**Moose Lake Windemere Area Sanitary Sewer District**

**Approved Regular Meeting Minutes**

**January 17, 2024**

**@ MLWSSD Office**

1**.**  The regular meeting of the Moose Lake Windemere Sanitary Sewer District was called to order at 5:15 p.m. by Chairman Kuster immediately following the closing of the Organizational Meeting. Members present included: Chairman Kuster, Vice Chairman Lourey, Treasurer Eric Nielsen, Clair Strandlie and Paula Engstrom. Also in attendance were Executive Director Darla Hall, Superintendent Keith Newman, Erin Lambert, Attorney for Sand Lake Resort and Dennis Genereau, Windemere Township Zoning Administrator.

2. Approval of Agenda: Agenda item c. City’s Request for Information on Kenwood Lift Station added. Motion by Strandlie second by Engstrom to approve the agenda as amended. Motion carried 5/0.

3. Guests: Dennis Genereau, Windemere Zoning Administrator – Campers/Holding Tanks Ordinance Language Discussion - Dennis Genereau, Windemere Zoning Administrator discussed the issue of Windemere Zoning language conflicting with the MLWSSD Ordinance regarding private sewer systems. He explained that Windemere Zoning requires that any time a recreational camper or any type of structure that has water are required to connect to an approved sanitary sewer. The District does not allow recreational campers to connect to the municipal sewer system nor do they allow holding tanks to be installed. Newman explained if people have RV campers, they need to use a pumping service to pump their camper tanks. Dennis discussed the District looking at modifying their ordinance to coincide with Windemere’s Ordinance. Dennis stated Windemere’s reasoning behind requiring recreational campers to connect to an approved sewer is their concern of people dumping grey or black water on the ground and it entering the lakes.

Genereau went on to discuss Windemere Township would like to research what state money may be available to do some type of treatment system for Hogans Acres and Island and Sturgeon Lake as these have become very populated. He discussed the Big Lake project and the funding they had been approved for. Genereau indicated he is going to continue looking into the option for state funding and see about getting a plan brought to the state legislature. Board informed Genereau that when the municipal sewer was originally installed it was designed to include Island and Sturgeon Lake, but the funding was cut before those two lakes could be connected. The pumps and sewer mains on that end of the system were constructed to accommodate the flow. The District obtained cost estimates for sewering those lakes back in 2016 and sent out a survey to residents to see how much interest there was based on the cost but the majority of the results from property owners at that time did not come back in favor of doing the project. Currently, the District is dealing with no place to send the wastewater with the City of Moose Lakes treatment ponds near capacity.

The Board indicated they are not in favor of changing the ordinance to allow recreational campers to connect to the municipal sewer and do not allow holding tanks. Board directed Hall to send a formal letter to Windemere Planning and Zoning indicating the Districts position on campers and that the District does not allow holding tanks to be installed. The District will continue enforcing their ordinance as written requiring structures located within 400 feet of the sewer line to connect and are not open to changing the language.

4. Approval of the Minutes:

A. Regular Meeting Minutes December 20, 2023: Board reviewed the minutes and a couple minor clarifications were made for understanding purposes. Motion was made by Strandlie second by Lourey to approve the MLWSSD Regular Meeting Minutes from the December 20, 2023, meeting as amended. Motion carried 5/0.

5. Executive Directors Report:

A. Mechanical System – Discussions with Engineer: Hall contacted Eric Otte of Septic Check in Milaca regarding mechanical systems. He is in charge of designing systems. Eric indicated that their company does mechanical systems but typically 10,000 gpd or less systems. The District would be discharging 67,000 gpd or more and this type of system would need to be designed by an engineer and MPCA permits acquired. Otte advised Hall to contact the District engineer first. Hall contacted Kelly Yahnke, Bolton & Menk and Kelly is looking into a rough idea on cost of a system and will be reporting back. Board suggested Hall to contact Joe Janson at MRWA to get more information as well.

B. City of Moose Lake – Chairman/Treasurer Met w/City: Chairman Kuster gave an overview of the two meetings that were held with the City of Moose Lake this month. Those meetings were attended by Chairman Kuster, Treasurer Nielsen, Mayor Shaw, City Administrator Owens and Public Works Superintendent Entner. The proposal that was presented to the District Board last month regarding turning over the Kenwood North area and customers in exchange for 18 ERU’s and installation of a flow meter at the Newberry manhole was presented to the City Council. At this time the City is asking for more information on Kenwood lift station and sewer infrastructure in that area. The City obtained a cost estimate from their engineer of $168,000 for installing a flume at Newberry (area where District customers end and City customers begin). It was noted that relocating the old or installing a new flume would be about the same cost. Both parties thought the cost to be excessive. Kuster reported the City proposed just allowing the City to take over all of the District customers in the Kasper addition. After discussing alternatives, the City is agreed to seek a direct cost from the flume manufacturing company to see if perhaps installing and purchasing the flume direct can be done in a more cost-effective manner. Kuster reported that the City would like to get the cost estimate for televising all of the lateral lines in the area between LS#1 and the flume meter as well as televising the sewer mains. Keith reported he did receive the cost estimates from Visu-Sewer on the sewer mains to be City $8,530.50 and the District $11,302.50. The cost is $3.30 per linear foot with the City having 2,585 feet and the District having 3,425 ft.

Kuster stated at the meeting held with the City on January 5th the capacity for the Sand Lake Project was discussed. At that time, the City Administrators response was that the District should just give SLR the 15 ERU’s. The District has a request for 10,000 additional gpd, part for the District and part for Sand Lake Resort project. If the District were to give the approval for the 15 ERU’s to Sand Lake at this time, the District would continue with have an increase in overage charges as the District’s total flow is already over the 67,000 gpd allotment in accordance with the City contract. The City of Moose Lake needs to respond to the District’s request and either deny the request or provide permission to hook up and the capacity. Kuster informed the Board that the City’s asked to extend looking at the treatment capacity until the end of 2023 data was compiled. The City Engineers are working on that at this time.

Kuster discussed the meeting that was held today between the two parties and the drafting of a “letter of intent” in which items are identified with timelines for both parties to resolve. The letter of intent deals with the overage bill, frozen water line policy, customers bill calculations in Southtown area and Kenwood North. Treasurer Nielsen prepared a draft of the letter of intent and provided to all Board members for review and comments. Board would like the letter of intent to be sent to the City in the next week or two.

Lourey explained to Attorney Lambert that the 15 ERU’s they are discussing for the Sand Lake project would be for the residential unit hookups. There could be more monthly user fees for extra amenities such as pool, restaurant, etc. It was also noted that load levels may be an issue relating to treatment of the waste due to the amenities. At this time, the District is awaiting the Significant Industrial User Agreement from the City of Moose Lake to see what additional charges may be imposed due to MPCA requirements.

Board asked Superintendent Newman to send a PDF file of the Southtown Kaper Addition lateral lines to the City of Moose Lake so they can obtain a quote from Visu Sewer. Kuster stated the next meeting the Chairman and Treasurer have scheduled with the City is on February 8, 2024, at 10:00 a.m. He also asked that the Board members review the current contract with the City of Moose Lake and funnel any changes they want to see in that agreement to Director Hall so she can compile a list.

C. City of Moose Lake’s Request for Information on Kenwood Lift Station: The City of Moose Lake has requested a list of information on the Kenwood Lift Station and sewer mains including maintenance records, customer lists, manhole inspections, etc. Hall to contact Attorney Mia Thibodeau for a legal opinion first to see if it is even possible to turn that section of line/lift station and customers over to the City of Moose Lake.

6. Superintendents Report: See written report as provided by Superintendent Keith Newman. Keith received a call from Carlton County Highway Department Supervisor that a plow struck a manhole along Sand Lake Road. Keith contacted Tim Gobel and he is going to make the repair and lower it as much as possible. Keith suggested putting a sweeping blacktop apron around it this coming summer. Quality Flow was out for Station 1 as there was a horrible noise coming from pump one. They pulled the pump and found it had sucked up a rock. No damage to the pump.

Board questioned if the property in Kenwood North had complied with the result of smoke identified coming from under the wishing well during the smoke testing project. Hall stated that she had sent two letters to the property owner. Superintendent Newman has not heard from the property owner. Hall to send a certified letter to the property indicating that penalty fees would be applied if the matter is not resolved.

Permits Issued: None Certificate of Compliance: None

7. Treasurers Report: Treasurer Nielsen reviewed the profit and loss and balance sheet with the District for the month ended December 31, 2023. Balance in checking as of December 31, 2023, was $3,183.58. Treasurer Nielsen had reviewed the bank reconciliation and statements and found the books to be in order. Claims submitted today include three EFT payments for payroll tax and check numbers 12750 thru 12765 for a total amount of $11,648.01. It was noted December treatment bill was not included with today’s claims but the Debt Service payments that are due in February are. Motion was made by Lourey second by Strandlie to approve the treasurers report and payment of the claims to include three EFT payments and check numbers 12750 thru 12765 for a total amount of $11,648.01. Motion carried 5/0.

8. Old Business: A. Flow Numbers – No flow numbers to report.

B. Letter sent to Pine County/Windemere Zoning/Homeowner – Holding Tank: Director Hall provided the letter she submitted to Pine County Zoning/Windemere Zoning and the homeowner regarding the holding tank that was permitted by Pine County to be installed at the property on Sand Lake which is within 400 feet of the District line. She requested that the County revoke the permit and require the property owner to remove the holding tank as the property is in the MLWSSD jurisdiction and holding tanks are not allowed. No response has been received to date. Hall will update the Board as information is received.

C. Proposed Changes Ordinance/PPM/By Laws – Update: Tabled at this time.

9. New Business: A motion was made by Lourey second by Strandlie to provide Hall with a 4% increase effective January 1, 2024. Motion carried 5/0.

10. Adjourn: Motion by Strandlie second by Lourey to adjourn the meeting. The motion carried 5/0 and the meeting adjourned at 7:12 p.m.

Minutes by Darla Hall, Executive Director