

MANCHESTER WATER AND SEWER COMMISSION
March 7, 2024

The Manchester Water and Sewer Commission met on Thursday, March 7, 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, Assistant Director Raney, and Billing Office Manager Jennifer Hall.

Absent: None

Late Arrival: None

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

1) The minutes of the regular meeting on February 8, 2024, were approved upon a motion by Vice-Chairman/Commissioner Watson, second by Commissioner Hillsman. After a vote was taken, the motion passed 5-0.

2) **Citizen Comments:**

None to report

3) **Director's Report:**

3.1 **Sewer Rehab:**

- a) The downtown work for the 6" storm drainage disconnection from sewer is moving along.
- b) There bad inlet to the manhole was fixed at Cooper Place.
- c) The line behind Home Depot was fixed and replaced with 16" piping.
- d) The manhole on Skinner Flat was raised. With the heavy rains in the past couple of days, there was still a small overflow visible. Director Phil Miller would like to seal top the manhole to prevent any spill out at all. The storm drain was disconnected out front of the city hall and it is now complete. The more he is looking, the more problems are being discovered. Work needs to be done at the ally way at the Mercantile Café building, Hwy 41 (state permit is required), and etc.

3.2 **Water System Rehab:**

- a) The rehab of the water system project is coming along. It is estimated 4-6 weeks until completion on McArthur Street by the Norris Brothers. The project consists of replacing the old water line. The last big hurdle crossed was the meter pit for the hospital.

3.2 **Waste Water Treatment Plant:**

- a) Director Phil Miller stated that the city did receive the permit, but NPDES did not grant leniency on the testing to one day a week. Testing will be three times a week with a weak rational plan that was normal and standard.

3.3 **Water Distribution:**

- a) The insurance (Serve Line) for customers was quoted at \$1.43 per customer per month with \$500 of basic insurance coverage for water loss. It would be a higher quote number of repairs. Chairman/Commissioner Anderson suggested that we could offer our customers this insurance and they would have a choice to opt out during a specified period of time if they were not interested. Information of this insurance would be provided to our customers by mail. Mayor Howard was concerned that insurance companies are out there to make money. If our city

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charged the customer and funds were held in a checking account, we could handle the refunds in line with other cities. We currently have a policy in place that doesn't reimburse 100%, but a percentage if a customer has a leak. Customers can have one water adjustment and two sewer adjustment per year. Leaks typically don't run through our sewer system and that is why Phil opted out not to go with the sewer adjustment insurance coverage. It was asked that Jennifer Hall to run numbers of water and sewer adjustments per month for a year to present to the next monthly meeting. We would save the city money if we could offer the insurance and changed our adjustment policy.

- b) As a group, the department has decided not to proceed with the purchase of the smart meters and software. Maybe purchase some in increments. Director Phil Miller received an awesome deal that he could not pass the opportunity up. The salesman offered sixty meters and cellar devices and the software package that can be implemented into the cell phones and computers for \$9,000.00 valued at \$40,000.00. At that point, the purchase the bigger meters like the ones in the Industrial Park could take place. The smart meter will tell us that there is a broken pipe in the freezing weather again. It will bling on the phone when there is a loss of pressure or if they are using a ton of water. This program will integrate with our current billing system.

Secretary/Commissioner Hunt made a motion to purchase the smart meter package in the amount of \$9,000.00, Chairman/Commissioner Anderson seconded. After a vote was taken, the motion passed 5-0.

3.4 Collection System:

None to report.

3.5 Equipment Upgrade:

- a) The 6" pump has arrived and now we have three suction lines and five discharge lines. A couple of more accessories will need to be purchased to get it going.

3.6 Budget:

- a) At this time, the budget percentages should be around 66% if your monthly expenses are consistent over the twelve-month period. Some items are sticking out with high percentages as Director Phil Miller has written in the explanation for the expense. For the budget amendment and the next budget, Phil has worked with Kevin Raney to input those figures in and the reasonings behind them. Discussion was made over certain line items. Going forward, Phil has asked for more funding. There is a need to use engineering service a lot with several projects completed and going on. There was a cyber security upgrade which took up a major amount of funding in order to put into placed. The cost of items and services has increased at least double and even tripe amount from a year ago. Kevin added that companies had started shipping items that had been on back order since COVID causing the inflation of the budget items which would present a underbudget two years ago. There was also a huge issue with the infrastructure (I&I) behind The Home Depot that was on an 18" line and needed two ferncos' (rubber seal that seals two pipes together). Alderman/Vice-Mayor Messick has asked Lisa Myers in Finance to report on the grant money that has been spent and what was purchased with those funds. We will be spending more money in-house repairing sewer and removing inflow water. There was a lot of repair work on a huge drainage ditch coming from Cooper Place, off Hillschapel Road, and going towards Indian Springs. One repair was the manhole close to the ditch, with thousand and thousand gallons of water was whirlpooling around this area.

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4) **Billing Office Items:**

4.1 **Proposal for Ordinance Changes:**

- a) Jennifer Hall presented to the board an ordinance to change the past due days from the previous extension of 45 days back to 10 days after due date before a customer's water can be cut-off for nonpayment. Mayor Howard added that before, customers had postcard with a payment due in 10 days with a past due postcard (warning) for 15 more days, and the board granted another 20 more days (total of 45 days).

Commissioner Hillsman made a motion to recommend this ordinance change proposal to the board of Mayor and Aldermen contingent upon correcting the ten (10) days to twenty-five (25) after the due date before someone's water can be cut-off for nonpayment as an amended motion, Alderman/Vice-Mayor Messick seconded. After a vote was taken, the motion passed 4-1 (MM).

- a) Jennifer Hall presented to the board an ordinance to change the refundable deposit of one hundred fifty dollars (\$150.00) to a non-refundable three hundred dollars (\$300.00) service utility fee at the time of applying for new water residential service. This method would help the collection of outstanding balances left by customers. The board was not in favor of this change and should wait for outcome of the approval of the first ordinance change of shortening of the past due time frame.

5) **Commissioner's Comments:**

5.1 **Purchase of a Water and Sewer Taps:**

- a) Alderman/Vice-Mayor Messick asked Jennifer Hall is someone wanted to purchase a water and sewer tap, where would they pay? Jennifer advised that those purchases go through Director Phil Miller for the amount and availability. Alderman/Vice-Mayor Messick was satisfied with answer as Phil would know that the new structure may include a duplex (two fees) and the correct pricing will be approved.

6) **Old Business:**

None to report.

7) **New Business:**

Asset Management will be discussed at the next scheduled meeting as what is best for the City of Manchester.

On a motion from Chairman Anderson, seconded by Commissioner Hillsman, the meeting adjourned.


Mike Anderson, Chairman


Gary Hunt, Recording Secretary