

Rogers Waterworks and Sewer Commission

March 25, 2002

Minutes

The Rogers Waterworks and Sewer Commission held its regularly scheduled meeting at 4:00 PM, Monday, March 25, 2002, in the Rogers Water Utilities Training Center. Commissioners in attendance were Donnie Moore, Dick McLelland, Lon Pepple, and Fred Wanger. Jerry Pittman was absent. Rogers Water Utilities staff present were Tom McAlister, Mark Johnson, Don Roberts, Mike Lawrence, Joyce Johnson, Luanne Diffin, Stephen Ponder, Earl Rausch, and Don Johnson. Others in the audience were Ben Lipscomb, Rick Rogers, Charles Reaves, Mike Shupe, Jack McHaney, Lori Harrison-Stone, and Kevin Thomas. Chairman Moore called the meeting to order at 4:03 PM.

There was a motion by Pepple, second by McLelland, to approve the minutes of the February 18, 2002, Commission meeting, as submitted. All in favor, motion carried.

Don Roberts, Field Operations Superintendent, recognized Don Johnson, Field Operations Technical Advisor, for 30 years of devoted service to the Rogers Water Utilities.

Moore recognized Mark Johnson, Utilities Engineer. Johnson presented the Commission with a spreadsheet detailing the status of the various projects in which the Commission had a pecuniary interest. A copy of the spreadsheet is attached hereto and a part of these minutes by reference.

Johnson addressed the issue of the widening of New Hope Road from S. 8th St. to Highway I 540. Johnson said that the proposed widening would necessitate the relocation of several miles of water line. He said that a twenty-four-inch water line was planned to run from S. 11th St. to S. 24th St. Johnson said that a twelve-inch main was planned to extend from 24th St. west to Osage Road. He said all service crossings would probably be replaced to accommodate the road and drainage improvements. He anticipated that the costs to relocate and upgrade the water system along New Hope would cost about \$1.783 million.

Regarding projected costs for sewer relocations and improvements, the estimated costs were much less, Johnson said. There are approximately 17 homes on New Hope Road that are still on septic tank/leach field systems. He said that the Highway Department asked whether the Commission would extend sewer to these homes, as the right-of-way acquisition costs could be greatly effected by the loss of septic tanks and leach field area. He estimated that the average cost to extend sewer to these homes was about \$15,000 per house; however, the cost to condemn the houses would greatly exceed this amount.

McLelland said that serving those homes with sanitary sewer service had been the original intention of the Commission from the beginning of the 1998 sewer bond project. There was a motion by McLelland, second by Pepple, to inform the Highway Department (who was acquiring right-of-way on the behalf of the City of Rogers) of the Commission's intention of extending sewer service to those homes on New Hope and Prestwick Place currently unserved. All in favor, motion carried.

Continuing, Johnson told the Commission that his staff had been investigating the possibility of extending sewer service to the proposed Pleasant Crossing commercial development at the southeast corner of Pleasant Grove Road and I 540. Johnson said that Charles Reaves, the developer of Pleasant Crossing, had committed to pay up to \$292,450 or the cost to extend 3700 feet of twelve-inch sewer to his property. The RWU Engineering staff recommended that an eighteen-inch sewer line be installed instead, so that the sewer main could be extended east and south. Johnson estimated that the cost of the eighteen-inch main would be about \$686,000. Johnson said the Reaves was in a hurry, and that, since his staff had already done most of the engineering, he asked that the Commission allow the engineering staff to design and bid the off site sewer for Pleasant Crossing. McLelland said that this cost sharing proposal was in line with what the Commission had done in the past. There was a motion by Pepple, second by McLelland, to allow the engineers to design and bid the project, based on Charles Reaves' contribution. All in favor, motion carried.

Continuing, Mark Johnson said that the developers of Northwest Business Park had been asked to upgrade their proposed sewer main through the development in the northwest corner of Pleasant Grove Road/I 540 interchange. He said that the development required an eight-inch line at minimal depth, while the staff required an eighteen-inch main very deep, with six-foot manholes. Johnson said that the developer's engineers had estimated the cost difference at \$86,968. Johnson recommended the cost sharing proposal to the Commission, since it was part of the Utilities' master plan for the area. There was a motion by McLelland, second by Wanger, to approve the cost sharing of the eighteen-inch line through the proposed development. All in favor, motion carried.

Moore recognized Mike Lawrence, Rogers Pollution Control Facility Manager. Lawrence gave a Power Point presentation, depicting projected impacts pursuant to the Oklahoma Water Resources Boards recent decision to impose a 0.037 mg/l total phosphorus limit on all Oklahoma's scenic rivers, including the Illinois River. Lawrence predicted that the limit would be enforced on the point source discharges, such as municipal treatment facilities. He predicted that, if Rogers had to meet a 1.0-mg/l total phosphorus limit, the capital cost would be about \$2.4 million. He said that our current method of disposing of biosolids would be impacted as well. Moore asked him if he might speculate on the cost to get to 0.5-mg/l? Lawrence guessed that the cost might be two to three times as much. He said that, if there were no municipal discharges into the Illinois River watershed, the numerical limit still might not be achieved.

McAlister reported that he had been in several meetings with representatives of the other large municipalities of NW Arkansas, and that group had come up with a

workable, regional solution to wastewater issues such as sludge disposal and permitting. He presented the Commission with a proposed ordinance and an interlocal agreement for the five major cities in Northwest Arkansas. The ordinance and interlocal agreement, formulated under authority of the State of Arkansas statutes regarding joint county and municipal solid waste disposal, calls for the formation of a regional authority under an autonomous board of directors, appointed by the various city councils. The authority would then offer various services to its members and other nonmember entities. McAlister detailed the actions of the Oklahoma Water Resources Board, and the steps whereby the proposed phosphorus limit in the Illinois River might become federal law. He said that the board of this new water authority might take the lead for the region, and do whatever was necessary to delay the phosphorus limit from becoming a federal regulation.

Jack McHaney, Mayor Pro Tempore, said that he had been to a meeting with the other cities, and was convinced the situation was very serious, and that the cities must act in concert without delay. He recommended the formation of the regional waste authority without getting bogged down in the fine details.

McAlister suggested a special-called Commission meeting in order to give the matter additional consideration. A lunch meeting was tentatively set for 11:00 AM, Friday, March 29, 2002, in the Rogers Water Utilities Training Center.

Joyce Johnson, Utilities Controller, presented the February financial sheets. The statements were accepted without comment.

Moore recognized Luanne Diffin, Laboratory Director and Industrial Pretreatment Coordinator. Diffin gave a Power Point Presentation to the Commission regarding Phase II storm water regulations. According to Diffin, the City of Rogers has until March of next year to file a permit application for storm water discharge. Although storm drains are under the City's Transportation and Planning Department, water quality issues will have an impact on the Pollution Control Facility, she said.

The meeting adjourned at 5:40 PM.

Sincerely,

Tom S. McAlister, Acting Secretary
Rogers Waterworks and Sewer Commission

