

**CHERRY VALLEY SEWER DISTRICT
BOARD OF SEWER COMMISSIONERS' MEETING**

VIRTUAL MEETING MINUTES

September 9, 2021

7:00 P.M.

- I. CALL TO ORDER Chairman Manseau called the meeting to order at 7:00 P.M. with the following present:

Donald Manseau, Chairman

LCAC, 2 subscribers, 1 nonsubscriber

Robert H. Lemieux, Sr. Commissioner

Michael DellaCava, Commissioner

Benjamin J. Morris, Superintendent

Jennifer Wood, Treasurer

Cheryl Balkus, Recording Secretary

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- A. **August 12, 2021** Commissioner DellaCava motioned to approve the meeting minutes of August 12, 2021. Seconded by Chairman Manseau. All in favor. Approved.
- B. **August 23, 2021** Commissioner DellaCava motioned to approve the meeting minutes of August 23, 2021. Seconded by Commissioner Lemieux. All in favor. Approved.

III. FINANCE

- A. Approve Warrant of August 12, 2021 - Commissioner Lemieux motioned to approve the warrant of August 12, 2021. Seconded by Commissioner DellaCava. All in favor. Approved. \$5,786.45

Commissioner Lemieux asked to explain to the listening audience who Spinelli and Mission Communications is on the warrant.

Per Superintendent Morris Spinelli is the firm that we use to do the annual audit.

This is the first payment of \$2,922.50 to them for annual audit.

Mission Communications is a web-based monitoring system for alarms, flow meters, flow rates. Alerts are sent if there is an issue. This is an annual fee.

- C. Approve Warrant of September 2, 2021- Commissioner DellaCava motioned to approve the warrant of September 12, 2021. Seconded by Commissioner Lemieux. All in favor. Approved. \$3,701.75

Commissioner Lemieux asked who Helgerson is that is listed on this warrant in the amount of \$1,650.00.

Per Superintendent Morris this is a company from Charlton, MA who we hired for their vac truck. Annually they vac out all grease and concentration in the wet wells and disposed of at the Upper Blackstone. This allows to keep our pumps to operate in a more efficient way. They were used twice due to a large grease blockage.

It is grease / sludge from cooking fats and oils flushed down into the system. It develops chunks and can cause the pumps to malfunction.

- C. Approve Warrant of September 9, 2021 - Commissioner Lemieux motioned to approve the warrant of September 9, 2021. Seconded by Commissioner DellaCava. All in favor. Approved. \$1,824.44

D. USDA Update – Per Superintendent Morris a lack of communications on USDA end with our financial advisor. He was informed yesterday that our loan specialist has been changed. The replacement has reached out to us to review the terms, interest rate with a meeting to be held next week. The original goal was to have this wrapped up the end of September. We do not know if this will still happen and when he knows more, he will communicate back to the Commissioners. It is still moving forward, and we will keep pushing.

IV. ADMINISTRATION – Nothing to Report

V. Communications

A. LIHWAP (Low Income Household Water Assistance Program)

CVRWD and 1,800 other water wastewater utilities attended a Webinar Meeting that was held by the Offices of Community Services about LIHWAP (Low Income Household Water Assistance Program). The program is overseen by the Division of Energy Assistance and provides funds to assist low-income households with water and wastewater bills.

LIHWAP grants are available to States, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, U.S. Territories, Federally and state-recognized Indian Tribes and tribal organizations.

Prior to COVID there was a five-year study being done because of the need of assistance for water and wastewater bills. Then with COVID Congress recognized the need for federal assistance for States to Secure Funding and appropriated \$638 million in the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2021 and an additional \$500 million in the American Rescue Plan.

The top priority benefits are for households for disconnected homes, those at risk of disconnection and the benefits will be paid directly to the utility.

There is the Grantee > States > Territories > Tribes
Money is determined by percentages and should be worked similar as the LIHEAP (Low Income Energy Assistance Program) or CCA (Community Action Agencies). All States awarded funds, then the State determines how the funding is spread out

When more information becomes available, we will make it a point to post on our website and include a notice in with the bill.

B. OPERATIONS – Per the Superintendent Helgerson was hired to vac lift stations to remove the grease. Over a couple of days, we received day and after-hours alarm calls in the Towtaid area. We did a full diagnostic, rebuilt and still was not working. Identified build up in the wet well that was tracked out through the manholes that comes into the station. It was here for some time and ended up being a level indicator issue. Hayes Pump was brought in to look at and determined sensor issue with the air bubbler that was changed out, recalibrated and then we dealt with the grease build up by having Helgerson in with their larger jetter. Since all completed corrected the issue. This took approximately two weeks to resolve.

Commissioner Lemieux asked if this is the same area that we have had previous issues of people putting items in the system. Per the Superintendent confirmed, flushable wipes an issue for many sewer districts. The wipes collect and stick together as giant rags that wrap up the pump and has issues with it. The pipe to the pump is approximately 26 feet into the ground, we could change out impellers one worn but then leads to changing the core with a price of approximately \$3,500.00 each time. We will see where the funds are to purchase another core. Of the four stations of this style, we have two and the other two have grinder pumps much like the E-1 ejector pumps that must grind up and push it out to the sewer main. Five-six years ago with the prior Superintendent it was researched to change out the two pumps and the cost then was approximately \$30,000.00. The impellers have been changed out twice in 2019 and this is great. There are at least 75 subscribers that feed into this station. The other station of similar size is the McCarthy Ave. The difference of the two is elevation. The other two stations are on Redfield and Willow Hill.

July and August 15 inches of rain measured into our meter pit. This is 6.1 million gallons of flow to the City of Worcester. As previously mentioned, we have identified pulsating flows in neighborhoods indicates that subscribers have sump pumps illegally connected to the system. We are paying for water that subscribers are putting in the system and causing substantial money to district. We spend normally \$18,000 and its more than twice the amount. He would like to develop a plan to go to each of the homes to inspect, work on having them disconnected from the system and educate the customers.

Commissioner Lemieux suggests having something in the bills to show the associated dollar amount with these sump pumps illegally pumping into the system.

Per the Superintendent for FY20 it costs the district \$66,520 / 440 subscribers is approximately \$152.00 per customer and for FY18 \$186,000.00 and was about \$425.00 per year per customer. Per Commissioner Lemieux there has been substantial time and money that has been done to bring down the I/I (Inflow Infiltration) of the manholes. The difference is by the Subscribers and need to do their fair share.

Per Commissioner DellaCava suggests doing the smoke test and identify who is tied in. Per the Superintendent he will need to know what the associated costs are to do this. Per Commissioner DellaCava maybe we need to add an additional surcharge to the customers sewer bills and explain that the reason that there are customers that are illegally connected to the system causing the increase. Commissioner Lemieux agrees and supports this idea. Per the Superintendent he will need to confirm with our bylaws, rules and regs that we can legally do. Commissioners Dellacava and Lemieux suggests to just put a notice in with the bills to explain what it is costing, and we will be charging for the illegal connections.

VI. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

A. Approval of Next Meeting Date – Commissioner DellaCava motioned to hold the next Virtual Sewer Meeting October 14, 2021 at 7:00 P.M. Seconded by Chairman Manseau. All in favor. Approved.

VII. ADJOURNMENT – Commissioner DellaCava motioned to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Commissioner Lemieux. All in favor. Approved. Meeting adjourned at 8:12 P.M.