

**MANCHESTER WATER AND SEWER COMMISSION**  
**January 4, 2024**

The Manchester Water and Sewer Commission met on Thursday, January 4, 2024 for a regularly scheduled meeting. Present were: Chairman/Commissioner Anderson, Vice-Chairman/Commissioner Watson, Secretary/Commissioner Hunt, Commissioner Hillsman, Alderman/Vice-Mayor Messick, Mayor Howard, Director Miller, and Office Managers Candy Hilmoe and Jennifer Hall.

Absent: Assistant Director Raney.

Late Arrival: Alderman/Vice-Mayor Messick (3:25p)

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

1) The minutes of the regular meeting on November 9, 2023, were approved upon a motion by Vice-Chairman/Commissioner Watson, second by Commissioner Hillsman. After a vote was taken, the motion passed 4-0.

2) **Citizen Comments:**

None to report.

Mayor Howard acknowledged and stated how proud she was of Austin Haithcote in Water & Sewer-Warehouse in receiving several certifications.

3) **Director's Report:**

3.1 Sewer Rehabilitation Project:

- a) First phase of Iris Drive is complete. Next on the agenda is replacing a manhole where workers found a 4-inch gas line bored in 2007 into a 6-inch sewer lateral. Sewer was fixed on Old Stone Circle and Creek Wood Drive along with the repair of Oakdale trailer park's sewer issue within the next month.
- b) St. John Engineering has submitted plans to TDEC for the rehabilitation project that will rehabilitate areas in the White Oak's neighborhood and TDEC stated no due to the information being too vague. TDEC needed more specific information. After discussion of the Mayor Howard, Director Miller, and everyone else working to get a new plan set in place that TDEC approves. This will take camera work from our staff and from another vendor which he had received a couple of quotes for the 18 and 21-inch lines that would be a little difficult for our staff. They would place a camera in the sewer line and drag it with a cable. You would not be able to drive it like normal. At that point, take the camera data and upload into our database (GIS) for St. John Engineering in order to be able to use it right away. Mayor Howard mentioned there should be three bids. One bid for \$20,000 for this board's approval for the full and quicker job, second bid for \$15,000 which the company didn't provide the step-down process and we would have to rent a piece of equipment with the work of our sewer department, tying them up. It was recommended by St. John Engineering that the city would need to outsource as the city didn't have the materials. And lastly, the third bid from a company that was \$5,000 less didn't have all of the necessary equipment and needed additional help.
- c) In house sewer televising in Basin I and just under 2.5 miles of sewer televised last month in Basin E. This is to gather more and complying data for the project going to TDEC due to the ties to the grant and they need state approved plans. Some of the obstacles facing us are mechanical issues at first and when everything is running smoothly, we would hit an area with lots of roots. Then the purchase of a root cutter would need to be signed off by Mayor Howard for the purchase. Mayor Howard added that we currently have the grant money sitting there with no bids going out. Lance Hoover with Southern Ground Sewer, LLC (recommended by Terry Smith) could have come in and did the rehab of all those lines if the city

had funds available. The route taken was conservative and the process has been slow in getting the plans together and getting the bids out. The savings to be around \$700,000 in estimated money that we would have wasted on camera footage. It would have a cost of \$6 per linear foot at CCTV times 8,800 linear feet (our engineer), \$52,800 with additional equipment needed. The liability will be solely on Southern Ground Sewer, LLC. The deadline to complete the project is the later part of year 2026. A prepared resolution needs to be prepared and brought before the board in the upcoming special called BOMA meeting with two out of three bids written with an effort of three bids.

Vice-Chairman/Commissioner Watson made a motion to accept the \$6 per linear foot request from Southern Ground Sewer, LLC, Secretary/Commissioner Hunt seconded. After a vote was taken, the motion passed 4-1 (MM).

### 3.2 Water System Rehab:

- a) The McArthur Street project is being worked on by the Norris Brothers that includes replacing the old water line and setting the new water main out of the highway. Chairman/Commissioner Anderson asked Candy Hilmoe did the billing department have any customer(s) complaints and Candy is working on three water adjustments currently due to the break on their lines so we can bill Norris Brothers as well. Director Miller stated that he has received several and has a file of all the complaints and repairs. We are now asking Norris Brothers to fix the problems as soon as the complaints come in instead of the city fixing the problems. Image was presented for discussion.
- b) A value vault is being repaired on the road in front of the old hospital which half is on the sidewalk and half in the road. It will be relocated and replaced with a new non-concrete vault coming in underbid.

### 3.3 Waste Water Treatment Plant:

- a) The draft NPDES permit was received and a partial copy was presented to the board for discussion as the complete letter consists of ten pages. There were some requested items that we had asked to be removed from executing some testing three times a week with increase work for the lab staff. Based upon past experience, the request to be opted out of certain requirements were granted. Discussion of items being tested for were BOD (strong waste water), ammonia, and total suspended solids. A response has been drafted and a copy was given to the board for review. The city's response is ready for submission on January 5, 2024.
- b) The digester mixer (10-12 years old) needs repair. The new mixer assembly has been ordered.
- c) Every five years, an application for a biosolid permit needs to be submitted to land apply your solids. Items for the application is being gathered along with all relevant laboratory and sampling data.

### 3.4 Sewer Rehab:

- a) Repairs to the floats of the west end lift station was completed to help with the turning on and off process and cycling. The flow is decent now, but we still need to get it fixed and the survey has been completed as residents were concerned.

### 3.5 Equipment Upgrade:

- a) Three bids have been received for the purchase of a 6" sewer pump used to pump down a clarifier, digester, or bypass pumping (while fixing the main) at the waste water treatment plant. There was only one bid that qualified in including all that

was requested. The pump is a Xylan brand (top of the line) in the amount of \$75,000 versus \$700,000 in rental pumps. Discussion of a rental pump at Sunbelt's Rentals where they would contract the service of the pump anytime. Direction Miller was asked to revisit the options, but did recommend a new sewer pump for the twenty-four lift stations collection systems that could lose power.

Secretary/Commissioner Hunt made a motion to purchase the 6" bypass pump, Commissioner Hillsman seconded. After a vote was taken, the motion passed 4-1 (MM).

### 3.6 Budget:

- a) Discussion of a MTAS rate study to help with future rate increases. The cost of the study is \$5,000 and would take six months to complete. They will also focus on the cost to run the department and what your rate structure should be set. It will also take a look at what the wholesales water prices that we currently pay. The use for this survey is for best practices for the city for future state grants qualifications. Taking into count the cost of rehab that is going to take place, the survey could be beneficial for the city verses looking at the budget. This process will help Director Miller with the load that he is currently facing.

## 4) Billing Office Items:

### 4.1 Office Administrator for Warehouse Position

- a) Jennifer Hall presented to the board Sheena Sartain, a temporary employee in the billing office filling in for Susan Parsley while she has been out. The city previously had a job description available for an Office Administrator for the warehouse area that we would like to place Sheena into this role has a full-time employee. She is a smart young lady, learns quickly, and works hard in learning the office process. Confirmation from Director Miller that we do have the money available for the position pay by way of an employee that transferred from the Water and Sewer department, warehouse division to the Police department. This job position would take on his job responsibilities to save money. Christine David in the Human Resource office confirmed that this isn't a newly created position. The position had already been created in the past, just not filled. Board agreed that this would be a decision Director Miller would need to make. Director Miller just wanted to inform the board and be transparent. No action by the board is needed.

### 4.2 Extension Time for Cut Offs (45 Days)

- b) Candy Hilmoe presented to the board the change granted to extend the cut off time to allow customers an additional 20 days to pay. Issues are within our Tyler/Incode billing system where we are having to delete prior month's packet in order to print past due bills which causes the billing department to lose cut off information for the prior month. Another issue is when customer is ready to pay and there has been a delay in so many bills, they are not able to afford huge payment that is now due. A solution would be to double our required deposit amount to cover what is left being owed when the customers decide to disconnect their water service and move to another location. The city is losing money of uncollected past due amounts as we do not possess a collection agency in the past two years. Lastly, the lengthen time frame causes confusion when the newest bill will state a past due date for that particular month, but they are actually being cut off on days prior their past due date for the prior unpaid bills. Our current deposit is \$150.00. Board asked for the number of cut offs per month and Candy responded with 150 cut offs and Terry Teal reduces that number down to 40-75. Another reason for customer(s) confusion of due dates and cut off dates is due to our three billing cycles verses only one billing cycle. Tullahoma has the 20 days grace period until cut off. Recommendation to change the ordinance back to the original grace period of 25 days until the cut off. We will need to write up a new

ordinance with the changes that needs to put in place to present to the commission board and to send further onto BOMA.

5) **Commissioner's Comments:**

5.1 **Water Department Grants**

- a) Alderman/Vice-Mayor Messick discussed the ARP grant with a good report and has to be spent by September, 2026. The ARC grant is still waiting on the Native Indian Tribes sign off with the intention of the land that it will disturb and/or damage to any ancient burial grounds or any Indian artifacts within thirty days. EDI grant for \$1MM hasn't been awarded, but has contacted us for additional information as it has been sent and the representative advices that this is a good sign of being considered.
- b) Chairman Anderson asked for an update regarding the water break (leak) repairs' insurance program. Director Miller stated the company had given us a questionnaire which has been submitted. They will take the information and give us a quote for the cost to participate in the insurance program within two or three months or even the next 30 days.
- c) Chairman Anderson advised board members of the document he had passed out to record training as a state requirement now. The recording will be every January of every year for the previous year's training. The training in Gatlinburg consist of six hours as Director Miller has the certificates. If there is any other training, you will have to have proof of attendance. This is a record keeping of training city and county commissioners.

6) **Old Business:**

None to report.

7) **New Business:**

Items previously discussed.

On a motion from Chairman Anderson, seconded by Alderman/Vice-Mayor Messick, the meeting adjourned.

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**Mike Anderson, Chairman**

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**Gary Hunt, Recording Secretary**