

# Village of Bellaire

## PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE

**Eldon McPherson, Chairman**

**Patricia Drollinger**

**Laurie Sexton**

### Meeting Synopsis

The Village of Bellaire Public Works Committee was to have met on Thursday, July 24, 2014 at 9:00 a.m. at Meadow Brook, Meguzee Hall, 4543 South M-88 Highway, Bellaire, MI 49615. The only committee member able to attend was Eldon McPherson. Village of Bellaire staff in attendance included Ken Stead, Chris Thompson and Lori Luckett. McPherson had been tasked with the responsibility of attending the Meadow Brook board meeting to present the village's proposal to install a permanent sewer meter for calculating usage if the infiltration was not remedied by August 1, 2014. The village proposes to share the cost of the meter with Meadow Brook. McPherson informed those in attendance that the problems with infiltration have continued and the temporary meter has proved ineffective and inaccurate. He advised that recently roughly 90,000 gallons had been missed due to coverage of the sensor. He reported that waste water staff has to make twice weekly checks of the temporary meter to read, clean, calibrate and re-install. Additionally, staff has to make multiple readings which raises the cost to the village. He indicated that he recognized Meadow Brook would be paying \$100,000 to \$130,000 for a new system, and thought it likely that engineers would have factored in the end discharge metering. Had they?

David Schulz asked how many other customers had this device? McPherson indicated only one. McPherson stated that once the infiltrate issue is fixed, the sewer meter would result in a more accurate reading of the water going into the system. Stead added that there are deductions for the irrigation and Meadow View apartments. McPherson thought the accurate meter reading would result in savings to both. The village is prepared to pay half the cost of the sewer meter; total cost from the engineer is roughly \$20,000. McPherson said the village council is concerned about costs to the village residents resulting from inaccurate readings. If the infiltrate is not fixed by November, where do we go? Does the village continue with the temporary meter? Should the village bill on calculated averages? The goal is to figure out the best way to properly meter and charge. The village council passed a motion at the July meeting, if the situation is not fixed by August 1, 2014 a permanent sewer meter would be installed and the village would offer to pay half. Council thought it would be \$8,000 to \$10,000.

Board member, Mike Ballard, asked if the issue was only in the peak season? Thompson reported that from March to April the temporary meter recorded 569,000 gallons while the Meadow Brook water meter registered 242,000 gallons. April to May the figures were 565,000 and 214,000 respectively; May through June 277,000 and 272,000. During this period the temporary meter stopped reading because it was clogged. He calculated based on past reads that at least 90,000 gallons was missed. Thompson reported that the waste water plant had an extra 4.6 million gallons last year over and above the previous five year period. This costs the village extra to treat and puts extra volume through the system. He advised that last year the village had issues getting the ponds low enough to hold water all winter long. Ballard stated that it appears the usage has not varied. It may be months or decades that the pipes have been failing. If the solution occurs in a few months, the village should see output more in line with usage.

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Rick Teague asked if the problem was fixed, would the village be asking to install the sewer meter? McPherson said there is an issue of infiltration as well as the reading of meters.

Schulz provided a report to the board members advising that Meadow Brook pays the sewage costs times two. The village has been paid by Meadow Brook \$558,000 for services since being connected. The village has also received money for tapping in.

McPherson acknowledged that Meadow Brook pays two times the resident rates. Nothing it pays goes towards the bond payment.

Teague - if Meadow Brook already pays two times more, the new meter will not save Meadow Brook anything.

McCleese reported that when Meadow Brook had a problem with the irrigation meter the village was not cooperative. The village does not like reading and deducting meters. Now Meadow Brook has a permanent fix to the water supplied.

Thompson asked if this problem occurred in the last four months. McCleese indicated that it was several years ago.

Teague asked how not paying towards the bond affected village residents? McPherson said a decision was made by council that those who lived outside the village would pay extra fees for use of the waste water system. Teague asked if 2 times was over and above. He asked Schulz. Schulz said he would have to look at the water bill. He thought \$5000 a month for waste water would offset payments towards lost tax revenues. Teague wondered if Meadow Brook was paying its fair share already. Stead and McPherson both indicated the two times the rate has been in place for 20 to 30 years. Teague asked whether Meadow Brook should be paying half the cost of the meter to village labor and for an accurate read?

Ballard thought the village should not be charging when the temporary meter was not working. Thompson indicated that the village did not charge for missed or inaccurate reads. The infiltrate is not limited to rain events. Teague said we should work to resolve the issue to the mutual benefit. Thompson informed that the proposed meter measures 2 gallons per minute. Teague asked Schulz to put together figures on what the village user pays to support the bond versus what Meadow Brook pays. Schulz advised that because of his position it would be difficult. Teague asked him to work through McCleese.

Robertson stated that at the March 3 meeting the temporary meter was discussed. Since then, Meadow Brook has expended \$20,000 in trying to fix the problem.

Discussion that the temporary meter could be used for other purposes. Meadow Brook has not paid for the temporary meter but its current bills are being calculated based on the meter. McPherson thought that if the temporary meter gets clogged again, the village will use the average. Fred Harris thought the average read would be fair. Village – if the permanent meter is installed, it will not have to be as closely monitored. The \$20,000 is for the cost of the meter, the pit, electrical, cover and

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installation. McPherson thought this should have been included in any engineering for the Meadow Brook system. Certainly best practices would have meant reviewing the old when tying into the new. Harris wondered about the time frame for replacement. McPherson stated that he would take comments back to the next council meeting.

As the board proceeded through the agenda, Harris indicated that the time for getting the new wing on line would be beyond November 1.

McCleese and Brad (The Christman Company) reported on the water issue. Brad indicated that “Blue Jay Lane” has been identified as a problem. John from PCS has been working on isolating the source and working with contractors to come up with solution. Possible options: 1. Full out replacement; not really an option. The problem is that the ground water is not far under the slab. The plumbing lines are deeper than the foundation. 2. The best option is sleeving the existing pipes in place and redoing the plumbing lines. Some of the connection joints are bad. Last week they thought they would have to dig out all the plumbing. 3. Abandon Blue Jay Lane plumbing and redirect the lines. Brad stated they prefer not to do this. He indicated they are working to develop a sound plan. So far the sleeving appears to be the better option. He is still vetting it out because he is not familiar with the contractor who would do this work. The ground water is 4 feet below the foundation. Sleeving would not shut down the Glacier Hills wing and would not interrupt patient care.

Discussion that the water lines have been an issue since 1982. The use of the system with staff pouring bleach has damaged the pipes. Harris stated that they are trying to avoid a sink hole. That is a concern. The flowing, the soil and the material removed will have to be hauled away. This will add to the cost. Ballard asked about suppliers of the sleeving material. Brad indicated they are limited and warned there likely will not be competing bids. Brad thinks the cost will be \$100,000 or less. He said that the plumbing in the rooms will also have to be done and the sleeving quote would include this. At this time, Glacier Hills has checked out. He is not sure about Grass Creek. There are three tie in points to the main line. They will sleeve up to those locations.

Pete Garwood asked about the thickness of the pvc used for the sleeving. Brad explained that the sleeving is inserted into the existing pipes then expanded. It is thinner than the pvc pipes in place but the product comes with a warranty.

Prepared by Lori Luckett, July 24, 2014