



## CITY OF CORTLAND WASTEWATER TREATMENT FACILITY



### *Meeting Minutes*

**Date: 9/26/16**

**Time: 5:30 pm**

**Conference Room,  
Cortland Wastewater**

#### ■ Members:

- Chairman John Troy – Present
- Vice Chair William Starr – Present
- Commissioner Todd Morris – Present
- Commissioner Diann Potter – Present
- Village of McGraw Mayor Allan Stauber – Present
- Bruce Adams, Supt. of Wastewater – Present

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

Minutes from August 22, 2016, meeting for approval.

**Motion** to approve the minutes from August 22, 2016, meeting by Bill Starr. Seconded by Diann Potter.  
**UNANIMOUS**

**New Business:      Discussion for a Sewer Ordinance Variance:**

Johanna Ames, President, Ames Linen, presented to the WWAB meeting with John Schultz, Sr. Manager of Water, Energy, and Wastewater Solutions (Ecolab), Kevin McLaren, Director of R&D for Gurtler Industries, and Santo Chillemi, District Manager for Gurtler Industries. Also present at the meeting was Mack Cook, Director of Administration and Finance, and Nick Dovi, Deputy Supt. of the Department of Public Works.

Johanna Ames presented to the board requesting their consideration for a variance on the city's sewer use ordinance, specifically to take a look at the pH limitations that are in that ordinance. Johanna is requesting a consideration for a variance that would allow up to a 12.5 pH discharge. The sewer use ordinance currently states a limitation of >5.0 to 10.0. Johanna further explained that there are other municipalities that do not have an upper limit at all, or those that have a structure in their ordinance that allows for a variance to be granted on a case by case basis.

John Schultz, Sr. Manager of Water, Energy and Wastewater Solutions (Ecolab), was introduced to the board by Johanna Ames at this time to present information on the laundry industry in relation to discharging into the sanitary sewers and how this impacts the wastewater treatment plant processes. Mr. Schultz reported that the laundry industry has in recent years voluntarily entered into a laundry environmental stewardship program (LESP). This program reduces pollutants, introduce safer chemicals to be used, using less water and less energy.

Mr. Schultz went on to explain the two types of dischargers, which are categorical and significant industrial. The categorical industrial discharges are commonly referred to as heavy metals, platers, circuit board manufacturers. These industries are federally regulated. The significant industrial users are not federally regulated; however, they are state and locally regulated. The significant industrials discharge greater than 25,000 gallons of water a day. Ames Linen is a significant industrial discharger and the goal is to assist the City of Cortland and work with the Wastewater Treatment Plant to work together so that each can benefit mutually. John reported that under federal law, 40 CFR403, a precursor for pretreatment regulations, prohibits specific materials that cannot be discharged into the collection system, including levels of pH less than 5.0, which causes corrosion to the collection system. Most collections systems throughout the United States are made of concrete, which low pH levels can erode the concrete and cause damage. John briefly explained the chemical composition of how wastewater treatment plants processes and removes toxicants that are harmful to the environment and water systems and managing pH levels by adding to the system that would adjust the pH levels. New York State regulations has a limit for pH of no less than 5.0.

Mr. Schultz further presented to the board a chart showing various pH ranges in cities throughout the United States, and specifically, cities in New York State. Mr. Schultz explained that many laundry lobbyists recommend a limit of up to 12.5 pH. Many laundries have been able to work with their local agencies to be granted a variance when the agencies pH limit is less than their needs, (i.e. 5.0 - 10.0 limit, variance granted to 5.0 -12.5) This is done on a case by case basis.

John stated that upon review of the sewer ordinance from a small community in Maine, specifically written for small communities, there is a statement that the district may authorize the discharge of waste with a pH greater than 10.3, provided that the hydroxide alkalinity does not exceed 1000 mg/l. John further stated that prior to the meeting, Santos Chillemi and Kevin McLaren were working at Ames Linen and conducted testing which showed a result of 800 mg/l, under the 1000 mg/l limit. John also stated that in the pH program, the industrial users are required to follow the federal regulations as well and must continually monitor their pH to make sure they are within range.

In conclusion to his presentation, Mr. Schultz offered to the board any references of his materials and offered to answer any questions they may have as well as contacting himself or Johanna Ames. Johanna Ames then offered the opportunity to Mr. Chillemi and Mr. McLaren, to present any additional information to the board. Mr. McLaren added that entire community has wastewater coming into the plant from all different sources. There is multiple generations of history that says the Ames Linen's wastewater being slightly alkaline, bringing the benefits in neutralizing some of the acids or acid salts coming into the system. Mr. McLaren further stated that if a variance is not given and the Ames Linen waste stream has to be neutralized down to 10.0 pH, there is a potential that you are going to lose the acid neutralization, which we are currently incurring for free will go away, and could eventually have an impact on our current process.

Bruce Adams stated that as he discussed with Johanna Ames, to his knowledge the wastewater plant has not experienced any difficulty with the Ames Linen discharge, being on Huntington Street for the past 10 years, as well as being in the community for many years. Bruce further stated that he had asked Nick Dovi, Deputy Supt. of DPW, to be present. The city collection system is maintained by the DPW. Nick Dovi reported that he was going to try to get some crews out before the meeting and do some TV work, (CCTV), to ensure the integrity of the pipes as they are right now. Due to late projects, he was unable to have this done. Nick stated that he did locate some old sewer videos and reviewed them. Nick stated that the pipes are 8" clay tile; however, the video is dated but as the DPW rarely receive calls at the Huntington Street location and that he has not seen any evidence that would make him uncomfortable with the current status of the sewer configuration.

Bruce Adams reported that he solicited a statement from a consultant engineer, which he provided a copy of the written statement to the board. The engineer recommended an inspection, (CCTV) of the Huntington Street sewer system to ensure no undue harm being done to the collection system. If there is evidence of damage due to chemicals, then a pH level of around 10.0 maximum should be set. Bruce also reported that he had printed all pretreatment documentation and history of pH requirements sent to him by the EPA inspector, which was made available to the board.

John Troy then asked for clarification as to what the board is considering a recommendation for a variance to allow the increase in pH to 12.5. Bruce Adams explained that he is looking potentially for the board to recommend to the Common Council to change the Sewer Use Ordinance to allow for a higher pH, either on a case by case basis or simply an increase. John Schultz stated that the recommendation for an increase can be 12.2 to 12.5 pH limit, not necessarily 12.5.

After discussion by the board, Todd Morris, made a recommendation to change the section of the permit for an acceptable pH range from the current 5.0 - 10.0, to 5.0 to 12.2.

**Motion** to recommend changes to the Common Council on the permit by Todd Morris. Seconded by Diann Potter. **UNANIMOUS**

## ***Plant Managers Report***

for

# **September 26, 2016**

(as written by Supt. Adams)

### **Administration–**

We have received the first reimbursement of expenses under the WQIP phosphorus project grant.

The Finance Department is currently in the process of converting the short-term bonds for the major upgrade project to long-term bonds. Net debt service for 2017 for this project will be \$459,470. Total debt service for 2017 will be \$795,136. By comparison, total debt service was \$1,156,090 in 2014 and \$1,049,285 in 2015.

I have been addressing the requirements stipulated in EPA's Administrative Compliance Order. Of the five dated items, four have been completed. Those include acknowledging receipt of the order, submitting a compliance plan, issuing SIU permits to the two identified businesses, and making public notification of SNC status of the landfill. All that remains is conducting inspections and sampling at the two identified businesses.

We continue to pursue options for getting a vermicycling project off the ground. We met with members of the County legislature on 9/15 and had a conference call with the DEC Deputy Director on 9/21.

### **Operations–**

The process continues to run very well. August removals for BOD and TSS were 96% and 97%, respectively.

We will be transferring sludge from the South digester into the now fully rehabbed West digester, previously the Secondary digester.

### **Maintenance–**

We are checking all cold weather equipment in preparation for winter.

The WQIP PAC project is still underway. We have had some difficulties devoting sufficient labor hours to it due to other issues that pop up. We anticipate having it finished in a couple of weeks.

Bruce Adams

Superintendent of Wastewater

**Motion** to approve the Plant Manager's Report by Bill Starr. Seconded by Diann Potter. **UNANIMOUS**

**Finance:** Financial statements and abstracts dated 8/31/16, and 9/15/16, were submitted for approval.

**Motion** to approve financial statements and abstracts by Bill Starr. Seconded by Diann Potter.  
**UNANIMOUS**

**Sewer Grievance:**

Gertrude Seeber submitted a sewer grievance on 6/20/16, for property located at 93 Wheeler Avenue, City of Cortland. Ms. Seeber reports that a leak was discovered in the crawl space under her house on 4/6/16, and repaired at that time. She is requesting an adjustment on the sewer portion of her billing.

Mrs. Seeber's application was reviewed by the board on June 27, 2016, and a decision was made to table the grievance until the next board meeting. The board requested additional information on the leak in relation to the hot water heater and if the water went into the system. The board met again on August 22, 2016, and addressed Mrs. Seeber's grievance; however, the additional information requested was unavailable to the board.

It was the decision of the board to once again table the grievance in order to extend to Ms. Seeber additional time to provide the information. The board further noted that if this information was not available at the next board meeting on September 26, 2016, Ms. Seeber's grievance would no longer be considered.

A letter of request for additional information was sent by Margie Becker on 8/23/16. At this time, the information is unavailable to the board. A motion was made by Diann Potter to deny the grievance.

**Motion** to deny the grievance by Diann Potter. Seconded by Todd Morris. **UNANIMOUS**

**Sewer Grievance:**

A grievance application was received from Upscale Rentals, LLC, on 7/25/16, for property located at 99 West Main Street, Apt. A, City of Cortland. The property management reported that a leak was detected on 6/14/16, and repaired on 6/15/16. A copy of the plumber's bill was also submitted which showed boiler work service performed on the property. Upscale Rentals LLC, is requesting a credit towards the sewer portion of their billing.

The board reviewed the grievance submitted by Upscale Rentals LLC, and a decision was made to table the grievance until the next WWAB meeting on Monday, September 26, 2016. A request was made by the board for additional information regarding the grievance as to the nature of the leak, how the leak occurred, and where the water from the leak went to.

The requested information was received from Upscale Rentals on 9/1/16, and reviewed by the board. A recommendation was made by John Troy for a possible maximum allowable credit of \$366.00, could be granted based on the past two quarterly billings. A motion was made by Bill Starr to approve the credit.

**Motion** to approve a credit of **\$366.00**, by Bill Starr. Seconded by Diann Potter. **UNANIMOUS**

**Sewer Grievance:**

Mountain Village, LLC, c/o Ann Wittmaack, submitted a sewer grievance on 7/29/16, for property located at 161 Port Watson Street, Apt. 1 & 2, City of Cortland. Ms. Wittmaack reports that she thoroughly checked her property which also included conducting a test on the toilets; however, she was unable to locate any possible leaks. She further reported that the tenants indicated that they may have used more water than usual, and that she will have a plumber come out to inspect the property. She is requesting relief towards the sewer portion of her billing.

After review of Ann Wittmaack's (Mountain Village LLC), grievance, a decision was made by the board to table the grievance until the next WWAB meeting on Monday, September 26, 2016. The board is requesting clarification on any findings of leaks, possible causes or problems located by a licensed plumber indicating high water usage.

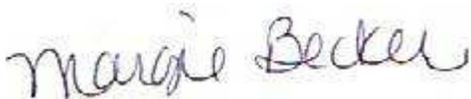
A letter of request for additional information was sent by Margie Becker on 8/23/16. At this time, no additional information was available. It was the decision of the board to once again table the grievance in order to extend to Ms. Wittmaack additional time to provide the information. The board further noted that if this information was not available at the next board meeting on October 24, 2016, Ms. Wittmaack's grievance would no longer be considered

**Motion** to TABLE the grievance by Diann Potter. Seconded by Bill Starr. **UNANIMOUS**

**Old Business:** No old business

**Motion** to Adjourn at 6:32 p.m. by Bill Starr. Seconded by Diann Potter. **UNANIMOUS**

Respectfully submitted by:



City of Cortland WWTF