

LAKES AREA SEWER AUTHORITY

Minutes—January 26, 2009

The Lakes Area Sewer Authority held its regular meeting on January 26, 2009, at 7:00 pm, at the Porter Township Hall.

Commissioners Present: Bitely, Bainbridge, Grib, Oxley, Melko, Johnson, Laski.

Commissioners Absent: None.

Public Comment: Fred Gebhard inquired as to what laws governed mandatory sewer hook-ups. He also repeated his opposition to the project due to economic concerns.

Motion by Bitely, Support by Grib to approve the agenda as presented, all Ayes—motion passed.

Motion by Bitely, Support by Oxley to approve and place on file the minutes of the Regular Authority Meeting of December 1, 2008 as e-mailed, all Ayes—motion passed.

Alan Smaka reported on the status of engineering for the project. The engineering design of the collection system and forced mains is close to completion. Rural Development requires a RFP process to obtain bids on construction and equipment for the treatment facility. Schreiber & Schreiber submitted a bid of \$600k for equipment in the treatment plant. A septage receiving station was not included in the original design. The Authority felt that this would be a very desirable component to have in the project. This option will be pursued.

Schuitmaker reported that the sale of Bond Anticipation Notes will take place on January 27. The Board of Public Works approval will take place on February 11. A review of the engineering plan for Gravel Lake has been completed. Discussion ensued regarding the process needed to obtain easements for lift stations and some sections of sewer line. Similar plans for Finch and Bid Fish Lake will be completed by the second week in February.

Schuitmaker reported that Jim White will be sending a draft sewer ordinance via email for review and comment at the February meeting. This must be finalized by April in order to have a review by Rural Development. Questions for the Authority to consider in the Ordinance were such things as whether or not to meter some establishments, immunity for the Townships or LASA against sewer backups, handling of complaints, inspections of sewer connections, etc.

A Project Budget Summary and a slate of bills were presented to the Authority for approval. These are the first expenses against the Bond Anticipation Notes. As additional expenses are incurred, they will be present and approved by the Authority and sent to Cass County for final approval and payment.

Motion by Oxley, Support by Bainbridge to approve the bills as presented. Roll Call vote: Bainbridge-Y, Melko-Y, Grib-Y, Johnson-Y, Oxley-Y, Laski-Y, Bitely-Y; Motion passed.

Boshoven reported on alternative energy issues. He has sent out letters to local, state, and federal legislators and other government officials outlining our project and the need for funding alternative energy systems such as solar and wind power. He has also been researching Biomass using methane gas micro-turbines to produce heat and electricity. He believes this to be a very viable energy source and will continue to pursue grants and funding. Funding could be possible through the economic stimulus package depending on how that develops. Schuitmaker stated that he will pursue getting Van Buren and Cass Counties to endorse such a proposal.

Melko stated that he would like to plan a public information meeting to be held sometime in the spring. This would provide opportunity for property owners to ask questions and obtain information regarding sewer planning, payment, project status, etc. Tentatively this would occur in May or June, prior to the beginning of construction.

Next steps in the project will be finalizing the Sewer Ordinance, obtaining agreements from the Village of Marcellus, obtaining design permits and easements, etc.

All future meetings will be held on the fourth Monday of each month, 7:00 pm at the Porter Township Hall. The May and December meetings will be rescheduled at some future date due to falling on or near a Holiday.

Public Comment: Fred Gebhard, again, criticized the Authority for its timing of this project and poor dissemination of information. Melko and Boshoven challenged this assertion and reviewed the years of planning meetings and public information sessions.

The meeting adjourned at 8:45 pm.

Next meeting—February 23, 2009 at 7:00 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

John A. Grib
Authority Secretary