

Rogers Waterworks and Sewer Commission

June 16, 2003

Minutes

The Rogers Waterworks and Sewer Commission held its regularly scheduled meeting at 4:00 PM, Monday, June 16, 2003, in the Rogers Water Utilities Training Center. Commissioners in attendance were Donnie Moore, Dick McLelland, Jerry Pittman, and Fred Wanger. Lon Pepple was absent. Rogers Water Utilities staff in attendance were Tom McAlister, Mark Johnson, Joyce Johnson, Mike Lawrence, Luanne Diffin, Don Roberts, and Earl Rausch. Others in attendance were John Moore, Tom Terminella, Brian Moore, Wayne Ledbetter, and Everett Balk. Chairman Moore called the meeting to order at 4:01 PM.

There was a motion by Pittman, second by Moore, to approve the minutes of the May meeting. Pittman, Moore voted aye. McLelland abstained. Motion carried.

Moore recognized Mike Lawrence, Rogers Pollution Control Facility Manager. Lawrence recognized Luanne Diffin, Environmental Services Coordinator, with a certificate of appreciation for fifteen years of dedicated service to RWU and the citizens of Rogers.

Moore recognized Mark Johnson, Utilities Engineer. Johnson presented the Commission with a spreadsheet depicting the status of the projects in which the Commission had an on-going interest. He noted that the now famous Phase VI sewer project was complete; however, some residents were slow to connect. Johnson noted that the design of the regional sewer lift station at Garrett Road was near completion.

Johnson reported that several design changes for the ground storage tank and pumping station at S. 24th St. at Lilac had delayed the start of the project. He noted that the tank floor elevation was to be lowered about six feet at a sizable cost reduction. Johnson noted that concern over velocity in the pump station piping had necessitated additional talks with the pump station manufacturer.

Johnson said that design work was proceeding with utility relocation on New Hope Road. He said that the Highway department had finally staked the right-of-way, and were negotiating ROW procurement with landowners. He guessed that utility companies would start relocating their facilities next year.

Moore recognized John Rutledge of Crews and Associates, bond underwriters for the ground storage/pump station project. Rutledge presented the Commission with

several options for procuring \$4 million for the project. He noted that interest rates were at a “45 year low”, and that it might be preferable to take a longer term, reducing the annual P + I payments, thereby freeing up cash for other uses. He showed the Commission four scenarios with terms of 15, 20, 30, and 35 years. McLelland noted that he did not want to issue debt for thirty years or more. McAlister said that he wanted to preserve the Utilities capital, and minimize interest expense. There was a motion by Pittman, second by McLelland, to issue the bonds for a term of 20 years maximum. All in favor, motion carried.

Moore recognized Brian Moore, ESI, Inc., consulting engineers. Moore represented his client, Tom Terminella, developer of Meadowbrook Addition. Moore said that the staff at RWU had required a second connection to the water system, requiring about 1400 feet of offsite water main on S. Dixieland Road. He requested that the Commission help pay for the offsite water main, since it would benefit the water system as a whole. There was a motion by McLelland, second by Pittman, to approve a fifty-fifty cost share, not to exceed \$26,000. All in favor, motion carried.

Moore recognized Wayne Ledbetter of Perry Butcher & Associates, engineer for Rogers Warehouse, a project on N. 8th St. Ledbetter said that the staff at RWU had required a twelve-inch water main be extended north along 8th St. Since the 12-inch water main exceeded the requirement for the project, he asked that the Commission help pay the difference between an eight and a twelve-inch main. There was a motion by McLelland, second by Pittman, to approve the cost share request, not to exceed \$40,455. All in favor, motion carried.

Moore recognized Joyce Johnson, Utilities Controller. Johnson presented the Commission with a draft budget for Fiscal Year 2004. Johnson went through the budget, pointing out a potential serious problem with the Water Department. Since Beaver Water District was going to increase its rates by 15 % this November 1, and since Beaver Water District was not going to rebate any of its customers this year, and since the interest rates on the Department’s reserves had fallen significantly, the Water Department would show a deficit of almost \$250,000 by the end of FY’04.

McAlister said that he planned to consult with a rate analyst the Utilities had used earlier, and come back to the Commission with a cost-of-service rate analysis and a water rate study, in a timely manner, so that the Council could act on a water rate ordinance, before the rates from BWD increased.

After some questions and comments regarding the FY ’04 Budget draft, there was a motion by Pittman, second by McLelland, to approve the budget as submitted. All in favor, motion carried.

Moore recognized Mike Lawrence again. Lawrence presented a brief Power Point presentation detailing the projected needs of the RPCF. Lawrence noted that population growth and expected tightening of discharge regulations were making operations more difficult at RPCF. He projected that biosolids accumulation in the system and odor

complaints from neighbors immediately necessitated the need for biosolids dewatering capabilities. Lawrence noted that very soon another clarifier and additional blowers would be needed to handle the ever-increasing amount of solids entering the treatment plant. He also predicted that filters would be required to meet expected phosphorus discharge requirements. Eventually, in 8 to 10 years, he predicted the city would need to add another treatment “train”, as well as another disinfection technology, ultraviolet radiation.

Continuing, Lawrence recommended that the Commission allow the staff to proceed with the biosolids dewatering project, so that plans and cost projections might be presented to the Commission as soon as possible. He also recommended that the Commission start the process to procure professional engineering services for wastewater planning services. McAlister added that the dewatering project might well be done with in-house engineers, but the planning phase might best be contracted to engineers with experience in master planning wastewater systems.

McLelland asked how much the dewatering project would cost initially? McAlister guessed roughly \$500,000. How much to take it to a landfill? Someone asked. McAlister said that the annual cost had been projected at about \$300,000, including power, personnel, chemicals, and tipping fees. Might it not be further processed and sold? McLelland asked. Yes, McAlister answered, and he told the Commission about the recent engineering study commissioned by Northwest Arkansas Conservation Authority. That study, he said, recommended that NACA buy trucks and haul sludge for the various cities.

There was a motion by Pittman, second by McLelland, to grant the staff authority to seek engineering RFQ’s and to perform preliminary design work on the biosolids dewatering project. All in favor, motion carried.

The meeting adjourned at 5:20 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

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

File: RWWSC minutes, 6-16-03

