

MANCHESTER WATER AND SEWER COMMISSION

October 3, 2024

The Manchester Water and Sewer Commission met on Thursday, October 3, 2024 for a regularly scheduled meeting. Present were: Chairman/Commissioner Anderson, Vice-Chairman/Commissioner Watson, Alderman/Vice-Mayor Messick, Secretary/Commissioner Hunt, Commissioner Hillsman, Mayor Hobbs, and Director Jeff Perry.

Absent: Billing Office Manager Jennifer Hall

Late Arrival: None

Chairman Anderson called the meeting to order at 3:00 PM.

1) **Citizen Comments:**

None to report.

- 2) The minutes of the regular meeting on September 5, 2024 were approved contingent upon corrections (change *contact* to *contract*), a motion by Secretary/Commissioner Hunt, seconded by Commissioner Hillsman. After a vote was taken, the motion passed 5-0.

3) **Director's Report:**

3.1 Commissioner Training:

- a) The 2024 Utility Leadership Conference will be held October 30-November 1, 2024 at the Gatlinburg Conference Center. Those attending are Director Perry, Chairman/Commissioner Anderson, Secretary/Commissioner Hunt, and Billing Office Manager Jennifer Hall.

3.2 Waste Water Treatment Plant:

- a) The warehouse has hired two great new employees, Mrs. Emily Bull (WWTP) started on September 23, 2024 with a grade 2 collection license, Will Alford (WWTP) has started as of September 30, 2024 with an industrial maintenance technician certification with experience as an electrician and welder.
- b) We have received the information of the data from the televising and cleaning project by Insituform and it is currently being reviewed by Assistant Director Kevin Raney. There is an issue that it wasn't GIS compatible.
- c) The screws for the drum screener and grit remover were installed on September 12, 2024. The screw that was replaced on the drum screener was loaded with tissue paper and/or paper towels and other material which could cause it to break. It had to be shut down for cleaning and the staff has been advised that this needs routine checks daily. A bar screen and possibly a grinder need to be installed (at the 7 Eleven location) before the influent pumps to prevent large items coming through as a future project.
- d) The belt press was down for a few weeks and we were not able to waste. BAR Environmental installed new paddle drive sensors that were bad and caused misalignment of the belt. We were able to get it back up and pressing again.
- e) We have completely replaced the sleeves and bulbs for UV Channel 1 and 2. Each channel has 12 bulbs and sleeves. Chairman/Commissioner Anderson suggested to be prepared with a plan of what it would take to change over to better equipment instead of the massive cost of repair.
- f) We are having pump 3 at the 7 Eleven pumping station rebuilt and a cutter head installed. The cost is roughly \$45,000 and a requisition was submitted. Status of a purchase order is pending. The station has 5 pumps and pump 3 is the only one that did not have a cutter head which would lead to having it being pulled due to stoppages.

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- g) All of the chronic manholes overflowed again and the date now resets. There is a new manhole overflow in front of McArthur Manor and that count started at one. Mayor Hobbs mentioned that the \$3 million basin project (cleaning) is going out to bid around October 16, 2024. There will be another project being submitted for replacing the line (new line) from Willis Farm to Skinner Flat with 18-inch piping. The board would like to know the old waste water treatment plant schedule. They also would like to schedule a waste water treatment plant site visit this month.

3.3 Water Distribution:

- a) The warehouse has hired another great new employee. Junior Prater started on September 30, 2024 as a Water Distribution Operator. He had been a past employee.
- b) LSLI (Lead Service Line Inventory) is due by October 16, 2024 and was completed and submitted on September 24, 2024 to TDEC. This procedure was pushed aside for several years, was only partially completed, and at risk of EPA issuing fines. Director Perry commended his staff for all of their hard work in gathering this information. We are currently waiting for the results of the report from TDEC.
- c) Director Perry has received 3 quotes for a pole barn to house pipe and other inventory. Summertown Metals and Watson Metals provided the quotes. Summertown Metals was \$76,000 (includes concrete pad and garage doors) and Watson provided two different quotes of \$93,000 (without concrete pad nor garage doors) and \$114,000 (includes concrete pad and garage doors). The preliminary budget stated a cost of \$50,000. We plan to reach out to the Amish community for another quote to prevent a budget overage.
- d) Booster pumps at the old water treatment plant need to be relocated. This would be a better solution for the long-term growth. The building (ready to crumble), pumps (down to 1 out of 3), and electrical panel are outdated (600-amp fuses). Daniel Tribble with Wauford Consultants did a site visit on September 26, 2024. We currently cannot shut off water to the plant. We need to install two valves on the intake and discharge as well as tapping both sides and installing PSI gauges. We need to rebuild one of the pumps immediately so that we can remain in service until a relocation is possible. We have received a quote from WASCON (sole source) for the rebuild and it is \$12,923.97. The gauge and check valves also need to be replaced and it is \$9,700. A requisition has been submitted for this temporary solution. This booster station serves Batesville, New Union, and Hillsville. A bypass pump (if possible) is being considered in case the third pump fails. One of the projects that needs to be looked at is building a new booster pump house with new pumps or a new transmission line that runs across I-24 to serve that community.
- e) A major concern is that we need to install water valves (due to age) throughout the distribution system and we cannot isolate areas in the event of water leaks and main breaks. The valves have not been properly exercised (maintenance program) over the years and some have been either covered up or not properly mapped.

3.4 Safety:

None to report.

3.5 Sewer Rehab:

None to report.

3.6 Water Distribution:

None to Report.

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3.7 Collection System:

None to report.

3.8 Equipment Upgrade & Project Needed:

None of report.

4) Billing Office Items:

None to report.

5) Old Business:

None to report.

6) New Business:

6.1 Old Water Treatment Plant Booster Station:

- a) Director Perry informed the board that his staff has been performing spot digs to determine the outer diameter (OD) and material of the pipe. They have actually uncovered five valves and they were all off and possibly reverse operated. There is also lead jointed pipe as well as the water treatment plant building being speculated as having lead-based paint and could be a liability for the city if someone gets hurt while trespassing.

6.2 Approval for Increase of Existing Rates and Fees:

- a) Director Perry, Jennifer Hall, and Kathleen Penner have started a rate study for changing the water and sewer rates, capacity fees, tap fees, labor, equipment usage, and every small item that goes into the services we provide. We are currently losing money in all areas and can't continue to sustain in our operations.
- b) Due to the ending of the nickel program as of June 30, 2024, the department has had an increase in loss of water. Chairman/Commissioner Anderson stated that we were paying Upper Duck River Water Trust Fund via Randal Braker directly for water sold and now they are charging us through the water that Duck River sells to us. We were paying the nickel on water we lose (the amount of purchased water verses the amount billing out). We are sustaining with no collection system on water loss. The question is how much water loss do we have and do we want to increase the surcharge in order to make up for roughly \$6,000. Director Perry thinks his analysis of the water loss is that we take into consideration the labor of repairing water main breaks and equipment usage. It was suggested that these items (normal operation expense) needed to part of our rate charge.

6.3 Job Titles Changes:

Currently, we have the same job titles as the street department. These job titles need to be changed as they are more involved than just running equipment. The change would be Light Equipment Operator to Utility Worker I and Heavy Equipment Operator to Utility Worker II. Mayor Hobbs advised the board that there is discussion of what the charter states on the creation of new jobs verses the directors to reclassify existing jobs. Dates are being placed on the job descriptions so we will know when the last revision was done. It is questioned and could be just a matter of the commission board's granting approval and not having to go before BOMA because it isn't creating a new job. It is a job description more accurately describing what the complete duties are.

6.4 Wastewater Plant Back Up Pumps:

- a) Currently, we have no return activated sludge nor waste activated sludge backup pumps. The digesters, mixers, augers, and shafts are \$9,000 to \$13,000 apiece, and the motor is around \$40,000. Further discussion will be forthcoming at a future meeting.

6.5 Distribution System (Water Valves Installed):

- a) We cannot get the water completely shut off in some situations depending how much water flow we will need. We will need assistance from someone to come in and do a hot tap where they will tap it live. The quotes, depending on the size of the pipe, are between \$8,000 and \$15,000 per valve due to inflation and bigger line. In past years, the cost was around \$3,000-\$6,000 per valve. Director Perry asked for additional discussion regarding more storage (water tank) that is needed for water in our next meeting. There has been some discussion on this topic in prior meetings.

6.6 Change Job Title Change of Mechanic to Maintenance:

- a) Director Perry would like to change this job title to help out with maintenance at the waste water plant and the collection system. Our mechanic building is in bad repair with the lift not safe to operate and the concrete pad being busted in several areas. It is difficult to find a mechanic to pay a \$20.00 an hour salary when they can work at a higher rate with their mechanic skills. It was asked if Water & Sewer's mechanic work could be shifted over to the Public Works' Department to be done by that location. Mayor Hobbs stated that the way it is currently set up, we would pay them to perform the work. It was asked that Director Perry bring this item up at the department head meeting on October 21, 2024 for further discussion with Director George Gannon on consolidating the mechanic work.

6.7 Job Title Change, Tanner Frick:

- a) Director Perry would like to change Tanner Frick's (The Voice contestant) job title to Maintenance Manager. This would be a new job description and will need to be brought before BOMA for approval. Tanner graduated TCAT with an industrial maintenance technician certification. He is a very talented and a hard-working young man.

6.8 J.R. Wauford Engineering Consultants with Water Distribution:

- a) Director Perry would like to get them involved in our water distribution and can arrange for a meeting for discussion of the water plant and booster pumps. They came out for a site visit and Daniel Tribble with Wauford Consultants went through and noted that the water could be flowing in a circle around the area of the water treatment plant. Mayor Hobbs stated that this company has come to the table with a proposal to do a study on pressure, how the water is moving, and hydraulic model. Based upon those findings, they will go ahead and give out preconstruction numbers to rebuild the facility verses putting in the transmission line that would do away with the whole building. The proposal for them to do the work was \$16,000 and is geared towards the flow. This would be a proposal for two different models and to figure out what is happening inside the water flow. Chairman/Commissioner Anderson would like to see the information before making a decision. Director Perry passed out their proposal for review. Attorney Johnson has reviewed this proposal as well. It doesn't need to go before BOMA and once the board agrees, Mayor Hobbs will sign to initiate the agreement.

Commissioner Hillsman made a motion to approve J.R. Wauford Engineering Consultants for \$16,000 for water distribution study. Secretary/Commissioner Hunt seconded. After a vote was taken, the motion passed 5-0.

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6.9 Additional Water Storage Tank:

- a) There are a lot of pressure issues on the north end of the city on 16th Model Road and Blanton Chapel Road (Cathey Ridge Road), in the direction of Bedford County. Recently, there has been a water main bust and a lot of residents are complaining about the low water pressure. This area of town is in need of a water tower to help with the pressure. Chairman/Commissioner Anderson asked if there had been any kind of funds spent for a study performed for this area and none could be recalled. Secretary/Commissioner Hunt stated that in the past when the water pressure was checked at the meter, it indicated the water pressure was adequate.

6.10 Apartment Complexes Installed with Master Meters:

- a) The master meters need to be installed at apartment complexes instead of individual meters for each unit for existing and future growth. Every winter season, a lot of the overtime hours are spent at Hillschapel Road apartment complex which has two taps and seventy-five water meter lines running to their individual apartments. There are a couple of ways to remedy this issue. One way is to provide a two- or four-inch meter to service the complex and meter their water. The apartment complex will divide their cost up among tenants instead of having seventy-five service lines to fix when their pipes freeze and bust as a long-term solution. This would also benefit the apartment complex with being out of water due to our line being busted. Currently, they have a two-inch line with two taps and then branches off to seventy-five meters. There is no room to work on them. Director Perry would like to propose to cut the two sections of pipe out where the two taps are, have a meter big enough to hook into what they have, and take the valves off the meters or sell them the meters in order for them to bill each tenant. In those meter boxes, the water meter bottoms rust out and bust with a huge amount of repair. Chairman/Commissioner Anderson recommended a policy change for new apartment buildings and a policy for existing buildings that have multiple meters to specify who will be responsible for the cost associated. Secretary/Commissioner Hunt mentioned that the policy needs to state what will be the cut off for the number of units, excluding duplexes.

7) Commissioners Comments:

- a) Mayor Hobbs added additional comments on a meeting he attended in Nashville last week. More information was given on the industrial site changing the focus on different industries coming in verses not so much automotive. They understand our issues and if they went with automotive that would be too many gallons a day that we may not be ready for. There are additional grant funds that we need to work on to get some projects going. Note that Director Perry, Adam Carter, and Mayor Hobbs meet every two weeks to make sure we stay on task and updates will be presented when things come in.

On a motion from Commissioner Hillsman, seconded by Chairman/Commissioner Anderson, the meeting adjourned. 5-0


Mike Anderson, Chairman


Gary Hunt, Recording Secretary