site to the Ag Center. The City will install individual meters for each residence to measure consumption. Currently the total usage per quarter is divided equally by the number of homes and each resident pays the same amount of the water bill. Expected turn-over of system is December 2014.

### **Old Business**

### **Freedom District Wastewater Treatment Plant Enhanced Nutrient Removal Upgrade Status:**

Updated 8/28/14: Mr. Castonguay stated that this is out to bid and due on 9/3/14. He estimated 5-6 months for the contract administering. Construction is expected to start between February and March 2015. An additional \$569,000 was received in grant money. The total project is \$19,377,000. Total Grant Eligibility is \$8,797,000. CCG share is 75% of the 10,580,000 to be paid or \$7,935,000 plus additional \$1.4 million for deepening the reactors. Total our share is \$9,335,000. Current funding is \$7.5 mil. We are short \$1,835,000. We are requesting additional money in FY16 CIP Budget to cover the difference.

**Asset Management – Geographic Information System (GIS) Status:** Mr. Castonguay stated the County is continuing to update the GIS system and using staff to identify assets. Mr. Miller asked if multiple layers such as stormwater locations and information could be overlapped into our asset system. Mr. Castonguay said there was much information that included roads, bridges, stormwater information, etc. that can be used.

Updated 8/28/14: The RFI process for the Asset Management program is complete and we are in the final steps of drafting the RFP to go out in the next week or so. The process took time to draft the new RFP to be in sync with our IT Department.

**Town of Sykesville Water Pipe Replacement Status:** Funding is available from the State Highway Administration for streetscape concept planning. The road will be turned over to the Town. Mr. Hann inquires as to the age of the lines – older than 1970's. Mr. Hann cautioned the County be aware of potential administrative fees assessed by SHA.

Updated 8/28/14: Mr. Castonguay has attended two meetings since his role began as Bureau Chief of Utilities. There is shallow rock and springs in the area. The County plans to line the sewer pipes to stop infiltration and inflow, but further investigation is required. Changes will be made to the water lines.

**Council members' status:**

- a. **Freedom Area business community:** A representative is still needed. Mrs. Dix was not in attendance to give an update.

Update 8/28/14 – Mrs. Dix stated she has spoken to several business owners in the Freedom District and no one has expressed an interest in joining the Council.

- b. **Bark Hill/Pleasant Valley/Bramble Hills Area:** A representative is still needed. Bramble Hills to be removed from member list, as this water system will be turned over to the City.

**Septage hauling/upgrade wastewater treatment for City of Westminster:** Mr. Castonguay stated that the City's wastewater treatment plant handles landfill leachate and septage from septic tanks. The plant's upgrade is over 30% completed. The 50 to 75% plans are being worked on. The plant upgrades need to be completed by July 2016 and meeting ENR requirements by 2017. Mr. Topper noted that a meeting was held with the City to determine how to allocate funding. Mr. Wilmore asked if the enterprise fund is covering the seepage – No, it's self-contained under another fund. He noted that 12.7 million gallons was treated last year. Ms. Hobbs noted the Board of County Commissioners agreed to increase 5.5 cents per gallon to 6 cents per gallon for fiscal year 15 and 6.5 cents per gallon for FY16.

Update 8/28/14: Mr. Wilmore expressed his concern to not pay for future upgrades. No money is available due to paying for clarifiers from a past project. Mr. Castonguay stated the press was removed from the current project to save money. Savings is based on how sludge is processed. Currently sludge is going to Northern Virginia for land application. A Baltimore based Company called Synagro is being looked at for possible use by the County to transport sludge. The incineration project was scrapped due to liability issues. Lehigh Cement Company was one possible place to dispose of sludge but much would need to be done for compliance. Mrs. Dix questioned the buyout amount to get out of the contract with Frederick County. Mr. Castonguay stated the cost was reduced from \$3 million to \$1 million. Mrs. Dix was not clear on how County waste related to the City of Westminster septage facility and inquired as to how the County got involved in hauling down

Rt. 140 to the facility. Mr. Castonguay explained that leachate from the Northern Landfill is hauled by the landfill workers to the septage facility and wastewater pumped from Carroll County residences is hauled by private septic haulers to the facility. Private haulers are pre-approved by the County to haul to the septage facility and they pay to dump at the facility.

**Baltimore City food oil waste information:** Update 8-28-14: A sample of the F.O.G. flyer and No Wipes in the Pipes flyer was distributed by Mrs. Brandenburg for review by members via e-mail on 8/21/14. Mr. Miller asked if there was a copyright on the information from Baltimore and if the information could be used in other capacities. Mrs. Brandenburg didn't know if there was a copyright but the City of Baltimore granted permission to use the information contained in their flyer as long as the County mentioned the info was provided by courtesy of the City of Baltimore. Mr. Wilmore suggested changing the content periodically to keep people interested. Mr. Castonguay would like to insert the flyers into next year's Consumer Confidence Reports if possible. Printing quotes are being requested for costs on printing in quantities of 10K, 15K and 20K. Mrs. Dix mentioned she was told by a BGE representative that putting Vinegar and Baking Soda down kitchen and bathroom drain pipes every 6 weeks would help to keep them clean. Mr. Miller asked if this treatment would cause any impact on private septic tanks. Mr. Castonguay was not sure if there would be any impact and would question this to our collection and treatment staff.

**Bureau of Utilities Fiscal Year 2015 Operating and Community Investment Plan (CIP) recommended budgets:** Update 8-28-14: Mr. Castonguay explained the FY15 budget is 5% higher due to 3R money (Repair, Replace and Rehabilitate). The Freedom Wastewater Treatment Plant ENR project was a large portion of the increase. It also included pumps and vehicles for normal operations. Ms. Hooper explained how 3R monies are obtained from area connection and hookup fees.

**Water and Sewer Rates:** Update 8-28-14: New rates went into effect on July 1, 2014. The average bill increased \$20 per quarter or 8%. Mrs. Dix is concerned about the impact this increase has on the over 55 age group who have limited incomes. Mr. Castonguay explained that when rates increase, consumption usually decreases. Operating costs continue to increase so increasing rates is necessary to be able to meet operating needs. He also explained a new technology that allows water service pipes and mains to be lined versus digging up and replacing lines. This new technology will save money on contractor costs.

**Fluoride Costs:** Discussion ensued regarding the use and cost of fluoride in the water treatment facility. Research will be done and presented at the May meeting.

Update 8-28-14: Mr. Castonguay stated we are paying about \$8K per month for fluoride. The cost of chemicals is minimal but upkeep of equipment is more costly due to the corrosiveness of the product. He obtained information that was received by Mr. Topper in 2012 from MDE regarding the use of fluoride in drinking water. Before discontinuing the use of fluoride MDE would require us to contact local dental offices, doctor offices, and schools to advise them and to hold a public hearing for residents. Mrs. Dix stated the Freedom Area Citizens Council brought this up at a recent meeting. She was unaware that Fluoride was a hazmat issue if not used or stored in the proper capacity. Studies have shown we are inundated with fluoride with the use of products already containing fluoride and then drinking water containing fluoride. Mr. Wilmore had no opinion on the matter. Mr. Miller mentioned several local municipalities that are not using fluoride in drinking water. Mr. Castonguay stated he would do whatever the general consensus decided and perhaps we could use the Survey Monkey to put out a survey to residents.

Dawn Ashbacher with the Town of Sykesville will be notified as well when the survey is conducted.

## **New Business**

**FY16-21 CIP Budgets:** CIP budgets get put together and submitted to the Budget Office between mid-September to October. Mr. Castonguay is meeting with the Superintendents at each facility. They are recording each part/asset, age of part/asset, when it was last replaced or needs replaced. This should give Utilities a better handle for what is needed to budget and when.

**Water/Sewer Study:** Black and Veatch did the last big study in 1998. A small sewer study for the Hampstead area was done in 2009 by JMT with regards to inflow and infiltration. Mr. Castonguay stated we should be updating our information every 4-5 years to keep the study current. Much has changed since the last studies were done. Areas we didn't think would grow have grown and areas that were thought wouldn't fail have failed. A new study will show the degradation of existing infrastructure. Mr. Wilmore agreed that the study will show the condition of our copper pipes and what useful life is left in them. It will also show how much I&I (inflow and infiltration) is flowing into the sewer system. He asked about the cost to do the study. Mr. Castonguay estimated about \$300K for Freedom sewer, \$150K for Hampstead sewer and another \$200K for the water study. The initial cost will be more expensive but if we keep updating every 4-5 years it is estimated \$50K will cover the updates. Mr. Castonguay said this will be a key to keeping our Asset Management System in good standing.

**Black Squiggly debris** – Mrs. Dix mentioned that several years ago the 55+ community developments complained about black squiggly debris coming out of the kitchen sprayers and water faucets. They were told previously that the cause was coming from the water going through metal to plastic pipe. Mr. Castonguay asked the age of the pipes and she stated they were probably 8-9 years old. Mr. Miller suggested the cause was from the rubber seals and washers breaking down. Mrs. Dix stated that one resident purchased a new faucet thinking the problem would go away. This did not cure the problem. Mr. Castonguay assured her that our membrane technology filters below the virus level from the water treatment plant from getting into the water system. Mr. Miller stated the problem could be occurring before getting to the shower heads. Ms. Dix will contact some of the residents to see if they are experiencing this so that Mr. Castonguay can see firsthand the problem. This was the first he has heard about it, but the team will get involved.

**HHWTP ENR:** Mr. Castonguay is meeting with GMB to discuss the 30% plans submitted by GMB for the upgrade. We are not opting for the membrane technology system due to the fluctuation of the I&I into the system and limited control over the treatment process. A five stage Bardenpho process will be used using the existing structures. The project will include adding one more clarifier. GMB is proposing alternative discharge options for the plant. Mr. Wilmore asked what benefit is in it for MDE if they approve the plan. Mr. Castonguay explained that the ongoing decade plus long lawsuit could be dropped. Mr. Castonguay explained a one mile influent line will be run from Houcksville Road to Lower Beckleysville Road eliminating the current plant flows through an aged clay pipe system running through a residential neighborhood. The new line is gravity feed to the HHWTP.

**Freedom WTP staffing:** Brandon Frebertshauser was promoted to Superintendent after the resignation of the previous superintendent. The plant is still down one operator which we hope to fill the week of September 2<sup>nd</sup>. There is a possibility of using one of the operators to fill a lab tech position. That person would test for pH, turbidity, etc. Our senior night shift operator was promoted to night shift Assistant Superintendent following Brandon's promotion and move to day shift..

**Pleasant Valley well:** Mr. Castonguay explained to Council members that the fire company well still needs to be attached our water system. Along with the new water line a fiber optic line will also be installed for the fire company. We will need to treat the water for nitrates; therefore, a sewer line will also be installed for discharging to the wastewater treatment plant. 53 homes plus the fire company are on the water system. Mr. Miller was pleased with having the 2<sup>nd</sup> well to supply usage for the residents. Mr. Castonguay mentioned to meet MDE requirements we will need to abandon old wells and add an alarm system to the treatment plants.

**National Night Out** – Mrs. Dix has not heard back from Mayor Shaw. Most businesses in Sykesville are individually owned and not chains. The Town Council will be getting together to discuss the Cooper Drive to Springfield Avenue to train tracks storm drains and water line installation for Rt.851.

**Piney Run Reservoir** – Mrs. Dix would like to see the Piney Run Reservoir brought to life again as a main water source. With increased costs for paying the City of Baltimore for raw water, Carroll County needs another water source independent from the City of Baltimore. Mr. Castonguay explained that the water allocation for Piney Run has been lost and the project would need to be put on the books again before MDE could be open to the idea.

The next meeting is tentatively scheduled for November 20, 2014 at 7 pm. Due to the Thanksgiving Holiday, this meeting may be adjusted by one week or so.

The meeting was adjourned.

Cc: *Council Members*  
*Thomas J. Rio, Director of Public Works*  
*Jeffrey Topper, Deputy Director of Public Works*  
*Jeffrey Castonguay, Bureau Chief of Utilities*  
*Robert Burk, Comptroller*  
*Thomas S. Devilbiss, Deputy Director, Land Use, Planning & Development*  
*Robin Hooper, Budget Analyst, Department of Management & Budget*  
*Jenny Hobbs, Financial Analyst, Department of the Comptroller*  
*Steve Powell, Chief of Staff, Board of County Commissioners*  
*Utilities Advisory Council File*

Handouts: Copy of 3-27-14 Minutes

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