

**Pocono Township Board of Commissioners
Sewer Committee Meeting Minutes
April 6, 2020**

The Sewer Committee meeting of the Pocono Township Commissioners was held remotely on Monday, April 6, 2020 via teleconference and was opened by President Rich Wielebinski at 6:00 p.m., followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

ROLL CALL: Jerrod Belvin, present; Ellen Gndt, present; Gerald J. Lastowski, present; Keith Meeker, present; Rich Wielebinski, present.

IN ATTENDANCE:

Leo DeVito, Twp. Solicitor, Broughal & Devito; Jon Tresslar, Twp. Engineer, Boucher & James, Inc.; Michael Gable, Sewer Engineer, Boucher & James, Inc.; Patrick Briegel, Sewer Consultant; Taylor Munoz, Township Manager and Dee Ackerman, Administrative Assistant were present.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Vincent Trapasso – Provided comments relating to the fiscal impact of COVID-19 on Pocono Sewer System businesses and requested that the Township provide sewer billing relief for business owners. P. Briegel explained that sewage flow meters are only for the largest users on the system and billing is based on EDUs available and fixed costs, not just on usage. It was noted that further discussion and feedback from the professionals will occur later the agenda. E. Gndt stated that the Township is taking the concerns of the system users into account and will be discussing the various relief options available to the Township later during the meeting. R. Wielebinski expressed concern about the potential of a rate increase if sewer revenue is impacted or the system becomes unstable. J. Lastowski stated he would need more numbers and information from the sewer system professionals to make a final decision.

ANNOUNCEMENTS: None

MINUTES:

R. Wielebinski made a motion, seconded by J. Belvin, to approve the minutes of the March 2, 2020 sewer committee meeting. Roll call vote: Jerrod Belvin, yes; Ellen Gndt, abstain; Gerald J. Lastowski, yes; Keith Meeker, yes; Rich Wielebinski, yes. Motion carried.

OLD BUSINESS:

- Discussion regarding engineer and sewer consultant recommending proposed changes to update Sewer Resolution for consideration by the Committee. P. Briegel will forward work completed with Mike Gable and will look to have a workshop meeting post April 30. M. Gable noted proposed changes will be presented as a mark-up to show the old versus new proposed changes.

FINANCIAL TRANSACTIONS: None

APPEALS: None

REPORTS:

Commissioners: None

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Sewer Consultant:

R. Wielebinski made a motion, seconded by J. Lastowski, to approve Multi-Dimensional Integration (MDI) as the contractor for control system third party review in the amount of \$12,360.00 as required under the Emergency Management Plan & Risk Assessment and recommended by Boucher & James. Under discussion, it was noted the 3rd Party provides a detailed assessment of all controls for the system, provides additional contractor familiarity with the system and is necessary due to the specific operational needs with the sewer system. Roll call vote: Jerrod Belvin, yes; Ellen Gndt, yes; Gerald J. Lastowski, yes; Keith Meeker, yes; Rich Wielebinski, yes. Motion carried.

- Work is moving forward on the Pump Station 5 jockey pump project. Application was submitted to DEP to proceed with permitting. Purpose of the jockey pumps is to reduce wear and tear on the valves.
- Preparation work for the mixer pump was conducted and installation on target for the week of April 13.
- Installation of singer valve subject to COVID-19 delays. Anticipated delivery at end of April.
- Work continues on deferred property list. Suggested consideration at next meeting, pending deadlines established in December. Residents will have trouble securing contractors and professionals during COVID-19, so work cannot proceed.

ADMINISTRATION – None

SEWER ENGINEER – No report

TOWNSHIP SOLICITOR

- Discussion regarding extension of expiring letter of credit (LOC) for Kalahari pre-treatment facility. Currently \$1.5 million LOC for installation of a pre-treatment facility. Consensus is that an equalization tank is preferable instead of pretreatment facility and will also address pre-treatment concerns. Kalahari is requesting a waiver of a LOC for installation of an equalization tank and the current LOC expires on June 10. The Township either must draw down on the existing LOC to construct the pre-treatment facility or Kalahari will need to agree to extend the LOC, get a cost estimate for equalization tank installation and secure the installation of the EQ tank. L. Devito recommended that current \$1.5 million LOC for Kalahari be extended until a revised LOC can be obtained with lower estimates for the EQ Tank.

J. Lastowski made a motion, seconded by R. Wielebinski, to require Kalahari obtain a Letter of Credit to secure the installation of an equalization tank. Roll call vote: Jerrod Belvin, yes; Ellen Gndt, yes; Gerald J. Lastowski, yes; Keith Meeker, yes; Rich Wielebinski, yes. Motion carried.

- Discussion regarding possible relief measures for sewer customers affected by COVID-19 closures and/or loss of revenue. E. Gndt stated there have been communications regarding whether providing relief for sewer customers is feasible and stated the Township has done similar measures in the past, including the de minimis use policy. She expressed the opinion that the township can make changes to sewer billing without

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jeopardizing the system. Stated that the township paid down debt earlier, the system is operating at a profit and that potential relief would be due to a once-in-a-lifetime situation. J. Lastowski stated he could not make any decisions until all facts are received from the township professionals. R. Wielebinski stated that the Board will continue to review based off recommendations from the engineer, consultant and solicitor.

- Township manager was asked to follow up with DCNR regarding their sewer line in Swiftwater and conveying a portion of their line to Pocono Township. M. Gable stated that new lateral needs to be installed prior to PennDOT laying new blacktop.
- J. Tresslar stated engineer review of the Turtle Walk plan has been completed and almost all comments addressed, with some outstanding minor items. Further discussion needed as to impact of applicant's riparian buffer required by their NPDES permit and how it impacts the Township's sewer easement.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Ralph Gundrum, Kalahari legal counsel, thanked the Board of Commissioners for their consideration of Kalahari's LOC request.

ADJOURNMENT:

R. Wielebinski made a motion, seconded by E. Gndt, to adjourn the meeting at 7:00 p.m. Roll call vote: J. Belvin, yes; E. Gndt, yes; J. Lastowski, yes; K. Meeker, yes; R. Wielebinski, yes. Motion carried.