

Hague Town Board
Sewer Public Informational Meeting
August 18, 2015
7 pm at Hague Community Center

Members present: Supervisor Edna Frasier, Town Board members Ginger Kuenzel, and Steve Ramant.

Absent: R. Meola and M. Fitzgerald II

Sewer Asset Management Committee: NYS Rural Water representative Steve Grimm, Committee member Phil Smith and Committee member Jim Beaty.

Committee members not able to be present were Chris Navitsky and Diane Trudeau.

Introduced to the audience was the new Waste Water Treatment Plant Chief Operator, Joseph McDowell.

A slide show presentation was given along with verbal presentations by committee members.

Ginger Kuenzel led it off with the introduction saying, "We understand that you want to know that your money is being used wisely." There are two sewer districts - #1 built in 2003 and #2 built in 2009, with a total of 431 EDUs.

Jim Beaty said, "It is a small plant and has to be very efficient to be cost effective." The Town is responsible for in the equipment at the grinder pump stations and for the lines from the road to the plant. He noted that Supervisor Frasier has been the "anchor in the storm" and has had to deal with the issues of the age of the plant, the collection system and the staff turnover. He stated that one of the most important things for the efficient working of the plant is communication. One of the conditions to satisfy for the consent order from the DEC is to reduce the excessive levels of the nitrates and phosphorus. The FUND for Lake George has awarded us a grant for \$10,000 for mixers to help solve the nitrate problem.

Steve Grimm, an engineer with NYS Rural Water, has been moderating the committee at no cost to the Town. He said they have been working on three areas - product quality, financial viability and infrastructure and are developing an asset management plan (required by the DEC).

Phil Smith noted that the Town will maintain the pumps and they are working on budgeting. They have been finding ways to reduce costs, for instance by cutting energy costs, and have also reduced the amount of sludge that needs to be removed from the plant, thereby also saving costs. They are also looking at bringing pump maintenance back "in house." Despite successful cost saving measures, rates have increased and will likely increase further. This is because rates were never high enough to cover all the maintenance and operations. In addition, the town has received some grants for the sewer districts and will continue to explore grant opportunities in the future.

Ginger Kuenzel summarized the meeting and noted that minutes of their committee meetings are on the Town website.

The meeting was then opened up for questions from the audience.

Ken (Engler) - Have there been improvements in how the property owners have been using the pumps? A: Edna - yes.

Rich Mayer - What is the timeline for buying new pumps? A: Edna - We are testing them.

Mike Strutz - comment: Heat tape connected at the pole next to his house did not appear to be working as the status lights were all dark.

Q: Are you in compliance? A: Not yet, we are working on it.

Q: What are the risks for residents by not being in compliance? A: Fines.

Q: What are the risks of the deferred maintenance? A: Joe McDowell - It is manageable.

Sandy Warriner - What about the phosphorus and nitrates? A: The problem was in the way the plant was designed and the engineering firm has come up with a plan using the mixer(s).

Q: Where is the sludge going? A: To Ticonderoga

Gene Moran - What is the violation policy? A: Sewer law needs to be changed and that is the next thing that needs to be done.

Q: How many are needed to run the system? A: 1 1/2 people. Edna - We are over budget due to repairs. The consent order and staffing (using an outside engineering firm) have cost \$.

Q: Why does a 3 month user pay same fees as a year round user? A: It is a shared system. The service is available to everyone year round.

Ro Meeker - Can we pay quarterly? Please look into it.

Q: Who is doing the maintenance? A: In house option, not sure yet. Ginger - May be able to have shared services.

Miles Peterson - What record keeping is being done on # of pumps replaced and staffing? A:

Lari Dhein comment - Should give us a report on the # of incidences.

Mary Lorensen - Why are you flushing the system? It seems counterintuitive.

Fact noted: There are 68 lots not connected in sewer district #1.

Cathy Clark - What is the over budget estimate for 2016? Have you set up an escrow account? (maximum allowed by state is \$1025)

John Zamrock - What percent of the design capacity are you using? A: No flow reaches the design capacity.

John Zamrock comment - You are doing a better job of responding to odor.

Jill Stull - Every time the truck comes to the Lakeshore pump station there is a terrible odor.

Judy Stock - Who is working on the budget? A: Joe McDowell is working with Diane Trudeau.

Judy Stock - You have been able to accomplish a lot since establishing the sewer asset management committee. Now what will happen to your committee? A: It will continue.

Respectfully submitted,

Judy Stock
Acting Clerk