

UTILITY COMMITTEE  
July 3, 2024  
9:30 a.m. Newburgh Council Chambers

Committee Members

Steve Shoemaker, Utility Commissioner  
Leanna Hughes, Council Member  
Russell Powell, WWTF Superintendent  
Susan Helms, Utility Office Manager  
Acting Board Member, Andrea Balboni

Advisory Members

Chris Wischer, Attorney  
Drew Flamion, Engineer

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**Petitions and Comments from Citizens Present**

No citizens present.

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**Consent Agenda**

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1. Monthly Tracking Report
2. Inspection Status Report
3. Sewer Repairs Report
4. Tap Report
5. Financial Report
6. Monthly Sewer Adjustment
7. Approval of June 5, 2024 Minutes

Motion: Russell Powell moved to approve the consent agenda.

Motion seconded: Susan Helms

Discussion: No additional discussion.

Motion passed unanimously.

**Committee Discussion Items**

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**Wastewater Treatment Facility Superintendent, Russell Powell**

**1. Request for recommendation to Council to purchase fencing for Victoria LS. The existing solid vinyl fence has sustained wind damage three times since being installed. Replacing with a chain link should allow the wind to pass through the fence without damage. Tri-State Fence Company. Costs: \$30,067.00**

Motion: Andrea Balboni moved to recommend to Council to approve replacing the fencing at Victoria Lift Station for \$30,067 by Tri-State Fence.

Motion seconded: Susan Helms

Discussion: Mr. Shoemaker asked how many quotes were obtained and Mr. Powell stated that three quotes were obtained. Mr. Powell also explained the existing solid vinyl fence had sustained wind damage three times since being installed and replacing with a chain link should allow the wind to pass through the fence without damage.

Motion passed unanimously.

**2. Request for recommendation to Council to approve CEI contract amendment 2024-13. This contract is to assist in land acquisition for various projects on an hourly as-needed basis. The engineers routinely provide easement descriptions and exhibits for the legal team to approach property owners for land acquisition. This will include on-site meetings, assistance with negotiations, and minor design changes as needed. This contract will operate similar to our capacity studies where services are requested by the Wastewater Superintendent as needed. If costs are expected to exceed spending limits, these items are submitted for approval through UC.**

Motion: Susan Helms moved to recommend to Council to approve CEI contract 2024-13 to assist with land acquisition for various projects on an hourly as-needed basis.

Motion seconded: Andrea Balboni

Discussion: The engineers routinely provide easement descriptions and exhibits for the legal team to approach property owners for land acquisition. This will include on-site meetings, assistance with negotiations, and minor design changes as needed. This contract will operate similarly to our capacity studies where services are requested by the Wastewater Superintendent as needed. If costs are expected to exceed spending limits, these items are submitted for approval through the Utility Committee and Council. Motion passed unanimously.

### **3. Update on emergency repair on 30” pipe near WWTP**

Mr. Powell stated this will be around \$10,000 below the last estimate. The pipe is in the ground and waiting on testing.

### **4. Powers Place and Colonial Hills Recalibration Study**

The study revealed concerning findings. The existing pump capacity stands at 660 gallons per minute, while the anticipated requirement is 1,100 gallons per minute. To address this, an additional attenuated diesel pump at the Powers Lift Station is planned, which will boost the flow to 1,000 gallons per minute. Fortunately, no overflows have been reported so far. To further investigate, smoke testing will be conducted to identify any inflow and infiltration issues. Additionally, there has been some interest in new construction in this area.

Motion: Andrea Balboni moved to recommend to Council to approve adding a sound-attenuated diesel pump to Powers Lift Station for a cost not to exceed \$70,000.

Motion seconded: Susan Helms

Discussion: This is due to the findings of the Powers and Colonial Hills Lift Station Recalibration Study. The current pump capacity is 660 gallons per minute and the expected need is 1,100 gallons per minute. The additional pump will bring it up to 1,000 gallons per minute. Mr. Flamion stated there was minimal inline storage available that would also help the situation, but until a more permanent fix was available, the additional sewer taps should be limited in that area.

Motion passed unanimously.



## **Engineer Report, Drew Flamion**

### **1. WW Flow EQ project – Discussion on Pre-Purchase of Equipment under Engineering**

Mr. Flamion presented the Committee with information concerning equipment procurement options for the Waste Water Flow EQ Basin project due to the large equipment that would be necessary. The 3 options that were discussed were contractor-selected, preselected, and owner-purchased. He went into detail that there were pros and cons with all 3 options. The committee agreed that the preselected option was the best option for the Town. The equipment would be preselected and available during the bid process. Mr. Flamion stated that a team would be put together and a panel would be selected for the process.

### **Utility Chairman, Steve Shoemaker**

None

### **Town Attorney Report, Chris Wischer**

Mr. Wischer reported that he had been contacted twice in the last week regarding subdivision recordings in Warrick County. The contractors were asking for a consent agreement, hoping it would be just a simple matter that Newburgh Sewer could provide a letter stating that they consent to the dedication of additional right-of-way for Vann Road and the additional right-of-way will remain subject to the existing sanitary sewer easement that was already recorded. Mr. Wischer was not comfortable proceeding with this letter until further investigation was completed. He wanted to find a way to make sure that the utility easements were caught before this issue presented itself again. Mr. Shoemaker stated that he would like Mr. Wischer to take his time and to present what was best for the Town.

### **Acting Town Manager – Andrea Balboni**

None

### **Utility Manager, Susan Helms**

#### **1. Financial Report**

Mrs. Helms stated that the operating account balance was \$6,545,588.54

#### **2. Credit card fees**

Mrs. Helms stated that currently, there is a \$3.50 charge for a convenience fee on credit cards no matter the amount of the bill. She stated in the last 3 months, the Utility Office has had an increase in the amount charged on credit cards by commercial properties. The office has 16 businesses that charge by credit cards. Those charges have totaled an average of \$44,500 per month. The office is collecting only .13% which is \$56.00 in fees from these businesses. It is costing the office 2.50% - 2.75% in fees which is approximately \$1200 and more each month for credit card fees.

The office has approximately 10-15 residential accounts a month that make payments on credit cards for \$500.00 or more. These payments are usually paying 4-6 months of sewer bills. The Utility Office has approximately 1900 customers paying by credit card each month. The \$3.50 fee pays for most of the fees when charges are under \$500.00. Ms. Helms ask the committee to consider adjusting the fees for the credit cards.

Motion: Steve Shoemaker moved to recommend to Council to approve a 3% credit card processing fee for credit card transactions of \$500 or more with an effective date of September 1, 2024.

Motion seconded: Russell Powell

Discussion: The utility office is being charged higher fees for these transactions. The credit card transaction fee for under \$500 will remain at \$3.50.

Motion passed unanimously.

### 3. E-checks

Ms. Helms also stated that the Utility Office has no charge on e-check as a service to Utility customers. The office has over 1150 customers paying by e-check now. The cost of the service is \$3.21 per e-check. This is approximately \$3700 per month. The actual cost for the first 6 months of 2024 is \$22,017.39. A fee of \$2.00 would help the office still offer a less costly option for payment than the credit card fee of \$3.50 and will help reduce the cost the office is paying on e-checks.

Motion: Steve Shoemaker moved to recommend to Council to approve a \$2.00 processing fee for electronic check transactions with an effective date of September 1, 2024.

Motion seconded: Russell Powell

Discussion: This is due to the fees being charged to the utility office for the processing of each electronic check.

Motion passed unanimously

Motion: Andrea Balboni moved to adjourn the meeting.

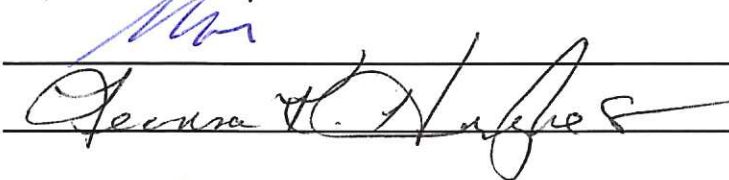
Motion seconded: Russell Powell

Discussion: No additional discussion.

Motion passed unanimously.

Approved this 7<sup>th</sup> day of August, 2024.

  
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“Persons with disabilities or non-English speaking persons who wish to attend a public meeting or hearing and need assistance should contact Town Manager, at Town Hall, 23 W Jennings St., Newburgh, IN 47629 or 812-853-1720 not later than one (1) week prior to any meeting or hearing. Every effort will be made to make reasonable accommodations for any such person or persons.”