

Town of Hague
Sewer Asset Management Committee Meeting
1/13/2016

Members present: Edna Frasier (Supervisor), Ginger Kuenzel (Town Board), Jim Beaty (public member), Chris Navitsky (public member), Phil Smith (public member), Diane Trudeau (Assistant Budget Officer), Joe McDowell (Waste Water Treatment Plant Operator), Steve Grimm (Rural Water, Facilitator).

Next meeting: Wednesday, February 10, 2016, 3 pm

Homework: Continue reviewing sewer law

New action items:

- **All Committee members** – Continue reviewing sections of sewer law.
- **Jim and Ginger** – Talk to Tim Costello about past process for installation permitting. Create flow chart.
- **Steve** – Ask Jamie Herman to revise energy-efficiency audit report to reflect Ambit rebate.

Issues discussed:

- Edna announced that the Town Board approved a resolution to allow Hague to submit an application to be part of the municipal sewage system asset management pilot program.
- Since the last meeting, Joe, Chris, Phil, Diane and Ginger worked on filling out the application. The Committee discussed and refined the wording for the needs statement, which is part of the application. Chris will send Ginger wording about the complexity of the system, which she will incorporate into the needs statement and send to other committee members for final review. The deadline for filing the application is January 20.
- The Committee discussed the energy-efficiency report done by Rural Water. The report suggested that the Town consider researching kw/h prices for energy since we may be paying more than the average rate. Edna and Diane noted that the information about the kw/h cost of power in the report is misleading since the Town received a rebate from Ambit. Steve will ask Jamie Herman, who performed the energy audit, to revise the report to reflect this rebate and resend it. The Committee agreed that, in light of the rebate, and the Town's plan to move to solar power in the near future, it doesn't make sense at this point to change energy suppliers. The other suggestion was to install variable frequency drives for digester aerators, which could save energy. However, Joe pointed out that we also need to have funds to purchase back-up equipment. We need to balance whether it makes more sense to spend available funds on reliability (back-up equipment) or on equipment that could improve efficiency. NYSERDA provides rebates for equipment that improves energy efficiency. We should determine the process for getting this rebate: select a VF drive that is energy-efficient and call NYSERDA to ask if it would qualify. Joe knows a person at NYSERDA named Kathleen, when we are ready to make the inquiry.
- The Committee continued reviewing the existing sewer law and made many changes. Ginger will incorporate the changes and send to Committee members. The Committee will resume its work on this at its next meeting. See page 3 for running list of issues that need to be addressed in the law.

Open action items:

- **Steve:** Provide information to the Committee about insurance that is available for the Town for issues such as freeze-ups.
- **Cedarwood:** Obtain a quote for fixing the SCADA system. There will be two parts to the quote: cost of a quick fix and cost for a longer-term fix.
- **Edna/Diane:** Ask Tim Costello to check pump stations at NLGYC and Oliver residence as pumps were off for a week or more after a power failure. (Done?)
- **Jim:** Talk to Edna about reaching out to Ticonderoga Supervisor/WWTP staff about developing a checklist for e-one pump issues when problems are reported. Perhaps they have a checklist, or would like to work with Hague to develop a list that both towns could use.
- **Edna:** Speak with Cedarwood about making recommendations on which grants to apply for in the future, helping us prioritize them and working with the Town on the applications. (For instance engineering study of collection system; also see 'radar screen' items).

Keep on our radar screen:

- Apply for grant to update infrastructure documentation and have GPS mapping done of collection system. DEC will require maps of Hague's waste water treatment collection system as part of the asset management plan. Steve's organization (Rural Water) provides GPS mapping services. We should also have as-built plans, which currently do not exist, as far as anyone knows. Suggestion was made to apply for a grant to get the mapping and documentation done.
- NYSERDA provides rebates for equipment that improves energy efficiency. Determine the process for getting this rebate: select a VF drive that is energy-efficient and call NYSERDA to ask if it would qualify. Joe knows a person at NYSERDA named Kathleen, when we are ready to make the inquiry.
- Tracking WWTP employees' time spent on various tasks, based on the following categories: collection system, plant O&M, homeowner calls. Best way for employees to track this is a daily journal that they keep with them.
- Ongoing communications: Develop communications materials for sewer district residents to ensure they have information about work of the Committee, the status of the plant and what is being done to address the issues. This will enable residents to understand the sewer rates and why they are increasing, and give them confidence that their money is being well managed. Include energy-efficiency audit in these communications.
- There is some documentation at the WWTP and also at the Dodd Hill pump station. It seems like these might be the only copies. Diane noted that we should have copies made to keep in the vault at the Community Center.
- Consider study of collection system (infiltration, freeze-ups, location of valves). Current study is only for plant and pump stations.
- From May meeting: Jim suggested that the Sewer Asset Management Committee could offer support to plant staff, for instance if operator trainee needs someone to go along to speak with homeowner. Or Chris or Jim or another Committee member could stop by the WWTP occasionally to show support, find out how we can be helpful, etc.
- Create database of grinder pumps, with detailed information.

Review of sewer law:

- Issues that need to be addressed: Who is the enforcer – ZEO (code enforcement officer) and/or plant operator? The Committee agreed that the plant operator identifies a violation and passes it along to the ZEO for enforcement. It must be a partnership. We should make this clear in the law. Diane said this is how it used to work. Forms exist for this. **To do:** Jim and Ginger will talk to Tim Costello to determine what process has been in the past, and what forms exist. Create a flow chart.
- What is permitting process for installation / enforcement of the process?
- Who owns the valves connecting the homeowner’s lateral to the sewer main?
- How to handle cost of grinder pump replacement (sewer district or homeowner?)
- Grease traps in restaurants and motels with housekeeping units – Need to look at whether language exists about this in the law. If not, we should add it.
- Should we add language about the need for rigid insulation of pipes?
- Should we add language in the law to require periodic pumping of septic tanks at properties where pump is installed in septic tank? Suggestion was made to perhaps require pump-out of septic tank any time that pump fails. Jim also suggested that we could require adding cement blocks to septic tanks so that they hold less effluent. Law should state that installation in septic tanks would not be allowed in the future, but existing ones are grandfathered, subject to the regulations stated above.
- Commercial: Need regulations for grease traps. Joe suggested requiring preventive maintenance for grease traps – for instance, pre-season. Steve noted that this then also needs to be part of the enforcement provisions. (From October meeting: Consider adding language about grease traps to Section 808: provide specs that are based, for instance, on seating capacity, number of fixtures putting wastewater into sewer, etc. Do commercial establishments need different pumps than residences have? If so, who pays the difference? All those in sewer district or the commercial establishment owner? Or is it a shared cost? Who pays if pump-out is required because of excessive grease? Sewer district or property owner?)
- Who is responsible for tank that the E-one pump is in? Clarify this in the sewer law.
- Section 1001 of sewer law addresses Enforcement Response Plan. Review what we have in this regard. Diane sent this plan out to members of the Committee after the October meeting.
- Who owns the valves connecting the homeowner’s lateral to the sewer main?
- How to handle cost of grinder pump replacement (sewer district or homeowner?)
- Check NYRWA forums to see if we can network with other towns regarding provisions of sewer law.

Next meetings:

Meetings are at 3 pm at the Community Center

Wednesday, February 10, 2016	Thursday, August 18, 2016
Wednesday, March 9, 2016	Thursday, September 8, 2016
Wednesday, April 13, 2016	Thursday, October 13, 2016
Thursday, May 12, 2016	Thursday, November 10, 2016
Thursday, June 16, 2016	Thursday, December 8, 2016
Thursday, July 14, 2016	