

City of Harlowton
Preliminary Engineering Report (PER) for Wastewater project
February 13, 2018 6:00pm
Harlowton Public Library

Gary Swanson of Robert Peccia and Associates facilitated the public meeting.

The purpose of the meeting was to inform the public of the problems and regulatory issues with the current wastewater system in Harlowton. Discussion of possible resolutions to these problems, preliminary cost estimates, impacts on user rates, funding options, and potential project schedules were discussed.

Gary Swanson provided handouts outlining the discussion.

Two public meeting will be held, this being the first, to allow sufficient public input.

The current lagoons are about 20 years old, which is about the useful expected life of this type of system. MDEQ compliance issues started in 2004. A discharge permit was issued in 2009 and expired in 2014. In 2011 Harlowton entered into an administrative order on consent (AOC) with MDEQ to extend the compliance schedule. The city agreed to complete a PER by May 2012 and do the recommended improvements by September 2014. The wastewater PER and funding applications were completed in 2012 and the collection system infiltration/inflow project was completed in October 2014. That project replaced or lined about 11,000 feet of wastewater collection pipe. The 2014 discharge permit was finally issued and became effective September 2017. In order to comply with additional MDEQ requirements, the city has contracted with RPA to develop a new PER to identify current issues. The city has received planning grants from DNRC, TSEP and USDA Rural Development for this PER. Funding applications for the lagoon improvements will be submitted around mid-year 2018.

Preliminary information suggests that the most important issues to correct in the wastewater system are installing a disinfection system and sludge removal. Jim Kalitowski asked how often sludge removal should be done. Gary responded 10-20 years depending on the use and maintenance of the system. There are still over 44,000 feet of aging and undersized sewer mains remaining in Harlowton as well. Future issues could involve upgrading the aeration system, new headworks to screen large sewer materials or installation of a land application system.

The current recommended solution to the disinfection system would be to install either a UV disinfection system or a de-chlorination system. A de-chlorination system involves the addition of Sodium Bisulfate to neutralize the chlorine. Estimates for UV disinfection are around \$990,000 plus annual operating and maintenance costs of around \$15,700 per year. Estimates for chlorination/de-chlorination system are approximately \$700,000 with annual operating and maintenance costs of \$25,000. Sludge removal will cost up to \$400,000.

Preliminary cost estimates for additional future upgrades include aeration system upgrade of \$1.02 to \$1.63 million, headworks upgrade of \$60,000 to \$1.05 million, collection system (sewer mains) \$4 to \$6 million. RPA suggests TV inspection of collection system to determine if main lines would need to be replaced or could be lined. The cost of TV inspection would be \$70,000 to \$90,000.

RPA's recommended improvements will be determined in the final PER, but currently phase one improvements would include sludge removal and one of the disinfection alternatives. Funding options for these improvements are USDA Rural Development which does low interest loans and partial grants; TSEP which does grants; DNRC RRGL which does grants; SRF which does low interest loans and partial grants; and CDBG which does grants. User rates could potentially go up \$5.14 to \$11.14.

Potential phase 1 project schedule would be:

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|----------------------|----------------|
| Complete the PER | May 2018 |
| Funding Applications | May 2018 |
| Secure Funding | March 2019 |
| Design Phase 1 | September 2019 |
| Awards Bids | December 2019 |
| Construction | September 2020 |

Gary suggested the city make sure the Growth Policy and Capital Improvement Plans are updated. These documents are instrumental in successful grant applications. Gary also suggested that the city consider changing its rate structure to charge higher "load" customers more than standard residential customers. Examples would be the state rest area, RV dump stations, restaurants, truck stops, gas stations.

Meeting adjourned at 6:52 pm.

Present:

Rob Elwood, Jim Kalitowski, Ron Teig, Charley Bennett (via telephone), Ian Reed, Paul Otten, Kathie Newland, Lauri Teig

Paul Otten, Mayor

Kathie Newland, Clerk