



## MINUTES OF THE PAWLET SELECT BOARD

November 1, 2011

**7:03 PM** Informational meeting opened by Moderator John Thrasher

Present: Sue LaPorte, Joe Clark, Clarence Decker, Mike Beecher, Bob Jones

Audience Present: Peter Pochop, John Thrasher, Charlie Mason, Judy Coolidge, Bud Coolidge, John Malcolm, James Glick, Deb Hawkins, Elizabeth Gibson, Lenny Gibson, Keith Southworth, Kathleen Southworth, Eric Mach, Ronald Harmson, Ray Foster

Peter Pochop, of Green Mountain Engineering, presented the Wastewater Treatment Facility proposed upgrade:

He provided a brief background on GME

He provided a history and plans of the Pawlet project:

- The original facility was built in 1982
- It was designed for a 40,000 gallon per day flow
- An evaluation done after 20 years showed that the RBC and Clarifier were thought to have 1-5 years of function left (in 2002).
- This preliminary report was accepted by the State, Pawlet, and USDA
- Pawlet is eligible for the Clean Water revolving loan fund
- RD provides loans. In an income survey done a few years back, Pawlet met the intermediate level of funding.
- We are required to pass a bond to retrofit the plant
- Plan drawings of the existing plant were explained
- Elevation drawings of the existing plant were explained
- Proposed plan drawings were explained. Pawlet and GME decided to go with an RBC facility to cut costs and meet design flow without the redundancy now required. We can put in two 20,000 gal/day flow tanks to get that redundancy.
- The facility is currently running at less than 20,000 gal. - per- day flow.
- The building will also be refurbished
- The new clarifiers are made of Fiberglas
- The new UV units have a different type of flow meter.
- One set of units will be out behind the plant while construction is going on.

- This eliminates the need for temporary treatment units that get carted away afterward.
- Elevation drawings of new units were explained
- Building issues include the front roof replacement to standing seam metal.
- There will be a new insulated garage door and a pass through door installed in the storage room. A smaller insulated garage door will be installed on the north end and a pass-through door will be added.
- A new emergency generator is also included.
- Deck stated that the existing RBC has been patched and welded so often that it's not repairable anymore
- Photos of the existing plant were shown. Mold is evident all over building. The two clarifiers operate as one now because the separation is rusted through.
- Rust was shown on all other pieces of machinery.
- The new heating system will be more efficient
- Any good siding will be salvaged and re-used. Most of the trim is rotted out. The doors are all rusted out at the bottom.
- Photos of new RBC units were shown.
- Eric Mach asked what the life expectancy of the new machinery is. Peter responded that it's good for 30 years
- Bob Jones asked Peter to explain why taxes go up for everyone for the people in West Pawlet to get a new facility.
- Peter gave an overview of the costs and plans for repayment: The estimated cost of 1.25 million includes Engineering (planning loan taken out last year), Legal, fiscal, administrative, short term interest(need to borrow to pay contractors, then we are reimbursed from RD), administration fees. The construction estimate is 1.14 million. USDA will provide a loan of \$700,000 with the rest in grant money. This includes a 10% contingency that might not be needed.
- The user cost RD loan is \$706,000 and the RD grant is \$544,000. The loan is at 3%. There will be an increase in Operations and Maintenance (due to new regulations), and that has been factored in.
- The \$20,000 is generated by 1 cent on the dollar on the grand list.
- User cost would increase to \$675/year from the current \$500.
- An example increase for a non-user would = \$9 per year for a \$200,000 house.
- Keith Southworth said that in Connecticut, wastewater facilities were paid for by users only.
- Peter Pochop said that two other towns in VT had the O&M paid by users, and the bond paid by the tax rate.
- Lenny Gibson asked what a new facility would cost
- Peter Pochop responded that it would double the current estimate

- Pawlet received an eligibility letter from RD for funding they are expecting to be available in this fiscal year.
- James Glick asked about the difference in the number of hook-ups vs. the difference in funding. Judy responded that all hook-ups pay regardless
- Mike said the cost of a hookup was originally \$250, and is now \$500
- Per select board vote, the difference in hook ups is spread out among the users
- Ray Foster asked if a hook-up is paid regardless of whether anyone is living in the house. Yes.
- James Glick asked what happens if the bond is not approved. The Select board would need to discuss going for another bond. There would be violations in the permit, and fines from those violations. W. Pawlet open land could never be used. Peter Pochop stated that the Federal government has provided 90% of the funding for the plant so far.
- Mike said there would be a catastrophic failure, and the state would require a portable unit be put in place to handle the wastewater that town is responsible for.
- Joe Clark asked if the generator is mandated. Deck said the town had a contract with MWE to take their generator to the plant and the town would pay while it was there. Peter Pochop stated that the UV unit needs to be working constantly. It's illegal to not have a generator.
- Deck said Pawlet would be subject to NYS and VT fines if the river is polluted.
- Pawlet is on the State funding priority list for a \$10,000 grant at 2% for 20 years. This is the second best funding. The user fee goes up to \$925 per year.
- Keith Southworth asked for the total costs of the two loan programs. Peter Pochop said they are about the same with a grant.
- James Glick asked what the time frame of the project is, if the bond is passed? Peter Pochop said we would bid the project in February for a mid-May start. The project would be finished at Christmas.
- Deck said the parts are not replaceable – they are all obsolete. We have to have to have a tank built due to problems from Irene.
- Keith Southworth asked for a comparison of costs of the 20 and 30 year scenarios. John Thrasher and Peter Pochop said they are almost the same (factoring in the extra 10 years on the 20 year plan).
- Charlie Mason asked about the phosphorus regulations vs. the increased O&M. Peter Pochop said there would be increased particulates (sludge) therefore more cost for removal.
- Keith Southworth asked about the interest for 20 years vs. the interest for 30 years. Peter Pochop said he will put the information on the Pawlet website tomorrow so anyone can figure it out.
- This will be board decision after the bond is passed.

- Mike said the bond gives us permission to borrow money to do this project. John Thrasher stated that it gave the town permission to incur the \$1.25 million obligation. The town can shop for terms at that point.
- The RD loan can be refinanced or paid off early.
- John Thrasher asked Peter to get the interest information on the web site and to the board. This information will have no influence on the bond
- Elizabeth Gibson said she needs the information for the website. Peter will send it to Mike, Sue, and Joe. Sue will forward it to Elizabeth.

**8:37PM:** John Thrasher closed the informational meeting, to reconvene on November 8<sup>th</sup>.

**8:46 PM** Select board meeting called to order by chair Mike Beecher

Present: Sue, Joe, Deck, Mike, Bob

Audience present: Elizabeth Gibson, Lenny Gibson, John Thrasher, James Glick

The Minutes of October 18, 2011 were reviewed. *Motion by Deck, seconded by Sue, to accept the minutes as written, so voted.*

The Minutes of October 28, 2011 were reviewed. *Motion by Deck, seconded by Sue, to accept the minutes as written, so voted.*

### **Audience**

Elizabeth: On November 14, there will be an Energy improvement presentation. Press releases have been sent out. The Pawlet Newsletter was mailed this week.

James Glick presented the board with a letter of interest for the Regional Commissioner alternative at RRPC. He would like to begin in December of this year. Sue said she knew of another person interested in the position and would like to table the board's decision until the next meeting. John Thrasher suggested the board also get input from Eric as to who he would like to work with.

Additionally, James would like to be considered for the alternate position for Planning Commission board. *Motion by Sue, seconded by Deck to appoint James Glick as alternate for the Planning Commission. So voted.*

### **Correspondence**

The Clerk's memo was reviewed.

- Deb is requesting a new set of maps for the clerk's office. There have been lots of changes that she doesn't have. *Motion by Sue, seconded by Joe to order a new set of maps for the Clerk's office. So voted.*
- Memo from Mark Blucher
- The contract from Cartographics needs to be signed on two pages

- Memo from Jessica Hill regarding scam concerning wastewater facilities
- Memo from Philip Picotte re: updated emergency plan
- Letter from Eric Mach regarding Sawmill/Indian River
- Info from Peter Pochop for meeting
- Memo from Susan Schreiber re: Post Irene information
- Letter from Kelly Kindestine re: detailed loss report. Deck reviewed the report.
- Office hours change on Nov 17<sup>th</sup>

A letter from the State was sent to Keith about Sawmill Road. Mike will discuss this with Keith.

Basic operating plan from Philip Picotte. The town still needs to find an emergency manager. Mike is standing emergency manager until it's decided.

Vermont Fiber Connect letter. Sue will evaluate.

The Board received the budget from the Treasurer. The board will review the budget for the next meeting.

#### **New Business**

Joe said the elevator permit expired in June. An independent contractor came last Thursday to inspect the elevator for a set fee of \$150. Lack of records by Schindler, and other violations, for a total of 6, were noted. Schindler doesn't return Joe's calls. The town has one month to address the issues. There will probably be an additional fee. Joe and John Thrasher will pursue.

#### **Unfinished business**

Regarding the Slate quarry property donation, there will be a meeting on Thursday of this week.

#### **Other business**

None

**9:24 PM** *Motion by Deck to adjourn, so voted.*

Respectfully submitted,

Karen Folger, Clerk