

Information Meeting date: February 18, 2022
Larsen Winchester Sanitary District

Approved via email, February 18, 2022 meeting notes

The Commissioners of the Larsen Winchester Sanitary District (LWSD) sent out a mailing for a Notice of Public Information to all LWSD customers on Friday, January 7th 2022. The notice explained that the LWSD will discuss the Wastewater Treatment Facility Plan and the need for a wastewater treatment facility upgrade to meet proposed Wisconsin Pollutant Discharge Elimination System Permit effluent limits, and to manage projected wastewater flows. A copy of the Notice will be attached to these minutes to document the recording.

All commissioner and committee members were in attendance - Chairman Scott Reif, Commissioners Adam Blackburn, Scott Mathison, Rob Nelson, Jeff Guth, Secretary/Treasurer Cori Thomas, and Plant Operator Mike Pfankuch. Town of Winchester Board and staff included - Holly Stevens and Matt Olson. Town of Clayton Board and staff representatives in attendance included Tori Straw, Russ Giese and Linda Grundman. Mary Jo Miller from Martenson & Eisele conducted the meeting and provided a descriptive Powerpoint discussion to outline the Wastewater Treatment plan.

Chairman Reif called the meeting to order at 7pm, followed by the pledge of allegiance. Mary Jo Miller thanked the residents of the Larsen Winchester Sanitary District for attending. Background was provided on the lagoon system that the LWSD is currently using and the near capacity numbers that the LWSD is moving towards. Design considerations and parameters were discussed as well as estimated additional homes within the LWSD during the study period (2045) per the East Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission. A summary of the facility planning alternatives were provided, with more in depth talks regarding the regionalization with Winneconne and Fox West. A summary of the Wastewater Treatment Alternatives were provided along with prices with each alternative discussed in great detail. The three alternatives talked about were: Construction of a Mechanical Plant, Construction of a LemTec Treatment System, and a modification to the existing lagoon system.

Multiple funding options were discussed, such as the Community Development Block Grants, the Clean Water Fund Program, and the USDA Rural Development funding program. The commissioner's recommendation for this meeting was to support the Construction of a LemTec Wastewater Treatment System at the existing Wastewater Treatment Plant site. They also recommended that the LWSD apply for a Multi-Discharger Variance (MDV) to extend the timeline for compliance with low-level phosphorus limits.

Mary Jo Miller discussed the WDNR deadlines and listed the current implementation schedule to follow for the WDNR Clean Water Funds (CWF SFY 2024). She also proposed a fast track schedule that may allow the LWSD a better chance of obtaining principal forgiveness through WDNR Clean Water Funds (CWF SFY 2023).

Questions asked –

1. Tori Straw from the Town of Clayton – Tori wondered if Mary Jo could get income values for just the LWSD residents instead of using the Town of Clayton and the Town of Winchester's estimates number (relating back to the income limits and eligibility for applying for other grants/LWSD was considered lower income). Mary Jo offered up the option to send out surveys for residents to complete and if 80% or more are returned then that data could be used to apply for the grants instead of the online data she collected.

2. Mike Kinney, resident of LWSD asked why we needed to go ahead with a project of this cost without first knowing the grant money that will be received. Mary Jo mentioned that it is better to be ready for a project when grant money is available. Mike also asked about future development for the LWSD and if future development will help bring bills down or increase resident's bills. Mary Jo mentioned that the project isn't being done just for future development, it is being done for current residents with our almost at capacity flows. Other commissioners offered up suggestions of how more grant money may be available if the LWSD is ready and that at this time it still needs DNR approval to move forward, one reason for the informational meeting for the residents so that they understand what might happen if things are approved.
3. Rob Heffernon, resident of LWSD asked what happens if the variance is denied. Mary Jo replied that if that happened the LWSD would need to build tertiary treatment for phosphorus removal. The hope is that with the current plans and upgrades the variance should not be denied.
4. Chris Kabat, resident of LWSD asked if there had been any talk with farmers to contribute with the water quality training program. Mary Jo explained the basics of Water Quality Trading and why this option was not recommended in the Plan.

Most residents in attendance seemed to understand the limitations of the existing lagoon system, the need for improvements to meet future WPDES effluent limits, and the potential for rate increases that these improvements would require. There was further talk about how much money the LWSD currently had available for this program and what options would be available for funding the program.

5. Tori Straw from the Town of Clayton asked how we were going to pursue the increase of funds. The commissioners responded that it could be in the form of raising rates now, raising the levy now or both. It should be assumed that both options will happen going forward to help ease the program costs in the future (instead of waiting until the program is started or done).
6. Nancy Kinney, resident of LWSD asked if there was going to be a special assessment on existing LWSD customers. The commissioners responded that they are not planning for this to happen to any of the current residents. When there is future development, it is expected that new customers could have special assessments applied.

Chairman Scott Reif thanked all of the residents again for coming to the meeting and welcomed them to come to our monthly meetings. A motion was made by Chairman Reif and seconded by Rob Nelson to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried unanimously. Meeting ended @8:05pm.

Respectfully submitted.

Cori Thomas – Secretary/Treasurer
Larsen Winchester Sanitary District

Our next meeting date/time is Tuesday 02/01/22 4:00pm at the Winchester Town Hall.
