



CITY OF CORTLAND WASTEWATER TREATMENT FACILITY



Meeting Minutes

Date: 06/27/11

Time: 5:30 pm

**Conference Room,
Cortland Wastewater**

■ Members:

- Chairman John Troy – Present
- Vice Chair William Starr – Absent
- Commissioner Sally Horak – Absent
- Commissioner Todd Morris – Present
- Commissioner Paul Lorenzo – Present
- Village of McGraw Trustee – Absent
- Village of Homer Trustee – Present
- Bruce Adams, Chief Operator – Present
- Tom McCall, CPWOA President – Present

Meeting called to order at 5:30 pm.

Minutes from May 23, 2011 meeting for approval.

Motion to approve the minutes from May 23, 2011 meeting by Paul Lorenzo. Seconded by Todd Morris. **UNANIMOUS**

Plant Managers Report

for

June 27, 2011

(as written by Chief Adams)

Administration–

I contacted the person in Albany in charge of reviewing and approving the Chesapeake Bay Phase I reports. He stated the DEC did not intend that communities pay for large projects as part of the Phase I process, but that we would be married to the recommendations of any report we did submit. I called a number of other facilities within the Chesapeake watershed to find out what they had submitted. A number of them have been pushing back hard. One plant manager said he'd been told off the record to submit a report stating there was no low or no cost option for reducing nutrient loadings. That is the path we are going to follow. We are in discussions with an engineer at a small firm who is familiar with our facility.

We have finally moved our cellular phone service to Verizon Wireless. The switchover occurred on 6/7/11. We were the last City department not with Verizon. I am anticipating lower monthly bills.

The City has hired an outside attorney to negotiate the labor contract with the Professional Wastewater Operators Association. Hopefully, we'll now be able to progress to a workable contract.

On 6/13, the Common Council approved a reorganization of the department and changes to the job descriptions to reflect the new organizational structure. I had met with John Troy on 6/12 to discuss the reorganization and the job description changes. I would have preferred to discuss it with the Advisory Board before acting, but the need to get authorization to hire employees as quickly as possible meant not waiting for this evening.

Also on 6/13, the Common Council authorized promoting both Jim McCracken and Phil Opera from Laborer to Operator I. Jim and Phil had successfully passed their Grade 1A Wastewater Operator test on 6/10. Congratulations, Jim and Phil!

Also on 6/13, the Common Council authorized filling all vacant positions. I have already placed ads for one Operator Trainee/Operator I and two Maintenance Mechanics. I will wait until my appointment has been voted on by the Common Council to fill the Deputy Chief position. In the meantime, I continue to perform the functions of both Chief Operator and Deputy Chief Operator.

Also on 6/13, the Common Council voided the improper promotions and pay increases of Tom McCall and Ed Poole and the improper pay increase of Brian McCall. This action was initiated solely by the Common Council.

Sherry O'Brien did not place in the top three on the Senior Keyboard Specialist test, and therefore cannot be kept in the position more than 60 days after the list is established. Sherry's last day with us will be July 29. Sherry's performance has been exemplary and I've told her I'd be happy to give her a recommendation as she seeks new employment. I will begin interviewing from the Civil Service list this week or next.

Upon my request, Hugh Guider of Life Science Labs came to our site to give a training session on sampling and sample handling. Hugh did a great job and the crew and I found it very educational.

There were two DEC-required reports that had not gone in on time. On 5/26, our DEC inspector called to say the Toxicity Unit had not received any of our required toxicity testing information from 2010. I prepared a package and sent it out the next day. On 6/1, Sherry found a plant capacity report that had been due on 3/28. I called our inspector to let her know, then completed the form, got it signed by the interim Director of Administration, and mailed it out on 6/2.

Jacqueline Rios of the EPA was here on 6/8 and 6/9 to do an audit of our pretreatment program. In general it went very well. She noted some deficiencies in our data entry, as well as a failure to implement the recommendations regarding Pall Trinity included in the 2006 audit report. Sherry and I had a great deal of difficulty with the PreWin pretreatment database. The data entry screens are terrible and almost guarantee entry errors. We also started getting "database full" errors, which is ridiculous for a program our size. This is an orphan program and I am recommending acquisition of LinkoCTS as a replacement.

While here, Jacqueline also checked two dental labs for compliance with the Mercury Minimization program. She was careful to point out she had no jurisdiction and it was not a compliance inspection per se. However, it was incredibly valuable for me as an example of how to conduct a compliance inspection at a dental lab. As you know, our permit modification includes a mercury minimization requirement. This includes inspecting all dental labs within the collection system every five years.

There was a meeting between the City and Marietta on 6/22. It was a productive meeting and I believe we have found a way to move forward to allowing Marietta to resume discharging into the POTW. I will discuss this with Virginia Wong, our EPA pretreatment regulator.

Operations-

The tank cleaning upset of 5/10 which I told you about last month caused two DMR violations. We had a Settleable Matter violation for that day as well as a Suspended Solids Removal violation for the month. I'm actually a little surprised that that was the extent of the damage. As reported last month, our inspector did not seem too concerned by the incident.

We have gotten down to one each primary and secondary clarifier on line. We are also now down to three aeration basins on line. Our F/M ratio continues to be low, which is giving us a somewhat turbid effluent, but we are certainly still operating within our permit limitations.

With Gary Conklin's retirement, we were beginning to see a problem with off-shift alarm response. This has in the past been let run as a "whoever wants it gets it" thing, and Gary was generally willing to answer alarms that went unacknowledged by other staff. Without Gary, we were beginning to see alarms going unanswered for protracted periods of time. This is not an acceptable situation at a wastewater facility. This will eventually be resolved in contract negotiations, but for the time being, I have instituted a rotating "must answer" designated operator. The designated operator is free to find another operator to answer an alarm if they don't wish to, but if unable to do so, they need to acknowledge and answer the alarm. So far this is working out.

The City has been informed the Auburn facility, which had been accepting FSE grease trap waste, will no longer do so after the end of the month. This means we will need to begin accepting it here or we will start seeing it discharged into the collection system. I have been exploring options for accepting and treating this waste. If we can develop a successful system for accepting FSE grease, we may also be able to begin accepting septage. This would have two benefits: first, it's a revenue stream, and second, it can add BOD loadings, which would definitely help our summer F/M ratio.

Maintenance-

The BDP belt press installation is now complete and I have signed off on the final payment. We have determined the issues we are having with the belt press feed pumps are likely associated with the higher pressure we are asking of them. The short term answer is to continue tightening the set screws as needed. The long-term answer is to install pumps that are better designed to supply the pressure required to get the best performance out of this new belt press.

We have a proposal in hand from Alliance Energy to retrofit our lighting for energy savings. As proposed, the project would be paid over the course of three years using the energy cost savings. The payback period on this project is less than three years and after that would save an estimated \$10,000 per year.

I am still trying to get authorization from the City to move forward on the VFD replacement project. As previously described, this would allow us to replace almost all our VFDs for less than 7 cents on the dollar. Right now I am waiting for the interim Director of Administration to contact KJ Electric to ascertain for himself that the rebate program is as represented.

Bruce Adams
Acting Chief Operator

Motion to approve the Plant Manager's Report by Paul Lorenzo. Seconded by Todd Morris. **UNANIMOUS**

Finance: Bills: Paul Lorenzo asked if there was anything that the board needed to know about. Bruce stated that there isn't any for this month but next months report will show about \$1,100 in back invoices from Life Science. These are Invoices back from 2008, 2009 and 2010. Sherry stated that she investigated to see if the invoices in question were indeed paid or not. She requested the help of Connie Sorrells at City Hall to go back into '08 & '09 and try to find them in the City's system. Sherry was provided with a print out of those years and neither Sherry nor Connie could find where they had been paid. Bruce stated that he believes the budget line for the services discussed should be able to handle the additional cost. If there does become a problem Bruce stated he will request a transfer from finance. Paul stated that Bruce & Sherry should make sure that the services had been completed by the vendor. Sherry stated that she has requested the invoices be re-sent for our records.

Motion to approve the Bills by Paul Lorenzo. Seconded by Todd Morris. **UNANIMOUS**

Financial Statements: No questions or statements

Motion to approve the Financial Statements by Paul Lorenzo. Seconded by Todd Morris. **UNANIMOUS**

Sewer Grievance: Mr. Daniel J. Stoklosa – Out of State property owner. Property is being managed by Ithacor. Ithacor was the one who completed the grievance application. It is the facilities understanding that the property owner purchased the property without knowledge of the leak. It is also the facilities understanding that Ithacor has not been keeping Mr. Stoklosa apprised of the bill amounts.

John Troy made a note that the grievance request is for the 3rd and 4th quarter of 2010 even though the 1st quarter of 2011 is higher then the two quarter's the grievance spoke of. Paul Lorenzo stated he don't feel the grievance should be accepted due to the property owner not keeping track of his property even though he is located out of state. Todd Morris felt that additional information is needed before a decision can be made.

It was decided by the board to table this application due to not enough information. A letter will be sent the property owner and Ithacor requesting an itemized bill from the Plummer and an exact location of where the leak was. The board also asked Sherry to obtain additional information from the water department. Once the information has been obtained it will be considered again.

Motion to table until additional information is obtained by Todd Morris. Seconded by Paul Lorenzo. **UNANIMOUS**

New
Business: No New Business

Motion to move into Executive Session by Paul Lorenzo. Seconded by Todd Morris.
UNANIMOUS

Return from Executive Session.

Motion to adjourn.

Adjourned.

Respectfully submitted by:



Sherry O'Brien
City of Cortland WWTF