**Moose Lake Windemere Area Sanitary Sewer District**

**Approved Special Meeting Minutes**

**May 22, 2024**

**@ MLWSSD Office**

1**.**  A Special Meeting of the Moose Lake Windemere Sanitary Sewer District was called to order at 4:00 p.m. by Chairman Kuster. Members present included: Chairman Kuster, Vice Chairman Lourey, Treasurer Eric Nielsen, Clair Strandlie and Paula Engstrom. Also in attendance were Executive Director Darla Hall, and Eric Applewick, Advanced Utility Solutions.

The Special Meeting was called to gather information on possible sewer system upgrades and treatment options. Eric Applewick was invited to share information on his company as well as upgrades to systems that may be available to the District and possible alternative treatment options. Meeting was also called to review proposals/quotes and select a contractor for the Wastewater Treatment Superintendent position.

2. Approval of Agenda: Motion by Strandlie second by Lourey to approve the agenda as written. Motion carried 5/0.

3. Guest: Eric Applewick, Advanced Utility Solutions: Eric Applewick provided information to the Board about his company Advanced Utility Solutions. They currently have approximately 30 contracts and their services include electrical and general contracting as well. Applewick explained there are many types of systems they work with and discussed various treatment options. With the amount of flow the District currently has, Applewick explained that a mechanical package plant type system could only process around 30,000 gpd. The District would need to look at ponds or a mechanical plant. Board questioned if the MPCA would approve this type of system being so close to the City of Moose Lake. Applewick suggested the question should be posed to the state. The Board discussed the possibility of splitting off part of the system for treatment, but the question is if it financially makes sense.

Eric stated that from an operational standpoint, ponds are the best option and less money to operate. Finding available property for the treatment process can be a challenge. He suggested options for land such as abandon gravel pits etc. Kuster questioned if an area such as the airport area which has a large parcel of land next to the runway might be an option for land treatment. This would all depend on what the state allows. Appewick talked about one type of system he has worked with that included a filtration system and a drip irrigation system. He mentioned this type of system being easier to maintain.

Board discussed Sturgeon Lake and Island Lake. It was stated that the District researched sewering those lakes years ago and sent out surveys gathering data on the types and ages of homeowners’ systems, and if they would be interested in getting municipal sewer at the engineered cost estimate. The majority of the responses were not in favor at that time as it was costly. Applewick stated that if this option is looked at again, if the properties have failing systems, it helps push the project up on the PFA list but new data would need to be gathered.

Engstrom stated that the District should work with the Windemere Planning Commission with respect to sewering needs for Sturgeon Lake. This lake is very populated.

Applewick stated that a list of items that need to be identified are:

1. Is there a want of a System

2. Lot Sizes (if to small to support on-site)

3. Failing Systems

With that information you then look at long-term solutions. Applewick suggested conducting a survey of the systems and perhaps finding someone on the lakes that is in favor of sewering and have them do a polling survey to gather necessary information.

It was suggested to:

- Talk with Representatives/Senators to see what they can do for the District to support project

- Have a joint meeting with the Township Boards to discuss needs.

- Talk with Bolton & Menk about options for treatment and different variables.

(such as a portion of the system operates on a package plant and a portion sent to City, etc).

- Hire a lobbyist to work on behalf of the District

- Try to get bonding money from the PFA and get on list

Applewick suggested getting input from an operator when developing plans with the engineer with respect to design of a system. Operators know best of what works or doesn’t work and often offer suggestions to cut costs or suggestions on other types of systems that may be a better option and not thought of.

The project that was proposed for Big Lake was discussed. Applewick offered to get some information on the Big Lake project and email the District.

The District discussed the current capacity restraints of sending more allotted flow than the contract allows. Applewick suggested the District may want to look into an equalization basin which basically holds the flow when peak times are happening and discharges at lower flow times.

Applewick discussed technology for lift stations. There are many types of cell-based technology. He suggested one system called Fleet Zoom which is very simple to use and estimated the costs to be around $6,000 per lift station and a $60 a month service. Another option was Omni-Site Guard Dog system. Eric will send the District information regarding technology options and contact information.

Eric discussed the Superintendent retiring and the hiring of a new operator. He indicated that his company offers services to help in training in the operation of the system and has contracts from 1 to 3 months. They also have a service contract available on a yearly basis for approximately $500 under which they can be contacted if an emergency arises, or an operator takes time off. It is a good backup solution to assist. He stated they have individuals as close as Kettle River if necessary.

Board thanked Applewick for attending and providing information. Applewick left the meeting.

4. Review proposals/quotes and select a contractor for Wastewater Treatment Superintendent: Monday, May 20, 2024, the Board interviewed the selected candidates for the contracted position of the Superintendent and both candidates were asked to submit a quote on what they would charge for service contract monthly. Hall reported that she spoke with Mikrot Municipal Water/Wastewater Services after the interviews, and they have decided to decline submitting a quote at this time.

A quote was received from Brett Collier for $3,000 per month. Board discussed the current contract with Keith Newman which provides $150 per completion of the certificate of compliance. Issuing the certificate of compliance and following the Point-of-Sale Ordinance is included in the contract as a requirement. Hall explained currently Keith identifies a lot of properties that haven’t contacted the District about the certificate of compliance by noticing relator signs etc. The process includes working with the relators and homeowners, the homeowner’s contractor for conducting plumbing inspection, viewing the televised line video and following up with necessary repair requirements and issuing of the certificate of compliance upon completion. Hall suggested including the same offer to the new contractor as an incentive for following up on these items. Motion made by Lourey second by Nielsen to accept Brett Collier’s proposal for the Wastewater Treatment Superintendent Contract for the fee of $3,000 per month with an additional $150 to be paid for completion of each Certificate of Compliance with the term being 1 year with a review in 8 months. Motion carried 5/0. It was agreed to have Collier begin in mid-June and prorate the first month of services. Upon a favorable review at the 8 months, the District may look at entering into a 3-year contract with Collier.

Chairman Kuster left the meeting as he had another meeting to attend.

5. Adjourn: Motion made by Nielsen second by Strandlie to adjourn the meeting. The motion carried 4/0 and the meeting adjourned at 6:13 p.m.

Minutes by Darla Hall, Executive Director