

July 3, 2021

Next Meeting: August 3, 2021 6:00 pm (prior to Regular Twp. Board Meeting)

Special Meeting: Tuscarora Township Sewer Sub-Committee

Call to Order: 10:30 am at the Tuscarora Township Hall

Roll Call: Bob Kramer (Chairman), Janet Vance (Secretary), and Mike Ridley All Present

Agenda:

UPDATE: Sewer Ordinance

UPDATE: Temporary Leasing of REU's

UPDATE: Earmark Applications to US Senate and House of Representatives

UPDATE: State Revolving Fund/Intended Use Pane Application

UPDATE: Health Department meeting and USDA Applications

Discussion: Next Steps

Guest Speaker: Ana D. Schwab

(Dir. Of Government Affairs – Best, Best, & Krieger LLP – Washington D.C.)

Citizen Comments

Sub Committee Comments

Motion to Adjourn

Directly after Roll Call was taken, Janet Vance read the "Declaration of Intent" which outlines the intent of this committee to only use the committee's authority to advise the Township Board and our commitment to 100% transparency throughout this process.

Update: Sewer Ordinance and Temporary Leasing of REU's

This ordinance only pertains to the Business Sewer District with the possibility of temporarily leasing RUE's. Steve Mann (Bond Counsel) is currently working with us to try and facilitate this matter. There has been some hesitancy from our lawyers, however, it is important for the viability and growth of our business district for us to try and get some flexibility concerning future use.

Update: Earmark Applications

Congressman Bergman (US House of Rep.) informed us our application made it through the Sub-Committee hearing and will be voted on by the entire House soon. It is remarkable we made it through this far, but we have a long way to go.

Sen. Stabenow and Sen. Peters said we should hear something next week, but it carries weight with the Senate that we were approved by the House Sub-Committee.

If we are so fortunate to receive an earmark from the House, it will be for \$3.5m and will cover approximately 55% of the cost for the smaller district, South of Mack Ave. to the Sturgeon River. The House capped all earmarks to \$3.5m.

Update: Michigan State Revolving Fund (EGLE)

We only could qualify for the loans only. We wanted to get on the State's Intended Use Plan (IUP) which makes it easier to apply for earmarks and EPA grants. We had trouble meeting their public notice requirements because we followed USDA's policy and the request for exception was not approved.

Update: Health Dept. Meeting / USDA Applications/ Next Steps

The USDA required a letter from the Health Department to indicate the need of sewers in the proposed district before they would accept any of our applications. The Health Department agreed to send a letter to the USDA stating at least 51% of the district could not meet present replacement standards without variances.

USDA Applications: there have been many hurdles since July 2019, and the USDA has made changes to applications requirements, which meant more time and money. The USDA wanted to include the money from the Burt Lake State Park contribution, which was allocated for the first sewer district; because that is the

district they joined. It was decided NOT to use that money for any sewer expansion. We did divide the district into smaller districts due to the small amount of grant money available. "District South" is described as South of Mack Ave to the Sturgeon River. "District North" is Mack Ave. and North. The application for District North has been sent to the USDA, and District South will be sent in 30-60 days. Both are currently being considered for House and Senate Earmarks. It is vital to apply for any grant money we may qualify for to help keep the people's costs down as much as possible. We may know something by January about any USDA grants and mid fall for the earmark.

Guest Speaker: Ana Schwab

Ms. Schwab is the Director of Government Affairs for the law offices of Best, Best, and Krieger LLC, Washington D.C. She specializes in helping water and waste water infrastructure projects through the legislative procedures. Because she has a local seasonal home, and has a personal interest in this project, she and her law firm are working at NO COST to help us navigate through the legal process.

"The House sub-committee accepted it at the House and as a whole took up the bill and we are also waiting for the Senate." (Schwab) The goal is "working with USDA and the EPA and we need congressmen and senators to agree with the Project." She encouraged citizens to call the congressmen and senators to garner their support. We are waiting to hear more about the new infrastructure bill and she also said there is no conflict with receiving USDA loans and EPA loans if we apply for both.

Special thanks went out to Scott Swanson for the help and advice he has given to the committee to help avoid "pitfalls" experienced from the first sewer project.

Public Comment: (Some of the public questions from the meeting)

Q: Are there legislators we can "lean on"?

A: Send support to Rep. Bergman, Sen, Stabenow and Sen. Peters letting them know you appreciate the help.

Q: How long do we have to wait?

A: Best guess is we'll know something by January from the USDA side, and Earmarks sometime in the fall.

Q: What are the cost increases since 2019?

A: There has been an increase of about 25% for construction since then, but also in replacing the present systems as well.

Q: What about the grinder pumps?

A: The grinder pumps will be in the Right Of Way and will be paid by the entire districts. They will also have alarm systems incorporated to alert the sewer managers of any problems.

Q: Hook up fees?

A: That will be up to each property owner to contract for that service. There will be low income grants and loans available for those who qualify.

Q: What about joining additional lots?

A: If the lots touch, you can join the lots and this will reduce additional special assessments. Remember, even if the lot is across the street, you may be able to join the lots. Please call Assessor John Gehres to determine if your lots can be combined. There will be a dead line needed so as to determine the exact assessment cost.

Respectfully submitted,
Janet Vance, Trustee
Sewer Sub-Committee Secretary