



## CITY OF CORTLAND WASTEWATER TREATMENT FACILITY



### *Meeting Minutes*

**Date: 8/27/12**

**Time: 5:30 pm**

**Conference Room,  
Cortland Wastewater**

■ **Members:**

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

Meeting called to order at 5:28 p.m.

Minutes from July 23, 2012, meeting for approval.

**Motion** to approve the minutes from July 23, 2012, meeting by Sally Horak. Seconded by Todd Morris.  
**UNANIMOUS**

**Plant Manager's Report:**

***Plant Managers Report***

for

**August 27, 2012**

(as written by Chief Adams)

**Administration–**

The initial rounds of treatability tests for Marietta effluent have been completed. Cedarwood reports the data is very positive. We plan to schedule a meeting with DEC in mid September to discuss the testing and get their input on the next rounds. We also have still to conduct the toxicity testing. The results of the treatability testing will inform the parameters used for the toxicity testing.

The Common Council on August 21 approved the bid for the blower project. We stepped up the schedule a little so we would have more time to complete the installation before bad weather sets in.

Our new maintenance mechanic, Phil Tryon, will also be our safety coordinator. Tom McCall, the previous safety coordinator, submitted a letter withdrawing from the role on July 13. Phil has experience with safety management from his time with Pall Trinity.

On July 23, all three of the freshman aldermen – John Bennett, Julie Bird, and Katie Silliman – toured the facility. Director of Administration and Finance Mack Cook also took the tour. They were enthusiastic about what they saw and commended the department on its operation.

On August 2 the DEC criminal investigator returned to gather additional documentation, including DMRs and lab results. Jim Suozzo of Cedarwood Engineering has been extremely helpful in addressing this issue. His conversations with various DEC personnel have convinced him there will be no negative outcome. As stated last month, if anything this will be positive as the expected consent order will strengthen our position on securing EFC funding.

One of our operators is out for at least four weeks to recuperate from a surgical procedure. He is utilizing accrued sick time.

After nearly a year and a half, I finally had the phone system automated message changed. I wanted to have all personnel in place before I did it so I would only have to pay for it once.

On August 16<sup>th</sup> I met with Cedarwood Engineering staff, AFT president Paul Tower and AFT regional vendor Mark Koester at Cedarwood's offices in Oneonta. We discussed AFT's biogas conditioning equipment. This is the same equipment John O'Connell and I saw in Guelph, Ontario and it is impressively effective. When we do a biogas-to-electricity project, gas conditioning will be a big determinant of the project's success.

I am very seriously considering changing contract laboratories. Our current lab, whom we have been using for a number of years, is excellent in every regard but one. They have real problems with turnaround time. Their stated turnaround time is 14 days, but it is almost never less than 20 days and frequently approaches 22 to 24 days. This is important to a POTW for two reasons: One, we have a hard deadline to get our DMR to Albany by the 28<sup>th</sup> day of the following month. Taking report prep time, mail delivery time and non-business days into account, 20 to 24 day turnarounds become problematic. Two, the older the test data when received, the less useful it is for process control. The lab I'm looking at has an average turnaround time of 7 to 8 days. They are approximately 50% more expensive, but I believe it is a justifiable expense.

### **Operations-**

Dropped and cleaned West final clarifier and put East clarifier on. Reversed that later when we executed the effluent weir repair.

We experienced some operational issues associated with the abnormally hot weather. The temperature makes the microbes in the biological process more active, yielding an "older" sludge than one would expect based on our normal summer loadings. We had no violations and maintained exceptionally good removal ratios despite the sludge age.

### **Maintenance-**

The effluent weir, which provides a flow signal used to control the disinfection feed chemicals, failed on July 25<sup>th</sup>. This weir is constructed of 4x6 pressure-treated timbers and one of the braces fell out, upsetting the structure and allowing water to pass through the face of the weir. On John O'Connell's recommendation, instead of replacing the structure we covered the face with ¼" polycarbonate sheet and refastened the bracing with better hardware. The timbers are all still sound and doing the repair that way saved substantially on money and man-hours.

The Carbon Building air conditioner leaked all the refrigerant for the second time this season. The refrigerant is surprisingly expensive and, rather than sinking more money into another charge of refrigerant that could leak again in a few days, I decided to replace the condenser/compressor and move it to the roof where it belonged in the first place. The previous location in the basement had two major problems: One, it was exhausting hot air into a space directly beneath the space we are trying to cool, causing it to run far more than necessary. Two, it was too far away from the air handling unit, resulting in excessively long coolant line runs, which cause their own problems, including potential damage to the compressor. In fact, I ended up ordering a new condenser/compressor rather than moving the existing unit because there was some indication that it may have already been damaged. The new unit is now installed and running.

The used activated carbon odor control system from Andes has been installed and is now functioning. It is unbelievably effective, far better than the mist-scrubber system it replaced. It will also be less costly to operate and maintain. It requires no chemicals, metering pumps or compressed air. We only used one of the two carbon vessels and utilized the existing blower. The remainder of the system may be sufficient to treat malodors associated with the GBT solids handling upgrade that we have discussed.

On August 14 we had a power failure which involved the loss of one of the three phases of utility power. The power was out for nearly 12 hours before being repaired by National Grid. It was a good learning experience for staff. One of the things that came out of the event was a desire on the part of staff to generate more detailed guidance for power failure events. The staff will work on that as a learning exercise and a future tool.

HMT came out to check all main transformers to ensure there was no damage caused by the power failure.

Cleaned vegetation and debris from all transformer areas.

Found and repaired air leaks in Aeration Basin #2.

Bruce Adams

Chief Operator

Addendum: Bruce Adams also mentioned that there has been ongoing problems with the SCADA system. The SCADA system dates back to 1994 and is hard to obtain service due to being an old system. Bruce further stated that due to the high costs, he will try to maintain the system by changing out parts, but eventually will have to be upgraded. The SCADA system will be included as part of the upgrades planned for the facility.

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

**Finance:** Bills: Abstracts dated 8/01/12 and 8/15/12, were submitted for approval.

**Motion** to approve the Bills by Sally Horak. Seconded by Todd Morris. **UNANIMOUS**

Financial Statements:

**Motion** to approve financial statements by Sally Horak. Seconded by Todd Morris. **UNANIMOUS**

**Sewer Grievance:**

A sewer grievance was submitted by Mike Buchalla on 7/10/12, for the property located at 36 Grant Street, City of Cortland. Mr. Buchalla reported that a tenant had let the toilet run without notifying him. He is requesting relief towards his bill.

**Motion** to approve a \$60.00 credit on his account by Todd Morris. Seconded by Sally Horak. **UNANIMOUS**

**Sewer Grievance:**

A sewer grievance was submitted by Katy Oursler on 8/13/12, for property located at 56 Lincoln Avenue, City of Cortland. Ms. Oursler reports a leak in a tank that was discovered on 7/8/12. The tank was removed with a new tank installed on 8/7/12 by Sensible Maintenance Solutions. Ms. Oursler is requesting a reduction in the sewer portion of her bill.

**Motion** to approve a \$125.00 credit on her account by Todd Morris. Seconded by Sally Horak. **UNANIMOUS**

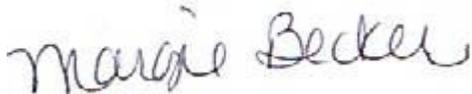
Outcome grievance decision letter was provided.

**New Business:** No new business.

**Old Business:** No old business.

**Motion** to Adjourn at 6:15 p.m by Todd Morris. Seconded by Sally Horak. **UNANIMOUS**

Respectfully submitted by:

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Margie Becker".

City of Cortland WWTF