

**VILLAGE OF EPHRAIM
WASTEWATER COMMITTEE MINUTES
MONDAY, AUGUST 3, 2026 – 9:00 AM
9996 Water Street- Ephraim Village Hall**



Action Items:

Peterman moved, Hoyerman seconded to approve the minutes of June 1, 2025, all ayes. Motion carried.

The consensus of the Wastewater Committee members present was to submit the updated CMOM to the WI DNR, with the corrections to be made first.

The consensus of the Wastewater Committee members present was to recommend to the Village Board that the Village prepare and issue a Request for Proposal (RFP) to qualified solar installation contractors, using existing power usage data and site information, and to bring supporting documentation, including the McMahon memorandum and Elan Electric cost estimate, before the Board at its next meeting in August.

McMurtry moved, Jewell seconded to adjourn at 9:44 AM, all ayes. Motion carried.

Present: Rick Hoyerman, Jim Peterman, Bruce Nelson, Dennis Jewell, and Karen McMurtry - Chair.

Absent: None.

Guests: None.

Staff: Brad Rasmusson – Wastewater OIC, Dan Oakley (Online) – Wastewater Operator, Nathan Merkel – Wastewater Intern, and Kim Roberts – Deputy Clerk.

1. **Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order by McMurtry at 8:00 AM.

2. **Changes to the agenda:** There were no changes.

3. **Visitors' Comments:** There were no comments.

4. **Approval of the previous minutes:**

Peterman moved, Hoyerman seconded to approve the minutes of June 1, 2025, all ayes. Motion carried.

5. **Plant Manager's Report:**

Rasmussen reviewed the July 2026 Plant Manager Report:

Water Lab Audit: The facility underwent a water lab audit. The auditor spent half a day on-site and identified two (2) minor findings which have since been corrected and approved.

Lightning Strike: A lightning strike knocked out overhead doors at the treatment plant and the new maintenance shop. The clarifier drives and some lab equipment required manual restarts but were restored without significant issue.

Blower Failure: A failing bearing on a blower was discovered during a walk-through of the boiler room. A replacement unit was sourced from factory stock and installed within a couple of days. The original blower has been sent for evaluation, and a repair quote will be brought forward for a future decision.

Generator Battery Incident: Smoke was reported along with loud noise coming from a green box near the beach. It was ultimately determined that the battery charger was overcharging, causing the generator battery to fail. Cummins was called and responded within approximately two (2) hours, installing a new battery and charger by 4:30 PM the same day.

Transfer Switch Replacement at Lift Station No. 2: NEI replaced the transfer switch at Lift Station No. 2, which required a complete power shutdown for nearly five (5) hours. Septic Maintenance trucks were brought in to haul sewage up the hill, where it was diverted by gravity to the plant via Bella Vista Lane. Rasmusson acknowledged that the work was completed successfully. He also noted the new switch was intentionally sized to accommodate a future generator upgrade.

Paving: A paving project required a shutdown of the Wastewater Treatment Plant for approximately one and one-half weeks. The work was described as looking great, though a small concrete repair is still needed

at the plant entrance where the new asphalt came in slightly higher. The contractor agreed to provide labor if the Village supplies the concrete, which Rasmusson considered a favorable arrangement.

Routine Maintenance: Staff painted the roof vents at the plant, giving them a uniform appearance. Old diffusers that had been stored for approximately two years had their membranes stripped and replaced. Septic inspections are ongoing, with the remainder expected to be completed soon.

6. Discussion and consideration regarding 2026 CMOM update:

Rasmusson explained that the CMOM (Capacity, Management, Operation, and Maintenance) update is a DNR requirement with a deadline of September 30th. The original CMOM was prepared by McMahon in 2016. Rasmusson reviewed and updated the document, producing a revised version for Committee review.

A discussion was held regarding the 2026 CMOM. McMurtry raised a question regarding the nitrogen testing schedule, which listed the 3rd quarter of both 2026 and 2027 as testing periods, and questioned whether the 2027 entry should instead be the 4th quarter. Rasmusson stated he would verify the permit requirements to confirm the correct schedule. Rasmusson walked through the key components of the updated CMOM, which includes a copy of the current operating permit, the annual budget, and Chapter 13 of the Ephraim Code of Ordinances. He noted a new permit is currently in process with the DNR and is expected within one to two months. Hoyerman asked whether effluent requirements would change under the new permit, and Rasmusson confirmed that nitrogen testing requirements and PFAS monitoring are expected to change.

Regarding PFAS, Rasmusson reported that when the Village's testing was conducted, the result was approximately 21 against a threshold of 30 for combined PFAS compounds, placing the Village below the level that would trigger additional monitoring. He noted that some neighboring communities came in at or above 30, but that in all cases regulators would likely look for identifiable industrial sources before imposing further requirements.

On televising, Hoyerman asked about the requirement to inspect 10% of the collection system annually. Rasmusson explained this is accomplished via camera truck, and acknowledged that in recent years televising has been funded from whatever remains in the Collection Maintenance budget line item rather than from a dedicated line item. He suggested that establishing a separate budget line for televising may be worth considering to ensure the 10% target is consistently met. Rasmusson suggested January as a logical time for the annual review of the CMOM, as operational activity is typically lower and the new budget would be in place.

Emergency contact information was identified as needing an update, specifically the medical clinic listing, which still referenced Fish Creek and an outdated clinic name.

The consensus of the Wastewater Committee members present was to submit the updated CMOM to the WI DNR, with the corrections to be made first.

7. Discussion regarding solar power at the Wastewater Treatment Facility:

B. Nelson opened the discussion by expressing concern that the Village has been slow to advance the solar project, and proposed an alternative path forward. He noted that McMahon's prior engineering work — which cost the village approximately \$330,000–\$360,000 — did not produce a standalone, biddable set of plans and specifications for the solar component, which he acknowledged had been a mistaken assumption on the Committee's part.

B. Nelson proposed that rather than paying additional engineering fees, the Village could prepare a Request for Proposal (RFP) and distribute it directly to qualified solar installation companies. His position was that the Village already possesses the information these contractors would need: Power usage data, utility costs broken down by month, and knowledge of where panels would be sited. He argued that suppliers themselves are best positioned to design the appropriate system based on those inputs, and that this approach would avoid significant additional engineering costs.

A discussion was held regarding drafting and RFP for solar at the Wastewater Treatment Facility. Hoyerman asked whether the Village had enough information today to issue such an RFP without additional

work. B. Nelson confirmed that he believed so, citing experience with Elan Electric and the Grow Solar program.

The discussion touched on the urgency of moving forward. B. Nelson stressed that federal funding opportunities and Focus on Energy incentives carry hard deadlines, and that inaction could result in the Village paying 100% of the project cost rather than a third or two-thirds. He noted that both the Wastewater Committee and the Green Tier Committee have previously made recommendations to the Board to pursue the project.

Jewell agreed with B. Nelson's framing, observing that the Committee does not yet have an actual cost for the system — only a two-year-old budget estimate from McMahon prepared by Elan Electric — and that getting a real proposal from contractors is the logical next step.

Peterman expressed broader frustration, noting that the Committee has been discussing the Wastewater Treatment Plant renovation for close to a year without sitting down with McMahon to go through the full scope of work item by item. He compared the situation to home renovation, arguing that doing it right once is more cost-effective than piecemeal fixes. He also suggested the solar project should be evaluated in the context of the larger plant renovation, and endorsed the idea of going directly to solar contractors for competitive proposals.

Hoyerman suggested that before the next Village Board meeting, the Committee determine what it would cost to prepare and issue the RFP, and bring that information along with supporting documentation — including the McMahon memorandum and Elan Electric's budget estimate — before the Village Board for a vote. The goal would be to keep the process moving without committing the Village to a final decision.

The consensus of the Wastewater Committee members present was to recommend to the Village Board that the Village prepare and issue a Request for Proposal (RFP) to qualified solar installation contractors, using existing power usage data and site information, and to bring supporting documentation, including the McMahon memorandum and Elan Electric cost estimate, before the Board at its next meeting in August.

8. **Visitors' Comments:** There were no Visitors' Comments.

9. **New business for the next meeting:**

- a. Solar for the Wastewater Treatment Facility.
- b. 2027 Budget.

The next meeting of the Wastewater Committee will take place on Monday, August 31, 2026 at 9 AM.

10. **Adjournment:**

McMurtry moved, Jewell seconded to adjourn at 9:44 AM, all ayes. Motion carried.

Recorded by Kim Roberts – Deputy Clerk