

**TRI-TOWN JOINT REVIEW COMMITTEE  
MEETING MINUTES  
November 30, 2023  
10:00 AM-11:30 AM**

**Wastewater Treatment Facility Conference Room – Admin Building AND Via MS Teams**

In attendance: Bruce Hoar, Christine Dougherty, Chelsea Mandigo, Jess Morris, Aaron Martin, Annie Costandi, Regina Mahony, Kendall Chamberlin, Guest-Randy Bean

**1. Draft meeting minutes from May 15, 2023, approval**

- a. Jess had one correction in reference to the Town of Essex.
- b. Bruce made a motion to accept the minutes as corrected, Annie second. Approved.

**2. Budget Update**

- a. A brief update on the budget was given. FY23 reconcile, current FY24 budget and FY25 proposed budget will be shared by the end of December.
- b. Kendall asked, Has the City been able to move accounts to high interest accounts? Jess responded not yet, but the reserve fund has a higher interest rate, so balances are being kept there.

**3. State Inspection**

- a. The inspection report from the State of Vermont Department of Environment Conservation was reviewed. The last inspection occurred in 2019. The facility received an Acceptable rating (B equivalent). There were a few follow-up items to comply with including a plan/timeline to repair the Anaerobic Digester flare system and to pass the Ortho P lab certification test.
- b. Inspections will occur every 1-3 years since classified as major facility.

**4. 10-year evaluation of facility**

- a. It has been 10 years since the last upgrade. Aldrich and Elliott were hired to look at deficiencies since the last upgrade and examine when capacity upgrades are needed. Result will be a list of projects and timelines for capital planning.
- b. Facility staff have walked through most of the facility with the engineers to discuss ideas and add anything to list. There is another walk through planned in December.
- c. Bruce asked, Does this include a 20-year outlook for the next major upgrade? Chelsea responded yes. Aldrich and Elliott requested the City to purchase a modeling software that will be used to make the assessment.
- d. Kendall requested we look at changing how we handle septage and receiving to consider adding it right to our dewatering operation helping lessen organic load, opening capacity.

**5. Essex Pump Station**

- a. Aaron shared they have an upcoming retirement in the Sewer and Water Dept which will leave the department with a staff of one. For a year, they have been trying to fill openings. It was decided to sign a maintenance contract with Champlin Associates. They will help with cleaning of station and maintenance tasks. Since partnering Champlain has already some system improvements which has reduced call-ins for the Town.
- b. Aaron mentioned the idea of Tri-town control of pump stations. This was talked about during Village/Town merger. The concept was the City of Essex Junction would oversee

all pump stations in the Tri-town with Essex and Williston paying for that service. To do this a minimum of 2-3 people would need to be added to wastewater staff.

- c. A discussion occurred about the status of pump stations in the communities.
  - i. The City sanitation capital fund is severely lacking for the need. The City currently examining retrofit of three pump stations that are 25-30 years old.
  - ii. Williston has a 20-year replacement plan for each pump station. The current station being retrofitted is seeing an inflated budget. They had an estimated budget of \$250,000 and bid the project twice with the lowest bid coming in at \$500,000. There is a lack of vendors doing this work.
- d. A discussion occurred about infiltration and inflow (I&I) and how the City plans on doing some assessments since they are seeing increased flow after storms. It was also discussed how Williston found some sources of I&I after the July storm. They do smoke testing and ask people to disconnect their sump pumps from the sewer when the discovered.

#### **6. Drying bed cleaning schedule**

- a. It was discussed if a cleaning schedule should be made for the use of the Winooski drying beds.
- b. Williston shared they appreciate the work done for them to gain access, but do not plan on using the bed. If it is used, they will partake in the cleaning cycle.
- c. Potential locations for a drying bed on site were examined during walk through with engineers.
- d. They may be a way to build a temporary drying bed using an old dumpster from Gauthier this coming summer.
- e. Chelsea asked in the interest of time if she could form a cleaning schedule with the Town of Essex offline. They agreed.

#### **7. Copper survey**

- a. Chelsea submitted the results to the State on behalf of all three communities. The state inspector was asked what was being done with the survey information. They said nothing until a Copper TMDL is created for the Lower Winooski.

#### **8. Burlington Beer Company (BBCO)**

- a. Williston and BBCO reached a settlement for pretreatment installment at the Williston brewery.
  - i. A third part samples their effluent and a fee is charged if BOD is above a certain threshold.
- b. BBCO received a \$850,000 grant from State ARPA Pretreatment grant program. The pretreatment equipment and related system must be up and running by July 1, 2024
- c. Facility staff have reported seeing less beer waste and beer smell in the influent in the afternoon. Williston collection system staff have also reported smelling less beer waste at the pump station near the brewery.

#### **9. High Strength Waste Policy**

- a. The committee reviewed the policy with Randy Bean who is the consultant assisting with this project.
- b. The idea is this would be a Tri-town policy in addition to each community's sewer ordinance.

- c. Discussion occurred if a BOD allocation per community should be created.
- d. Bruce asked, Are there any other joint community wastewater systems that have policies like this? Randy responded yes- Barre Town and Barre City does.
- e. Consideration of an O&M surcharge like one they have in Middlebury, VT.

**10. Set 4 meeting dates for 2024 @ 10 AM-committee agreed.**

- a. 2/15/24
- b. 5/15/24
- c. 8/22/24
- d. 11/21/24

**Adjourned:** 11:30 AM

Respectfully submitted.  
Chelsea Mandigo, Water Quality Superintendent

DRAFT