

1 **SPECIAL SEWER AND WATER UTILITIES COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES**
2 **TUESDAY, JANUARY 14, 2025**
3 **VIA VIDEO CONFERENCE**
4 **(APPROVED VERSION)**
5

6 The January 14, 2025 meeting of the Sewer and Water Utilities Committee was called to order by
7 Committee Chairperson Denise Bhirdo at 7:45 A.M.

8
9 **Present:** Chairperson Denise Bhirdo and members Kurt Harff and Alison Werner

10
11 **Staff Members:** Utilities Director Megan Barnes and Utilities Clerk Kara Kroll

12
13 **Others:** Dave Lienau, Sam Jordan, Laurel Harff, and “Tim”

14
15 **Approval of the Agenda:**

16 *A motion was made by Werner, seconded by Harff that the Agenda for the January 14, 2025 meeting of*
17 *the Sewer and Water Utilities Committee be approved as presented. Motion carried – all ayes.*
18

19 **Approval of the minutes:**

20 *A motion was made by Harff, seconded by Werner to approve the minutes of the November 12, 2024*
21 *meeting of the Sewer and Water Utilities Committee as presented. Motion carried – all ayes.*
22

23 **Public Comments and Correspondence**

24
25 No correspondence was received for this meeting.
26

27 **Discussion Items:**

28 **a) Wastewater Treatment Plant Operations Report**

29 A copy of the Sewer and Water Utility operations report prepared by Barnes was included in the meeting
30 packet for the members to review. Bhirdo asked a question about the Blackstone Harbor bypass valve
31 issue. Barnes said that it appears a contractor that was doing work at the facility broke the bypass valve
32 and turned the valve on without knowing what it was for. Blackstone said the users do not pay for their
33 own water service, so there is no reason to believe this was vandalism. Blackstone was billed for the parts
34 and labor to replace the broken equipment. The Utilities estimated the lost water and billed Blackstone,
35 per PSC rules and regulations. Bhirdo asked about the non-conforming features in the Sanitary Sewer
36 Report that was included in the packet and why they were not dealt with at the time of the plant upgrade.
37 Barnes said the items are related to the water side and the plant upgrade was related to wastewater, so
38 they would not have been dealt with at that time. The non-conforming features are items that conformed
39 when the items were installed, but now the code has changed, and the items will have to conform when
40 an upgrade is done, or new equipment is installed.
41

42 **b) Discuss Marina Billing**

43 Barnes gave some background information on the leak and sewer charges. The Utilities read meters on
44 September 16, 2024, for the third quarter utility billing. High usage was detected on September 17, 2024, at
45 the Marina. The Marina meter was read again on September 18, 2024, and it was determined the Marina
46 had used 11,000 gallons of water since September 16, 2024. The Marina was notified of the leak and shortly
47 after Sam contacted Megan with the location of the leak on D Dock. The Marina was not going to fix the leak

1 until October 15, 2025, when the Marina was scheduled to be shut down for the season. Barnes contacted
2 the DNR representative and notified them of the leak to see if any special reporting needed to be done.
3 Barnes went to the Marina and suggested the leak get repaired as soon as possible, as the Utilities is required
4 to bill for any water usage. Barnes offered to turn the water off, but was told the boats require water, so the
5 water could not be turned off. Kroll estimated the amount of lost water as being \$40.00 to \$50.00 per day.
6 Jordan notified Barnes that Cater Plumbing fixed the leak on September 24, 2024. The usage for the seven
7 days, September 18th through the 24th, was 66,000 gallons. Barnes noted the Marina minutes on November
8 13, 2024, stated the leak was fixed in two days, but that was not the case. Barnes mentioned that the Utilities
9 notified the Marina as soon as the leak was discovered. The Utilities performs quarterly meter readings and
10 that is when the leak was discovered. Utilities are not responsible to monitor leaks or notify customers of
11 high usage, it is a courtesy that the Utility offers. It is the users responsibility to find any leaks on their
12 premises. Barnes also discussed the reason the sewer service charge was added to the Marina account. In
13 the past, the meter in question was classified as a “water only” meter, as the Johnson’s Marina did not
14 perform pump outs. The Marina does now offer pump outs for water that has been supplied through the
15 meter. This is evident in the marina minutes that mention the addition of sewer system hookups to the
16 pump out systems for docks A, B, C and D. These line additions and pump out services offered by the Marina
17 mean that the Utilities cannot knowingly classify the meter as a “water only” meter, as the water has a
18 connection to the sanitary sewer through the pump out lines and the pump out services that are offered.
19 The Utilities do not meter sanitary sewer service, so there is no way to distinguish what is going into the
20 sanitary sewer. Therefore, the Utilities must bill for all water and sewer that is run through the meter. The
21 Utilities do not currently have a leak credit policy. The Utilities must offer and apply a leak credit policy to all
22 users equally. Lienau stated pump outs have been taking place at the Marina for years. The pump out system
23 that was added only uses one sewer connection over by the Marina office. Lienau said he has a tough time
24 paying for a sewer connection that does not exist and never has. Lienau discussed the water leak and said
25 after they were notified of the leak the Marina called around for a plumber and they were told it could take
26 a few weeks for a plumber to come. The Marina had Cater Plumbing scheduled to shut the Marina down on
27 October 15, 2024, so they thought they could wait until then to fix the leak. Once the Marina discovered the
28 severity of the leak, the Marina was able to get Cater Plumbing to come sooner. Lienau and Jordan
29 investigated the leak and found the leak was in a flexible line on B dock. Cater was able to shorten the line
30 by taking out one of the connections to fix the leak, so the leak was fixed quickly as no parts needed to be
31 ordered. The Marina Committee asked Lienau to come to the Utilities Committee and ask for
32 accommodation on the volume of water being billed for the leak and argue about the second sewer
33 connection charges. Barnes responded by saying the sewer connection is not the issue. The water that is
34 supplied through the meter to the boats also offers pump outs and then the water is placed into the sanitary
35 sewer. It does not matter if it has an isolated connection to the sewer, it is still getting placed into the sanitary
36 sewer. The Utilities must recoup the cost of the treatment of the water that is placed into the sanitary sewer.
37 Even if it is not placed through a line it is placed through a pump out cart or other means. Lienau said that
38 99% of the water that comes through the Marina does not go into the sewer. Lienau said the total pump out
39 volume for 2024 was less than 6,000 gallons. Lienau also said J dock rarely has pump outs. Barnes said that
40 the Utilities does not meter sanitary sewer and only water service can be metered, so there is no way to
41 distinguish what is not placed into the sanitary sewer. Barnes noted that in the past other Utility customers
42 had leaks and they were always required to pay the sewer charges, because we cannot distinguish what was
43 placed in the sanitary sewer. Lienau said he can show how much sewer was pumped by the number of pump
44 outs completed. Each pump out is approximately 60 gallons. Barnes asked Lienau how he meters usage.
45 Lienau said they had a 60-gallon tank on the pump out cart that the sewer went into. Now without the cart
46 it is based on the flow per minute through a 2” line. The volume is estimated on the flow per minute until
47 they reach 60 gallons and that is how the boats are charged. Lienau said that only the large boats have a 60-
48 gallon tank, most are much smaller. Lienau stated that only the sewer from the restrooms at the Marina,

1 the pump out cart and the pump out system goes into the sewer. Bhirdo requested to see the number of
2 gallons of water the Marina is billed per year. Lienau said most of the water used at the Marina is used to
3 wash boats. Bhirdo questioned Lienau about pump outs when the Johnson's owned J dock and Lienau said
4 the Johnson's did not perform pump outs. Pump outs have only taken place on J dock since the Village has
5 owned the Marina. Lienau said very few pump outs take place at the Johnson Marina, but pump outs have
6 taken place. Lienau wants the sewer charges removed because his budget has doubled after adding sewer
7 charges and he is blaming the new sewer charges on the leak that was found. The state statutes say the
8 Utilities must bill for sewer charges. Bhirdo questioned if there is a way to override the law and asked if it
9 would cause problems with other customers. Barnes responded and said yes, it would open the Utilities up
10 for investigation through the PSC, because other customers were required to pay those charges. If the
11 Utilities forgave these charges, it would show favoritism, and the Utilities cannot do that because all users
12 must be treated equally throughout the system. Bhirdo questioned if there is a way that any boat that is
13 parked on J dock cannot get a pump out? Barnes response was if you do not offer pump outs and disconnect
14 the lines. Lienau then responded and said no pump outs are performed at J dock, because the lines do not
15 run to J dock. If a pump out is needed the boat needs to move to A, B or C dock. Barnes said the water that
16 came from J dock is placed in the sewer system. Barnes has reached out to the PSC, and they said the Utilities
17 need to follow standard practices that are always followed and if we do not follow standard practices then
18 that could open investigations. Bhirdo said the Utilities do not need an investigation with the PSC and this
19 cannot happen. Bhirdo questioned if PILOT dollars could be used to help pay the bill? Bhirdo requested
20 Lienau supply her with all the bills for the last year and the usage of water. Werner and Bhirdo would both
21 like to see the state statues. Bhirdo recommends that the information that was requested be gathered and
22 brought to the next meeting for further discussion.

23 24 **c) Discuss Marina Water and Sewer Rates**

25 This item was discussed with the previous agenda item.
26

27 **d) Amendments to Ch. 62; Utilities Code**

28 Barnes updated the Utilities Codes and cross-referenced them to state statues. Information on meters and
29 construction requirements were added, as the current code does not include those items. Formatting and
30 editing changes are still needed to the Utilities code, but Barnes requested the Utilities Committee review
31 the draft attached to the meeting packet and give suggestions of changes they see fit. Barnes will finish the
32 formatting and editing changes and bring the code back to the Utilities Committee for approval before it
33 goes to the Board for final approval.
34

35 **e) Discuss Sludge PFAs Testing Results and Land Lease**

36 Barnes received the PFAs test results back from the state lab. The test results indicate the sludge contains
37 extremely low levels of PFAs. The EPA does not currently have any standards to follow for biosolids. The
38 Utilities Committee agreed that no land application should be done at this time, because there are no safe
39 standards, which means even a small amount of PFAs could be potentially dangerous. The Utilities
40 Committee also agreed to hold off on a land lease for now. The land lease discussion will be brought back to
41 the committee next year for further review.
42

43 **f) Department Annual Report**

44 Bhirdo mentioned Barnes did an excellent job with the photos and the report. Barnes thought the graphs
45 were interesting. The graphs show that water flow decreased a significant amount, and the number is really
46 tight with the influent number, so the water loss is very tight this year.
47

Discussion regarding matters to be placed on a future agenda or referred to a Committee, Official, or Employee.

- Discuss Marina Billing
- Discuss Marina Water and Sewer Rates
- Amendments to Ch. 62; Utilities Code

The next meeting of the Sewer and Water Utilities Committee will be conducted at 7:45 A.M. on Tuesday, February 11, 2025 via Video Conference.

Adjournment

At 8:43 A.M. a motion was made by Werner, seconded by Harff to adjourn the January 14, 2025 meeting of the Sewer and Water Utilities Committee. Motion carried – all ayes.

Respectfully submitted,



Kara Kroll

Utilities Clerk