

Utility Commission
February 5, 2018

The regular scheduled meeting of the Delmar Utility Commission was called to order by Vice Mayor Pase. In attendance were Commission Members Dickerson and Dewald, Council Member Smith, Deputy Mayor Unsell, Town Manager Bynum-King and Clerk of Council Fisher. Guests: Gary Spence.

Approval of Minutes

Commission Member Dewald made a motion to approve the January, 2018 minute as circulated. The motion was seconded by Commission Member Dickerson and passed with 4 ayes and Council Member Smith abstaining due to his absence last month.

Unfinished Business

Back-up Well Update

Town Manager Bynum-King said that there were only a few minor items left on the punch list. The well is up and running and functioning as designed. We are hopeful that the contractor will be back on site in the next few weeks to finish the punch list.

Pine Street Pump Street Update

The Town Manager informed the Commission that the MDE has approved the project as well as the funding. The Town is waiting for the Board of Public Works to release the final acceptance of the project, grant agreement and contract that has the terms and conditions.

Richard Rush (Beracah Homes) credit of \$900.00

Vice Mayor Pase reported that last month the Utility Commission tabled a motion concerning the credit request made by Richard Rush from Beracah Homes. Since Council Member Smith was absent at that meeting, the Commission wanted to have his input before its final decision.

Deputy Mayor Unsell stated that he thought that the Public Works Director should not have indicated a general direction if in fact he didn't know for sure. He should have left and brought back documentation showing exactly where the connector line was located. Deputy Mayor Unsell said that he can't actually conceive that the plumbers would go ahead and start digging in the area the Public Works Director thought it was located. Maybe the Town could be responsible for some of the credit requested. But at the last meeting, Town Engineer Josh Taylor stated that General Construction Practices states that a project is not to start until everyone knows where the locations of the connectors are. Deputy Mayor Unsell suggested that the Utility Commission consider the possibility of reimbursing 1/3 of the request.

Commission Member Dickerson said that he feels the responsibility is on the contractor and the Town should not reimburse anything.

Commission Member Dewald said that Beracah Homes is holding the Town in conflict between the home owner, the plumbing company and the contractor. This is a change order. They are

trying to drag the Town into a problem that we shouldn't be involved in. When they couldn't find the connection in the 10 ft. location, they should have stopped digging and contacted the Town for further assistance.

Council Member Smith asked the Town Manager how was the Public Works Director involved? Town Manager Bynum-King responded that he was asked by the plumbing contractor where the connection was located. He conveyed to them that historically it is located 10 ft. from the water connection. With that being said, the contractor, instead of test pitting, just took it as 10 ft. and started the process and was digging around to find the location which was further away than the 10 ft. This is not a typical lot, this was a combined lot, which further complicated the matter. Town Manager Bynum-King said that the Town Engineer, at last month's meeting, provided for the Utility Commission the responsibility of the contractor as it is specified in the Town Standards. It states that the contractor needs to take any means necessary to locate all the connections prior to starting the installation. This is not the first time that the Town has had connections located in areas where they historically should not be. It may have been more responsible for the Public Works Director to have said that he would look up the location and get back to them.

Council Member Smith stated that he doesn't think that the Town owes anyone anything. It falls on whoever is running the show. Vice Mayor Pase said that she feels that the plumbing contractor fell a little lax on their area of responsibility.

Deputy Mayor Unsell made a motion that the Town and the Utility Commission is not responsible to reimburse Beracah Homes the requested \$900.00 based on the statements by Town Engineer Josh Taylor. Commission Member Dewald seconded the motion which passed with 5 ayes and 0 absent.

New Business

Town Manager Bynum-King reported that on January 30, 2018, our secondary clarifier spilled approximately 4,000 gallons. The spill was confined to the immediate ground around the clarifier. When the spill happened, the system was shut down and adjustments were made to the SCADA system to pump at a lower rate to allow the system to get caught up. There were a significant number of mop heads that create problems with the pumps and clog some of the pipes. We had to get Chesapeake Environmental Services to do the cleaning as well as jet one of the pipes that connected to the clarifier. It was found not to have any clogs. No one is really sure what happened but one of the pumps did shut down.

The Town Manager said that she had a conversation with the Public Works Director and the Waste Water Superintendent about the mop heads. They don't come into the system as mop heads, so we really need to start thinking of how we can be proactive to minimize the ongoing issues. The screen/grit unit at the headworks has created some of the problems, because it allows all sorts of debris in the system, which clump together and create mop heads in the system. The manufacturer of the system has sent technicians in to work on the screens/grit unit and the screens still do not produce adequately.

The Town Manager Bynum-King suggested to the Superintendent of Wastewater to secure a cost estimate from CES to come in and remove the mop heads and clean the clarifier. The removal of the mop heads out of the system will eliminate the pumps getting clogged and shutting down the plant functions and causing spills. We are required to notify the State within 5 days of the excursion.

Town Manager Bynum-King said that our I&I issues is something that will be discussed at the budget workshops. She asked the Town Engineers to provide a price estimate to address all of our I&I issues at one time. We have been doing some slip lining, but it is not enough to keep up with the amount of water that seeps into the collection system and goes through the plant daily. Our permit allows for 850,000 gallons per day. There are some times that we have peaked at 1 million gallons per day.

Town Manager's Report

Town Manager Bynum-King said that Waste Water is looking for another operator. The one that was hired has some health issues and he will be having surgery this Friday. Not sure what the outcome is going to be but he thought it would be best to just resign since it was within his 90 day probationary period. He thought it would be best if the Town tried to get someone else to fill the position. He is a 5A operator. It turns out that he has a torn meniscus. His knee went out on him and it is prohibiting him from going up and down the stairs at the plant. She said that she informed the employee that if after the surgery and recovery goes well, if he is still interested and able to work, to contact the Town and if no one has been hired, they would entertain re-hiring him.

She reminded the Commission that the first budget workshop is scheduled for Wednesday, February 28th at 6:00 p.m.

Commission's Report

Commission Member Dickerson asked that if the WWTP is permitted for 850,000 gallons and we are having peaks of over 1 million gallons, should the Town continue to approve new housing? The Town Manager Bynum-King said that is one of the things the engineers will be looking at in their study is what is actually water from the I&I issues verses the actual flows. Every day the wastewater treatment operators chart such things as the weather, temperature and time of day. There are times when there are high peaks daily due to wet seasons and winter months. The engineers are looking at last years' charts. Although we are permitted 850,000 gallons, the plant is designed to handle up to 1.2 million gallons per day.

Adjournment

A motion for adjournment was made by Commission Member Dewald and seconded by Deputy Mayor Unsell. The motion passed with 5 ayes and 0 absent.

Submitted by:

Cindy Fisher
Clerk of Council