

VILLAGE OF EPHRAIM

FOUNDED 1853



Wastewater Committee Minutes Monday, June 1, 2026, 9:00 AM

Present: Karen McMurtry- Chair, Rick Hoyerman, Bruce Nelson, Jim Peterman

Online: Dennis Jewell

Staff: Brad Rasmusson – Wastewater Manager/Operator in Charge, Brent Bristol – Administrator, Andrea Collak – Clerk/Treasurer

Online: Daniel Oakley – Wastewater Operator

1. **Call to order:** The meeting was called to order by Chair - McMurtry and a quorum was present for this meeting.
2. **Changes in Agenda:** None
3. **Previous minutes – Minutes from May 11, 2026**

Peterman moved, McMurtry seconded to approve May 11, 2026, meeting minutes as presented, all ayes, and the motion carried.

4. **Visitors' comments:** None

5. **Ephraim Plant Manager Report:**

EFF samples sent to Northern Lake Services for ammonia testing:

Ph testing: Five times per week as required.

TSS, BOD, Po4, labs with lab cleanup: Twice per week as required.

Eff E-coli test, this must be done May-October once per week while running disinfection.

- Sent out, completed, and submitted 2026 sludge characteristics test to DNR, and the Village is awaiting a response.
- Great Lakes TV & Seal cleaned the lift stations. Dewatering bag was used to dump the waste into then hauled and dumped at GFL. During a dewatering bag operation, a zip tie securing the bag failed, causing an estimated 300–400 gallons of material to discharge back onto the asphalt surface. A spill response plan was activated: sandbags were deployed, a vacuum truck was used to recover material from the ground, and the entire area was sanitized and rinsed. The OIC subsequently consulted with the DNR, who determined that the incident did not meet the threshold for a formal spill report. Corrective procedures will be implemented for future dewatering operations.
- Sent out more effluent samples for permit renewal testing.
- Shortly after annual meter calibration, it was discovered that the composite sampler was not collecting samples when flow rates exceeded 150 gallons per minute due to a faulty 4-20 milliamp voltage amplifier. The component was identified and replaced for approximately \$35 via an online supplier, and normal sampling function was restored. Rasmusson noted that flows above 150 gallons per minute are precisely when higher solids concentrations occur, making accurate sampling most important.
- Interviews for a summer position were conducted. Nathan Merkle was hired for the summer season.
- Gathered and entered data for ECMAR.
- Wet wells, deep wells, and lift stations were inspected and found to be in good condition. Seasonal equipment along North Shore Road was transitioned from winter to summer configurations.

- Assisted the maintenance department with assembling and installing flags for streetlights.

Upcoming Paving: Paving work is anticipated near the facility toward the end of the month. The crew will coordinate truck access and service logistics with neighboring stations during the anticipated one-to-one-and-a-half-week period when heavy vehicle access will be restricted.

Phase 1 / Solar Project Update: Rasmusson reported that an option to incorporate solar into the Phase 1 project submission was explored but would require an additional \$5,000–\$10,000 in engineering costs. The current plan remains to resubmit Phase 1 as originally designed by the September deadline. The potential for principal forgiveness of approximately \$2,100,000 through the state funding program is expected to be clarified in the December–January timeframe. Rasmusson acknowledged the Village may rank high enough to qualify but may be too low on the priority list to receive the forgiveness and noted that solar and other project phasing decisions will be better informed once those answers are received.

Ephraim Well Water Testing: Year to Date

Number of Water Tests: 172	476
In-House Bacteria: 159	421
Clean Water Testing: 13	55

Ephraim Septage Service: Year to Date

Holding Tank Pump Outs: 7	16
Septic Pump Outs/Inspections:	
Emergency Call Ins:	

6. Discussion and consideration of the 2025 WI DNR eCMAR report

Compliance Maintenance Annual Report (CMAR) is a self-evaluation tool that promotes the owner's awareness and responsibility for wastewater collection and treatment needs, measures the performance of wastewater treatment works during a calendar year, and assesses its level of compliance with permit requirements. The governing body of a publicly owned treatment works shall pass a resolution that verifies its review of the CMAR, summarizes recommended or corrective actions if necessary, and authorizes the submittal of the eCMAR form.

The Village received an overall score a 4.0 overall Grade Point Average (GPA) Grade A with no corrections or deficiencies at the time of the regular meeting of the Wastewater Committee. Rasmusson noted this score reflects strong performance across all reporting categories such as Influent Flow and Loading, Effluent Quality and Plant Performance (BOD/CBOD, Total Suspended Solids, Ammonia – NH₃, Phosphorus), Biosolids Quality and Management, Staffing and Preventive Maintenance, Operator Certification and Education, Financial Management, and Sanitary Sewer Collection Systems.

It was noted that the village's replacement fund balance well exceeds the DNR's minimum required threshold of \$265,500. The OIC highlighted that all zero-violation fields in the report reflect clean discharge results throughout the year.

Hoyerman asked about the scoring scale and was informed that a score below 3 would be cause for concern and could affect the environmental discharge fee assessed against the Village. Hoyerman also inquired whether deteriorating capital infrastructure related to the upcoming treatment plant project could negatively affect the score; Rasmusson indicated that equipment

failures alone would not do so, as redundant equipment is in place, and only events such as a reportable spill or injury would likely impact the rating.

Discussion also touched on the sewer collection system camera inspection requirement. The DNR requests that 20% of the collection system be inspected annually, but recent years have seen only approximately 5% completed due to budget constraints. Rasmusson suggested that the committee consider establishing a dedicated budget line for camera work rather than relying on remaining funds in the general collection system maintenance budget. For reference, the Village has approximately 1.2 miles of sewer pipe within its 3-mile footprint.

McMurtry noted that the Village has consistently received a score of 4 throughout recent committee history, with the only exceptions occurring during a period of sanitary sewer overflow events on North Shore Road.

The committee recognized Rasmusson and his team for their continued excellent performance.

7. Discussion and consideration of resolution 02-2026 – Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, Wisc. Admin. Code NR 208 – Compliance Maintenance Resolution

Rasmusson explained that this resolution is a companion item to the eCMAR report and is required to appear as a separate agenda item. The resolution was presented and approved as part of the same motion approving the eCMAR report. Rasmusson will submit the 2025 WI DNR eCMAR this week.

McMurtry moved, Nelson seconded to approve 2025 eCMAR resolution 02-2026 - Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, WISC, Admin Code NR 208 – Compliance Maintenance Resolution, all ayes, and the motion carried.

8. Visitors' comments: None

9. New business for the next meeting:

Nelson made a point for the record regarding the solar component of the wastewater treatment upgrade project. He emphasized that solar represents the only portion of the anticipated project that carries a guaranteed principal forgiveness benefit—approximately 30% of the solar project cost funded through external sources—and is also the only component projected to generate long-term savings on electricity costs over the next 30 or more years. Nelson further noted that solar would provide a hedge against inevitable future increases in electric rates. He urged the committee to give serious consideration to solar, whether included within the broader project phases or pursued as a standalone project, characterizing it as a fiscally prudent obligation to village residents and businesses who will otherwise face rate increases as a result of the facility expansion.

The next meeting was set for **July 6, 2026**.

9. Adjournment

McMurtry moved, Hoyerman seconded to adjourn the meeting, all ayes, and the motion carried.

Recorded by Andrea Collak - Clerk/Treasurer