

**UTILITIES COMMITTEE MINUTES
MARCH 1, 2022**

The Utilities Committee meeting was held on March 1, 2022 at North Royalton City Hall, 14600 State Road. The meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m.

PRESENT: Committee Members: Chair Dawn Carbone-McDonald, Joanne Krejci, Jeremy Dietrich; **Council:** Paul Marnecheck, John Nickell, Mike Wos, Linda Barath; **Administration:** Mayor Larry Antoskiewicz, Law Director Tom Kelly, Finance Director Jenny Esarey, City Engineer Justin Haselton, Wastewater Superintendent Mark Smith; **Other:** Michael McDonald, Vincent Weimer, Jessica Fenos.

Ms. Krejci moved to excuse Mr. Dietrich from voting on the minutes of February 1, 2022. Seconded by Ms. Carbone-McDonald. Yeas: 2. Nays: 0. **Motion carried.**

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Approval of February 1, 2022 Committee minutes. Moved by Ms. Krejci, seconded by Ms. Carbone-McDonald. Minutes were accepted.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

1. Inflow/Infiltration of Storm Water (I & I)

Mr. Smith recapped that the dye testing has not been started, which would begin again as soon as the weather permits. We did have one conversion.

Ms. Carbone-McDonald asked what part of the City would be planned for that testing. Mr. Smith indicated that we would be starting in the Villa Grande/Vista Drive area, because there are a couple of projects coming up in that area. We normally would not do C District; however, it is going to coincide with the two projects that we have. We are low on the force main there, which we want to try to split the force main to help with some I & I and flow to the area of Bunker.

Ms. Carbone-McDonald wanted to know if there are still any failures of I & I from 2021. Mr. Smith clarified that we are going to have a lot of repairs to be completed. We provide a 60-day letter, a 90-day letter, then we give a 120-day letter; in which we follow up on.

KEEP ON AGENDA.

2. Ohio EPA (WW Treatment Plant B conversion)

Mr. Smith reiterated that the loan was approved. We had our first meeting on January 27th and will have a meeting on March 15th to see the progress that they have had on the design portion. Ms. Carbone-McDonald asked about the time line. Mr. Smith indicated that he cannot put a time frame on it however, he says up to 12 months for the design portion of it.

KEEP ON AGENDA.

3. Streets Light on York Road / York-Albion Light

Ms. Carbone-McDonald inquired about the time frame of having the few done that are left. Mayor Antoskiewicz clarified that we are working with First Energy and would not be able to provide an exact time frame. We are continuing to talk to them on this. He indicated that the timing on those that were corrected has helped the situation. He has not had any more complaints pertaining to Albion Road since the adjustments were made by the Police.

KEEP ON AGENDA.

4. Tree trimming – power line-utility lines

Mayor Antoskiewicz recapped that if the problem involves a power line, First Energy will come out and trim on the lines. If they are cable lines, we call the company; cable lines are not considered power lines. The cable company will not typically come out and trim. Ms. Carbone-McDonald asked if First Energy notifies us when they do come out. Mayor Antoskiewicz noted that First Energy does a regular, yearly maintenance on lines where they will come out, however, if we have a specific one, we will call them and they will come and address it.

Ms. Carbone-McDonald brought up Abbey and Albion Road, where she feels there are so many of them. Mayor Antoskiewicz stated that a lot of those were cable lines. We have checked them out previously, but we can check them out again. Ms. Carbone-McDonald appreciated it.

REMOVE FROM AGENDA

5. WWTP B Conversion

There was nothing further on this item.

REMOVE FROM AGENDA

NEW BUSINESS**1. Summer Energy – Wastewater Plant A and B – Electrical (proposed legislation)**

Ms. Esarey indicated that she received a call with regard to the electric costs for Plant A and B. Due to the size, over 700,000 kilowatts per year, we were not eligible to be part of NOPEC for those properties. In 2017, Council approved an agreement at the time with Freeport? Energy Solutions because they were the cheapest. The rates in which Ms. Esarey sent by e-mail are actually daily rates, however they are holding them for 24 hours. The cheapest rate would be .0605 per kilowatt, for 48 billing cycles; still with Summer Energy. We are looking to extend this and hopefully put in a contract, because we are out of contract currently; paying extra money. Mayor Antoskiewicz pointed out that it would save us roughly \$50,000 per year.

Mr. Smith added that this is an extreme situation where we need to be locked in at a price, and this was the lowest price that we will likely see this year. Once we get locked in at both plants, they go on a peak usage.

Ms. Carbone-McDonald questioned whether we have used the company before. Ms. Esarey indicated that we have used the Broker. Mayor Antoskiewicz concurred, stating that the company changes because of the rates. Mr. Nickell asked for more clarification, in which Ms. Esarey explained it would lock us in if it is approved this evening. Mr. Nickell mentioned costs would be more by the end of the summer; they are not going to go down. He asked Mr. Smith more about the process of running generators. Mr. Smith clarified that the generators are back up power; only.

Mr. Dietrich raised question as to how long we have been out of contract. Ms. Esarey explained that the end of the last contract was July of 2021. Mr. Dietrich inquired about whether we were explored looking into this then. Mayor Antoskiewicz conveyed that the last Finance Director had spoken about looking to set up a meeting with the individual. He believed as we got closer to transitioning, it was overlooked. Ms. Esarey received the call after she first began her position.

Mr. Marnecheck inquired whether there is a minimum of usage for us. Ms. Esarey did not believe so, nor would we be at a minimum. Mr. Marnecheck asked if the conversion at the B Plant had an impact on our usage rate. Mr. Smith indicated that it could, however it would lower it. Mayor Antoskiewicz did not think there was a minimum. Mr. Smith commented that there should not be a minimum; it is going to be that rate because we are a municipality. Ms. Esarey concurred. Mr. Marnecheck was wondering if converting the B Plant would lower our usage so much that we are no longer potentially eligible for this. Mr. Smith clarified no; it should not affect it. Mr. Marnecheck asked if the rates were to go down, would we have the ability during the contract to reapply and receive the lower rate. Ms. Esarey did

not believe so; we are looking at the lowest rate possible; which would be locked in. Mr. Marnecheck also inquired about whether we are able to renew at an earlier time, or whether we would have to wait until the 48 months is up. Mayor Antoskiewicz commented that we can open that discussion up prior to, so that we do not miss the opportunity, however, the new contract would start after this one expires; it is a contract. His guess was that they would not do that. Ms. Esarey explained that it was her understanding that it was a 48-month contract. If we want to do a different contract, it would be a higher rate then. She indicated she could possibly start talking to them a few months before the contract is up. However, the problem is, she did not think we would want to look at much because this is only guaranteed for 24 hours. Mr. Nickell stated that energy prices would not likely go down, therefore he felt that we should lock it in. Mr. Dietrich agreed.

Ms. Carbone-McDonald moved to recommend Ordinance 22-42 to Council for approval. Seconded by Mr. Dietrich. Yeas: 3. Nays: 0. **Motion carried.**

2. York Road Special Assessments – sanitary sewers

Ms. Krejci made it known that there are 11 houses on York Road, in her ward, that are not covered by sanitary sewers; they all still have septic systems. We have been talking to residents since July 2021 and have been in meetings, which included Mayor Antoskiewicz and Mr. Haselton, as well as the Board of Health. In the near future, we are going to be proposing for them to do a study to look at what the cost is going to be, or get an idea for the projects. However, we have talked to the residents and they are aware that it is moving forward. It is a long period of time from the time we start the project, to when it would actually get approved. There is plenty of time if any of the additional residents have any concerns. We are going to start the initial, informational portion of bidding out the project and looking at those costs.

Ms. Carbone-McDonald inquired about including the installation of sidewalks to the project. Ms. Krejci clarified that the cost of this is going to be covered by the residents, therefore it is not something that we can add to. Ms. Krejci indicated that we did look for grant money, which has caused more time; delay. We were hoping to get some grants to help the residents, however, that was not successful. Sidewalks would be completely different; which end up being a resident's expense. Ms. Carbone-McDonald asked about which area this pertains to. Ms. Krejci clarified it is her ward only; 11 houses.

Mr. Dietrich questioned if there is a reason that we want them to convert in Ward 3. Ms. Krejci clarified that residents have been asking about it, whereas some want it; some of their systems are failing. It was brought up because some of them have more of an immediate need. There are others that know they will need replacements in upcoming years. Mayor Antoskiewicz indicated that the more it was explored, we figured out that there are 4-6 houses that would not be able to have a new septic system put in anyhow; the County would not do that. Ms. Krejci noted that if we can take on the project, we would be able to assess them, and put it on their property taxes for assessment over a longer period of time; instead of them paying out the whole amount. Therefore, there is an advantage to the residents for the City to help them through this project. Furthermore, hooking up from their home to the line is all of their own expense and their own work; however, if we are doing 11 houses, hopefully they can get a better deal by doing multiple ones at the same time. Her hope was to have legislation for the next meeting. Mayor Antoskiewicz pointed out that we have what we need to do, in which the first couple of steps take time. It will be on the agenda for approval so that we can move forward.

Ms. Carbone-McDonald inquired about grants for this. Ms. Krejci explained that there are not any grants available, however, they would continue looking and are not giving up; as she also conveyed to the residents. Any time during this project that we can find grant money, we will apply. As discussion ensued, Ms. Krejci indicated that we should not wait any longer, as we already have waited and were unsuccessful at receiving a grant. There is more of an urgency at this time for the project. Mayor Antoskiewicz concurred that we waited and had a lot of hope through the state program that was giving money for storm and sewer projects. However, after applying, also through Cuyahoga County, we were denied. Cuyahoga County did not receive any of the money. We thought we were in good shape, however, very little came to Northeast Ohio to our surprise.

KEEP ON AGENDA

ADJOURNMENT

Moved by Ms. Krejci, seconded by Mr. Dietrich **to adjourn the February 1, 2022, meeting.** Yeas: 3. Nays: 0.
Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 6:30 p.m.