

Town of Hague
Sewer Asset Management Committee Meeting
9/21/2015

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: Monday, October 19, 3 pm

Issues discussed:

- During a conference call, the Committee spoke with Brian Suozzo of Cedarwood Engineering about the submission to DEC of the engineering study, which is due on October 6. Brian said he has everything he needs for this except for the narrative. The Sewer Asset Management Committee has been working on this narrative, also known as the System Management Improvement Plan. The Committee agreed to complete this narrative during the 9/21 meeting and send it to Brian. This will enable him to finalize the engineering study and submit it on time to DEC.
- During the remainder of the meeting, the Committee thus worked on finalizing the System Management Improvement Plan for the three key areas: product quality, financial viability, infrastructure stability. Ginger sent the three docs to Brian immediately after the meeting. The three docs can be found as an addendum to these minutes.

New action items:

- **Ginger:** Contact National Grid and ask for details about the energy-efficiency analysis that they can perform for the WWTP.
- **Phil and Ginger:** Perform an initial review of the current sewer law as it pertains to responsibility for enforcement.
- **Ginger:** Get copies of sewer laws from other towns such as Bolton, Lake George and Ticonderoga

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?)
- **Steve:** Have Jamie Hermann, an energy-efficiency expert from Rural Water, contact Edna.
- **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).

- **Edna:** Speak with Cedarwood about narrative about criticality and condition of items on critical asset list
- **Phil:** Check with Dan Anderson about an hour or cycle meter to use in analyzing issues such as inflow from ground water (see bullet point above about NLGYC and Oliver residence pumps).

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.
- 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.
- From January's minutes: Brian (from Cedarwood) will also work on listing the required O&M activities that need to be performed, including the frequency with which they need to be performed (daily, weekly, monthly, etc.). This will enable the Committee to create a calendar and populate it with the requisite tasks.
- 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.
- 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.
- Hague Sewer Law needs to be reviewed as soon as possible so that it can be enforced. Currently, it is not clear who is responsible for enforcement. List of items to clarify/add to/amend in sewer law (maintain an ongoing list, adding to it as items arise)
 - 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?)
 - Enforcement of law (who is responsible?)
- 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.

Meeting schedule for remainder of 2015

All meetings are at 3 pm at the Community Center

Monday, October 19

Monday, November 16

Monday, December 14

Addendum follows...

SYSTEM MANAGEMENT IMPROVEMENT PLAN WORKSHEET

Instructions:

- ✓ List your top three priority management areas – these should be drawn from the self assessment activity.
- ✓ List the improvement actions that you will undertake to address the priority management areas – you should have at least one action for each priority management area (actions may address multiple management areas).
- ✓ Fill out the details in the table below for each improvement action separately (i.e., one table per action).

Priority Management Areas:

1. Financial Viability
2. Infrastructure Stability
3. Product Quality

Improvement Action: Financial Viability

Description:

✓ Action:

1. Develop an asset management plan
2. Begin implementation of the asset management plan
3. Identify outside funding sources to assist in funding the asset management plan
4. Conduct an energy audit to identify possible cost savings in system operation
5. Explore staffing alternatives to minimize consultant fees for O&M activities

✓ Management Area addressed: Financial Viability

✓ Objective(s):

1. (Actions 1 &2) a: Satisfy the requirements of the NYSDEC consent order
b: Assure proper operation and maintenance of the system at the lowest possible cost to the property owners
3. Minimize the financial impact that implementing an asset management plan will have on the property owners
4. a: Reduce energy costs associated with system operation by identifying ways to improve energy efficiency
b: Explore opportunities for generating renewable energy (solar, wind, etc.)
5. Reduce or eliminate costs associated with consultants performing routine O&M activities

Timeline:✓ Start date:

Action 1: October 1, 2014

Action 2: December 1, 2015 (subject to NYSDEC's approval of submitted asset management plan)

Action 3: September 1, 2015

Action 4: September 1, 2015

Action 5: September 1, 2015

✓ Milestones:

Action 1: Monthly until asset management plan is submitted to and approved by NYSDEC

Action 2: Review asset management plan annually and revise/update as needed

Action 3: Quarterly review of funding assistance applications

Action 4: December 2015 - Present energy audit proposals to Town Board

January 2016 – Award energy audit contract

Action 5: December 2015 – Present staffing proposals/options to Town Board periodically as needed

(Note: Town Board approved hiring the new Chief Operator mid-August 2015)

Ongoing - Begin implementation of approved staffing option (new Chief Operator started work in August 2015).

✓ Target completion date:

Action 1: December 1, 2015 (subject to NYSDEC's approval of submitted asset management plan)

Action 2 : Continuous

Action 3: Continuous

Action 4: 2016

Action 5: Continuous

Responsible Party (or Parties):

✓ Town Board

✓ Asset management committee

✓ WWTP chief operator

✓ Engineers

✓ Technical assistance providers (NYRWA)

✓ Energy audit contractor

✓ Funding agencies (USDA Rural Development, NYSEFC, others)

Relevant Resources (on-hand or needed):

✓ On Hand:

- Engineers
- Technical assistance providers (NYRWA)
- Rural and Small Systems Guidebook to Sustainable Utility Management Appendix III “Resources for Rural and Small Systems”

✓ Needed:

- Funding assistance
- Energy audit contractor
- Information about operations in other small rural systems

Challenges to Address:

- ✓ The public response to the asset management plan
- ✓ Making the asset management plan affordable
- ✓ Finding sources of affordable funding
- ✓ Developing a staffing strategy that is affordable and adequately addresses the needs of the Town

Review Process:

Performance indicators or measures:

1. Milestone and completion dates met and/or revised
2. List of supplemental funding sources explored/applications submitted
3. A budget that moves towards sustainable operations and maintenance with a minimum financial impact on property owners

Status reports and updates frequency/cycle:

1. Review/update asset management plan – annually
2. Review/revise rates – annually
3. Review status of supplemental funding opportunities
4. Develop budget based on review of the asset management plan, rate review and status of supplemental funding opportunities – annually

Other Notes:

1. **This is an ongoing improvement plan.**
2. **Ongoing communications with stakeholders, including sewer users. This includes annual status report (can be mailed to sewer users as well).**

SYSTEM MANAGEMENT IMPROVEMENT PLAN WORKSHEET

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- ✓ List your top three priority management areas – these should be drawn from the self-assessment activity.
- ✓ List the improvement actions that you will undertake to address the priority management areas – you should have at least one action for each priority management area (actions may address multiple management areas).
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Priority Management Areas:

1. Financial Viability
2. Infrastructure Stability
3. Product Quality

Improvement Action: Infrastructure Stability

Description:

✓ Action:

1. Inventory critical assets
2. Inventory spare parts/supplies/tools
3. Develop a plant specific operations and maintenance (O&M) plan
4. Develop a policy/plan for the O&M and repair/replacement of E-one grinder pumps
5. Develop and implement a sewer use law that specifically addresses E-one grinder pump use
6. Explore options for treatment/disposal of sludge (liquid and dried)

✓ Management Area addressed: Product Quality

✓ Objective(s):

1. Provide information required for sustainable waste water infrastructure management. Listing the critical assets, current condition, remaining useful life, current value and replacement costs will allow for proper funding for operations, maintenance, repair and replacement of the assets
2. Maintain an adequate supply of spare parts and supplies as well as assuring the proper tools are on hand to perform maintenance activities to extend the useful life of the assets and minimize asset down time
3. Provide guidance on the proper operation and maintenance procedures specific to the waste water infrastructure. SPDES testing requirements and frequency as well as equipment O&M procedures and frequency should be included
4. Assure the E-one grinder pumps are being operated and maintained in a fiscally responsible manner.
5. Provide guidance to the homeowners on proper use of the E-one grinder pumps as well as provide protection and enforcement capabilities to the Town in cases of mis-use

6. Minimize the financial impact of sludge treatment and disposal on the O&M budget

Timeline:

✓ Start date:

Action 1: October 2014

Action 2: September 2015

Action 3: May 2015

Action 4: October 2015

Action 5: January 2016

Action 6: December 2014

✓ Milestones:

Action 1: May 2015 – Consultants submit asset listing to the Town and NYSDEC to satisfy condition 5 of the consent order

October 2015 – Consultants submit final asset listing to the Town and NYSDEC in the form of a preliminary engineering report (PER) to satisfy condition 4 of the consent order

Action 2: January 2016 – 50% complete spare parts/supplies/tools list

Action 3 – December 2016 – Submit draft O&M plan to the Board (utilizing a pilot O&M plan prior to that date)

Action 4: January 2016 – Select appropriate software

October 2016 – Testing and adapting is completed

December 2016 – All historical data is input and system is accepting new data

Action 5: May 2016 – Draft sewer use law complete and ready for review by Asset Management Cmte

August 2016 – Public hearing

December 2016 – Implementation of sewer use law

Action 6: October 2015 – Consultants submit PER with sludge treatment and disposal options

✓ Target completion date:

Action 1: October 2015 (May 2015 milestone has been met)

Action 2: June 2016

Action 3: February 2016

Action 4: February 2016

Action 5: February 2017

Action 6: Dependent on funding available

Responsible Party (or Parties):

- ✓ Town Board
- ✓ Asset management committee
- ✓ WWTP chief operator
- ✓ Engineers
- ✓ Technical assistance providers (NYRWA)

Relevant Resources (on-hand or needed):

✓ On Hand:

- Engineers
- Technical assistance providers (NYRWA)
- Equipment manufacturers literature
- Asset management committee
- Rural and Small Systems Guidebook to Sustainable Utility Management Appendix III “Resources for Small and Rural Systems”

✓ Needed:

- Sewer use model for guidance
- Information on E-one grinder pump use and repair/replacement strategies from other small rural systems
- Information on sludge processing/disposal from other small rural systems

Challenges to Address:

- ✓ Funding the actions to achieve the objectives
- ✓ Proper use of E-one grinder pumps
- ✓ Public acceptance of the management plan

Review Process:

1. Performance indicators or measures:

- Milestone and completion dates met and/or revised
- Reduction in E-one grinder pump service calls
- Public feedback regarding the management plan
- Budget that meets the needs of the utility with the least financial impact on homeowners

2. Status reports and updates frequency/cycle:

- Review/update critical asset inventory – annually
- Review/update spare parts/supplies/tools inventory – annually
- Review/update O&M plan – annually (as needed)
- Review/update E-one grinder pump policy – Every 2 years (or as needed)
- Review/update sewer use law every 5 years (or as needed)
- Chief Operator report to the Board - Monthly

Other Notes:

1. **This is an ongoing improvement plan.**
2. **Ongoing communications with stakeholders, including sewer users. This includes annual status report (can be mailed to sewer users as well).**

SYSTEM MANAGEMENT IMPROVEMENT PLAN WORKSHEET

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Priority Management Areas:

1. Financial Viability
2. Infrastructure Stability
3. Product Quality

Improvement Action: Product Quality

Description:

- ✓ Action:
 1. Achieve consistent compliance with the SPDES permit
 2. Reduce the number of treatment plant “upsets”
- ✓ Management Area addressed: Product Quality
- ✓ Objective(s):
 1. Operate and maintain the WWTP properly to reduce the number and frequency of SPDES permit violations
 2. Operate and maintain the WWTP properly to reduce the number and frequency of treatment plant “upsets”

Timeline:

- ✓ Start date: Immediately
- ✓ Milestones:
 - Objective 1: Monthly
 - Objective 2: Daily
- ✓ Target completion date: Continuous.

Responsible Party (or Parties):

- ✓ WWTP chief operator
- ✓ Town Board
- ✓ Engineers
- ✓ Technical assistance providers (NYRWA)

Relevant Resources (on-hand or needed):

- ✓ On Hand:
 - Reference manuals on treatment plant O&M
 - Engineers
 - Technical assistance providers
 - NYSDEC
- ✓ Needed:
 - Stable treatment plant staff (experienced and certified at the appropriate grade levels)

Challenges to Address:

- ✓ Hiring and retaining qualified and knowledgeable personnel
- ✓ Funding treatment plant upgrades to achieve the objectives

Review Process:

1. Performance indicators or measures:

Objective 1:

- ✓ Monthly SPDES compliance testing laboratory results

Objective 2:

- ✓ Daily process control data
- ✓ Documentation of process control adjustments made based on process control data

2. Status reports and updates frequency/cycle:

Objective 1:

- ✓ Monthly NYSDEC BMW reports
- ✓ Monthly DMR's

Objective 2:

- ✓ Monthly operator report to the board
- ✓ Immediate notification (verbal followed by written) to the Town Supervisor/sewer board member of any abnormal conditions/laboratory results/process control tests/equipment failure that may impact treatment plant performance.

Other Notes:

1. This is an ongoing improvement plan.
2. Ongoing communications with stakeholders, including sewer users. This includes annual status report (can be mailed to sewer users as well).