

DRAFT: 08/16/2011
Approved: 9-20-2011

Sewer Advisory Committee
August 16, 2011
6 PM
Grattan Township Hall

Meeting Minutes

I. Call to Order

The meeting of the Sewer Advisory Committee was called to order at 6:03 pm.

II. Roll Call

Roll call: Frank Force, Terry Conley, Tom Manikowski, Jen Medema present.
Excused: Alan Rumbaugh. Also in attendance – Jim Fues and Paul Knoerl, township board members. Also Kent, John and Chris from infrastructure Alternatives.

III. Approval of the Agenda

Committee reviewed the agenda. Frank moved Financials to top of agenda to accommodate Jims need to leave early. Jen Medema motioned to approve agenda, T. Manikowski support, motion accepted.

IV. Approval of the Minutes

Committee reviewed minutes from last meeting, June 21, 2011. Conley motioned to approved minutes, with Medema support, minutes approved.

- V. **Public Comment** – none
- VI. **Unfinished Business**

A. Grattan/Vergennes Irrigation Upgrade

- a. **Progress** – Frank reviewed progress, provided notes from July 26, 2011 meeting with contractors.
- b. **Farm leases** – The township sought bids for leasing G/V irrigation lands (~ 62 acres) for farming. It was awarded to Gregg Smith at \$6510. This acreage will require additional work before it's tillable. Lease reflects this and rates will be reviewed again at renewal.
- c. **Reserve Zones** – The board decided not to pursue the development of the reserve zones for irrigation. They did allow the tree company to clear cut the parcels at no charge. The reserve zones will not be farmed or irrigated at this time.

B. Collection System Upgrade

- a. **Progress** – Good progress was reported on the collection system upgrade, many items purchased and almost all electrical upgrades have been completed.

C. Grattan WWTF

- a. **Ditch Cleaning** – This is the area of the McArthur Drain that needs clearing to help improve the drainage in the irrigation fields. Discussed were costs, and potential of impacts downstream. Kent explained that the water would be pumped out so the silt and sediment blocking the drain can be removed. Frank will have it on September's Township Board agenda
- b. **Old Orchard** – This area represents the expansion of 16 acres to the irrigation lands. The apple trees have been cleared, but there remains a standing line of timber. The old under drains remain in place, but removal of trees may destroy them. Discussed costs, quote for appraisal of under drains. Jim and Frank have idea to free up resources by amending the budget. The expanded irrigation remains a high priority for the Grattan site, 2012 is a target date to put this acreage into production.
- c. **Expansion of the irrigation Area** – discussed viable options for parcels in addition to the old orchard
 - i. Two parcels at south end of current site – This is the area once used for migrant labor housing. It's township owned and contiguous to the current irrigation field.
 - ii. Adjacent Ag land - Heard option suggested to Frank by township board member to pursue off site irrigation, piping waters to nearby private lands west of Lincoln Lake Ave. Discussed concerns with this scheme involving permit compliance, location, and management.
- d. **Grattan Discharge Permit Compliance** – This stems from a DEQ request for specific information regarding the persistent high nitrate levels in the soils at the Grattan irrigation fields. Basically they are looking for a work plan to explain the high nitrates, whether they are coming off site or created on site. The installation of monitoring wells and a partial hydrogeological study completed by engineers will have to be performed. In the meantime, John Rydbeck has been in touch with the DEQ to get an extension for irrigation with the stipulation that the "old Orchard" site is up and running by next year. None the less the lagoons are still in a safe range for winter storage.

VII. New Business

- A. Financials** – Jim Fues presented the budget in the new BSA format, answered questions from Terry, Tom and Paul. Reviewed revenues and expenses, we need to trend less than 33% to remain on budget. Frank noted that our O&M expenses are running 28% less in 2009/2010 than previous years.
- B. Unidentified material** – Chris shared pictures of buried barrels found at the GVWWTF. The proper authorities were notified, two of the barrels were empty, one had a black sludge tar like substance. Most likely roofing tar, luckily nothing toxic.
- C. Dissatisfied Sewer Customer-** Reviewed communications from a Big Crooked Lake resident. Resident was not in attendance. Previously a dispute arose over a handout provided by John at a board meeting to help explain lagoon capacity. An error was discovered by the resident and foul play was called. John's intention was to help clarify and not muddy the waters. The committee expressed regret to IA that this has turned into a distraction that crossed personal boundaries. Frank reiterated that all citizen complaints or questions about the sewer system should be directed to himself.

VIII. Committee Communications

Next meeting September 20, 2011

7:45 pm adjourned.

Submitted by Jen Medema