

**UTILITIES COMMITTEE MINUTES
FEBRUARY 2, 2016**

The Utilities Committee meeting was held on February 2, 2016 at North Royalton City Hall, 14600 State Road. The meeting was called to order at 6:38 p.m.

PRESENT: Committee Members: Chair Paul Marnecheck, Vice Chair John Nickell, Dan Kasaris; Council: Larry Antoskiewicz, Gary Petrusky, Dan Langshaw, Steve Muller; Administration: Mayor Robert Stefanik, Wastewater Supt. Tim Tigie, City Engineer Mark Schmitzer, Service Director Nick Cinquepalmi; Other: Lou Krzepina.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Moved by Mr. Kasaris, seconded by Mr. Nickell to **approve the January 5, 2016 Utilities Committee minutes.**
Yeas: 3. Nays: 0. **Motion carried.**

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

1. Inflow/Infiltration of storm water

No update.

2. WWTP “A” Standby Generator Replacement Project

Mr. Tigie said that the project schedule states that we will receive the new generator in early March, and by mid to late April the contract will be closed out.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Vehicle Purchase – Wastewater Department

Mr. Tigie said that they auctioned off their 2000 Dodge Dakota and are looking to replace it with a 2016 Ford 150. This will be purchased through the Ohio Cooperative Purchasing Program for a cost of \$25,182.37. He said that they currently have a 2010 and 2012 F-250. Moved by Mr. Kasaris, seconded by Mr. Nickell to **recommend approval of this purchase to Council.** Yeas: 3. Nays: 0. **Motion carried.**

2. Sludge Press Replacement, WWTP “A”

Mr. Tigie provided pictures and a presentation on the two current sludge presses that they have and the one they are looking to purchase. He said the one that they run 90% of the time is 10 years old. They run it about 30 hours per week and it runs fine. He explained that a sludge press takes the sludge that is 1% solid and 99% water and makes it about 20% solids and 80% water and when it comes off the press it takes on a cake like consistency. He said that the press we are looking to replace is 29 years old. It is limited in use and is currently used only as a backup. It doesn't dewater as well as it should and this means that we have to haul more water, less solids to the site in Barberton which costs more to dispose of. Mr. Antoskiewicz asked if this new press would produce more than the 20% solids. Mr. Tigie said it will press more volume which means if we send more volume through it, we will get more tonnage of solids. He said that if the 10 year old press has an operational issue, he is worried that we won't have a backup. Mr. Nickell asked if this press is a premade piece of equipment. Mr. Tigie said yes, but there are control panels around it, there is water around it, there is HVAC duct work in the way that will need to be removed. He said that it is not something that we can just go out and purchase and install; we need a design consultant/engineer to ensure that we didn't miss anything. Mr. Marnecheck asked if when this is installed, will the replacement generator still be the right type of generator for this press. Mr. Tigie said yes, the electrical power for these is actually minimal. There are small motors and what does most of the work is the hydraulic rollers. He said however, if we have a power failure, we do not run this equipment. We only run what needs to be run that that would be the pumps and air blowers for aeration. Mr. Nickell asked if the new press would become the primary press. Mr. Tigie said no, we will swap this with the oldest one. He said that he does not want to have two pieces of equipment wear out together. He said that the current pump could last another 19 years. He said they have a contractor that comes out every 3 years to perform heavy maintenance on this equipment at a cost of roughly \$7,000.00. Mr. Kasaris commented that he likes what we are doing so far this year with preventative maintenance. We finally have money to do this because we are running this like the utility it is and not using politics to run the department anymore. He said that he commends Mr. Tigie and the Mayor on what they are doing to make sure that the residents don't suffer because we haven't done our job and replace

equipment that should have been replaced. Mr. Tigie said that he agrees and stated that they are trying to keep up with their capital plan and to predict future maintenance which can be difficult to do. He said that the rate study and what happened in 2012 was critical to this utility. He said if this wouldn't have happened, we would never be able to do any of this. Mr. Tigie said that another rate study is necessary for next year. It should be done every five years. He said that the capital plan will be up to date at the end of this year for the 2017 budget. The rate study can then use this information, along with operating money, and those two together should create a new rate study that makes sense. Moved by Mr. Marnecheck, seconded by Mr. Kasaris to **recommend approval of this purchase to Council**. Yeas: 3. Nays: 0. **Motion carried.**

3. **Standby Emergency Generator Replacement, WWTP "B"**

Mr. Tigie said that Brown and Caldwell is also being selected for design, bidding and construction services to replace WWTP "B" generator. He said that this generator is 27 years old and the predictability is that this generator will fail soon, so now is the right time to do this. Moved by Mr. Kasaris, seconded by Mr. Nickell to **recommend approval of this purchase to Council**. Yeas: 3. Nays: 0. **Motion carried**

MISCELLANEOUS

Mr. Nickell said that a resident asked him if we have a minimum sewer rate charge. Mr. Tigie said that many utility bills are not just a rate, it's a maintenance fee, an administrative fee, a billing fee, etc. He said here in North Royalton, we do not do this. We have one rate and it is based on the amount of water used. It was set up that the minimum bill would be based on 1 mcf per quarter. If you use less than that, you still have to pay the 1 mcf minimum. He said that this equals 7,480 gallons of water. He said our rate structure includes everything: full treatment, local service, lift station services, etc., unlike the regional sewer district. They are not full treatment, they do not own and operate local sewers. So whoever is in the sewer district for sanitary sewage is also paying a local sewer fee to their city. This is all included in our rate structure. Mr. Tigie said that the Cleveland Division of Water charges homeowners around \$18.00 per quarter just because you have a water line going into your house. Mayor Stefanik said that Mr. Tigie brings up a good point about our sewer bills. He said that our rates are all inclusive, whereas surrounding communities charge their residents additional money for the maintenance of the sanitary lines. Brecksville, for example, is about \$150.00-\$200.00 per year. This is in addition to the rate that the regional sewer district charges. So when you factor everything in, our sewer rates are lower than the surrounding communities. He said that this is a message that doesn't get reported enough. Mayor Stefanik said that Mr. Tigie does a great job of keeping our costs down. He said that when he took office in 2008 he inherited a bankrupt sewer district where we were millions of dollars in debt because the former administration did not want to perform their duty as an elected official and increase the rates to cover the cost of operating the utility. Mr. Tigie said that in two years, we will have loans ending that were taken out 20 years ago, so we will be in a lot better shape in 2018. He said that if the rate study is done properly and factors this in, he predicts that the rates will stabilize and there may be no rate increase necessary for years.

ADJOURNMENT

Moved by Mr. Kasaris, seconded by Mr. Nickell to **adjourn the February 2, 2016 meeting**. Yeas: 3. Nays: 0. **Motion carried.**

Meeting adjourned at 6:59 p.m.