

PROCEEDINGS OF THE CENTRAL BROWN COUNTY WATER AUTHORITY
TECHNICAL COMMITTEE

Pursuant to §19.84 Wis. Stats, a regular meeting of the Central Brown County Water Authority **Technical Committee** was held on Tuesday, May 11, 2021 at the Town of Ledgeview Public Works Shop, 1915 Scray Hill Road, De Pere, WI, and via video conference. Note that in light of public health concerns regarding COVID-19, Committee members were able to attend in person or via telephone/video conference. Members of the public were offered the opportunity to either attend the meeting at the location noted above or to contact the Water Authority to obtain telephone or internet access to the meeting.

Members Present: Allouez – Sean Gehin (in person)
Bellevue – Shawn Geiger
De Pere – Scott Thoresen, Eric Zygarlicke
Howard – Geoff Farr
Lawrence – Kurt Minten
Ledgeview – Andy Tenor (in person), Greg Potts (in person)

Also Present: Rob Michaelson – Manitowoc Public Utilities
Gary Rosenbeck – McMahon, Inc.
Nic Sparacio, CBCWA General Manager (in person)

The May 11, 2021 Central Brown County Water Authority – Technical Committee Meeting was called to order at 1:35 p.m. by Chair Greg Potts of Ledgeview.

Roll Call:

Attendance was recorded as shown above. (Note that all attendees listed were present via video conference or teleconference unless otherwise noted as “in person.”)

Approval of Agenda:

1. Approve Agenda

Motion made by De Pere, seconded by Lawrence to approve the agenda.

MOTION UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED

Approval of Minutes:

2. April 13, 2021

There were no revisions to the draft minutes.

Motion made by Allouez, seconded by Ledgeview to approve the April 13, 2021 minutes as presented.

MOTION APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY

Appearances:

3. None

Communications:

4. WDNR Municipal Water Systems WPDES General Permit

Nic Sparacio confirmed that everyone received this communication from the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources and stated that we have until May 22nd to submit any written comments on the proposed permit reissuance. Sparacio gave an overview of the proposed permit impacts. It will apply to hydrant flushing, pumping wells to waste, and draining towers or reservoirs when these operations result in treated water reaching surface waters of the state, including wetlands and storm sewers. New requirements include estimating volumes, sampling for chlorine, phosphorous, suspended solids, etc., and monthly reporting.

The Committee Members discussed their concerns and questions with the proposed permit, which included the following:

- a. Cost and Staffing Impacts. Significant cost impacts are anticipated for water utilities. While the lab fees for tests like Total Phosphorous and Total Suspended Solids are relatively low, they can add up quickly considering how frequently hydrant flushing, well maintenance, and water storage maintenance activities take place. However, the greater concern is increased labor costs as each required sample is collected and then delivered to an available lab. Water utility staff are already spread thin, so there is little to no capacity for these additional activities.
- b. Lack of Clarity. The Members have questions on sampling methodology, the allowable standards for discharged water, potential enforcement consequences, and the reasons behind the proposed new permit requirements. While many of these are addressed to some extent in the documentation provided for the reissuance, the Members have “what ifs” in mind as they think about the potential application of these requirements.
- c. Lack of Communication. The proposed General Permit contains significant and unexpected changes impacting water utility operations. It does not seem consistent with Department of Natural Resources best practices to introduce such changes without first providing some opportunity for stakeholder involvement. There presently exists a gap in understanding that should be addressed with communication and education.

There was a consensus that each Member should submit correspondence to the WDNR to make them aware of the high level of concern. Sparacio will draft the Water Authority response and share it with everyone. The Members can start from the Water Authority letter as an example. The process for submitting comments on the proposed General Permit is to send a letter or email to the permit drafter, Trevor Moen, with DNR. His email and mailing address are included in the Public Notice.

Agenda Items:

5. Proposal from NIS for Annual Corrosion System Survey

Sparacio reported that this is the typical annual survey of the impressed current system. Only the steel pipe will be surveyed this year. He is recommending approval.

Motion made by Allouez, seconded by Ledgeview to recommend to the Board approval of the proposal from NIS for Annual Corrosion System Survey.

MOTION UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED

6. Proposal from NIS for Cell-to-Cell Survey of Ductile Iron Pipe

Sparacio reported that this survey would help assess the condition of the ductile iron pipes in the transmission system. A cell-to-cell survey had only been done previously on the concrete pipes back in 2012. We requested this proposal from NIS in response to last year's break on a ductile iron pipe. Sparacio explained that this is a high priority, but in his opinion, it can be done in 2022 when the cost can be included in the annual budget. We could fund this project yet in 2021 by making several line item transfers, if it was determined to be that urgent. Sparacio recommends that this project be included in the 2022 capital program.

Sean Gehin asked how often a cell-to-cell survey would be conducted. Gary Rosenbeck responded that this survey would create a baseline of pipeline condition data and would not need to be repeated for 10 to 15 years. Potts asked if the cost could be higher if additional work is identified. Sparacio responded, yes, the cost would be higher if corrosion hot spots are discovered that require immediate excavation or even repair.

Scott Thoresen asked for the Engineer's recommendation. Rosenbeck responded that he recommends completing this survey, and 2022 would be sufficient timing. Thoresen asked how having this survey done might have impacted the break that occurred last year. Sparacio directed attention to the Final Report elements of the NIS Proposal. The report will include identification of anodic hot spots, any potential areas that require excavation for further investigation, and recommendations for any immediate corrective actions. If we had this information a few years back, we would likely have been able to foresee the issue that caused the break on American Blvd.

Discussion continued on the survey methodology and length of pipe involved. There was a consensus that this should be done and included in the 2022 capital program. The budgeted amount should include the estimated cost of the survey plus additional funds for hot spot excavation and corrective actions.

Motion made by Howard, seconded by Allouez to recommend to the Board that the proposal from NIS for a Cell-to-Cell Survey of Ductile Iron Pipe be included in the 2022 Capital Improvement Program.

MOTION UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED

7. Public communication related to water quality and testing

Sparacio reported that he did not receive any inquiries stemming from the PFAS media event. The Members confirmed that no inquiries were received at the local level either.

WBAY did cover the media event with a brief story. This is an important issue, and we are prepared for any inquiries that might be received.

8. Project status updates

a. **Emergency back-up supply study**

Rosenbeck reviewed the information requests that have been sent to the Members. He is still lacking some information on the wells, booster pumps, maintenance costs, any water quality updates, and projected 2030 flows. He is also requesting everyone's most recent Sanitary Survey reports. Please supply the requested information.

Rosenbeck then presented the May 7, 2021 Project Memorandum outlining the progress to date on evaluating the existing emergency interconnections and back-up wells. He also plans to reach out to each Member to review the details of the potential back-up supply scenarios. Rob Michaelson asked if there will be consideration for the water quality impacts of passing water from one community's distribution system to another. Rosenbeck responded that he is focusing first on the basic feasibility of various back-up supply scenarios, but the scope of work does include water quality considerations.

Gehin asked whether Rosenbeck is now more inclined to pursue the single large-scale interconnection with Green Bay Water based on what he has seen so far. Rosenbeck responded that if multiple communities are impacted by a system failure, there will be cases where we have to look to another source for back-up supply, which would be Green Bay. However, there are also many potential system failures that can be addressed with these smaller scale interconnections, so we need to explore these options as well. Sparacio added that this study may ultimately point us in the direction of a single large-scale interconnection with Green Bay, but even in that case, this study will help to justify that expenditure. We will be able to report to the Membership that we considered all options.

Gehin asked whether there has been some consideration of using funds from the American Rescue Plan Act to help fund an emergency interconnection with Green Bay Water. Sparacio responded that this has been discussed at the Board level. He added, however, that not all Members indicate that they would have capacity within those awards to dedicate funds to such a project. Green Bay Water would also have to be willing to dedicate funds, and the Water Authority would not receive any of these funds directly. There would have to be new borrowing by the Water Authority to access its share of the project funds. Discussion continued on the steps being taken to work with Green Bay Water on the structure for emergency service agreements.

Sparacio thanked everyone for taking the time to respond to the various emails on this project. This was a top priority under our recent strategic plan update. The project is complex and is somewhat evolving as we go.

b. Chlorine analyzers and solenoids

There are no new issues to report on the analyzers. There seems to be less drift in the readings. Lawrence still has some work to finalize their SCADA connections. De Pere is still working on coordinating the analyzers with the chlorine dosing system. Sparacio reported on the warranty details on the units and shared the feedback he received from Evoqua on the typical performance of the analyzers.

c. Automatic chlorine shut-offs calibration and maintenance

Sparacio shared the information he received from Hawkins on a potential service agreement for the chlorine automatic shut-off systems. They would provide annually a visual inspection, battery service, and gas sensor test at their hourly rate. They anticipate one day or less to visit all the stations. There is also an annual recertification service available on the Halogen actuators. This includes cleaning, lubricating, and testing the actuators to return them to manufacturer's specifications. Upon discussion, there was a consensus that the annual servicing proposed by Hawkins seems reasonable, but the factory recertification can be revisited at another time.

d. Meter accuracy and process for calibration

Michaelson reported that he has reached out to three companies, and he is leaning toward Midwest Meter to provide the service. MPU would retest at least the four meters that were presenting with an error under the previous testing. Perhaps they would retest all of the meters to get a baseline for comparison. Gehin asked whether everyone would be notified when the testing will be done. Michaelson responded that the Members will be notified and can be present for any tests.

e. Manitowoc pump station optimization

Michaelson reported on progress with the VFD procurement. A favorable bid was received for manufacture of the VFD, and they now await bids for the installation.

f. SPLASH Study implementation

Sparacio reported that he continues working on the Project Clearinghouse database with some of the Member utilities.

g. Transmission main and local excavation permits

Sparacio clarified, based on a question after the last meeting, that the process for monitoring construction and excavation near the transmission main also involves the Member municipalities. If there is a permit request near the transmission main, he is asking the Members to notify the Water Authority. There was agreement that providing such notice is feasible.

Thoresen asked for clarification on coordination with other jurisdictions when the municipality is not the permitting agency, for example, with County roads. Sparacio responded that he believes this is now being covered by the coordination with Brown County. He has already started receiving notice from the County in these situations.

9. Connection station ownership and maintenance

Sparacio introduced this item as it relates to last month's discussion on the condition of the doors on the connection stations. He reviewed the ownership status of the buildings – they are owned by the Members and governed by easements for joint use by the Water Authority. He explained two statements within the easement language that could be applied to the doors. The easements state that the Owners (Members) are responsible for maintenance of the building shell. They also state that the Lessee (Water Authority) is responsible for safeguarding its equipment. So the key question seems to be whether the doors are more a part of building shell maintenance or more a part of safeguarding the building contents.

Upon discussion, there was a consensus that the doors are more related to maintenance of the building shell. On one hand, the doors are essential for safeguarding the building. On the other hand, so are the roof and walls, and one could then make the case that a leaking roof, or any number of other building maintenance issues, could also become Water Authority responsibilities. This is probably not the intent of the easements. There was also a consensus that it would be worthwhile to potentially have the Water Authority coordinate a joint purchase and to the bill the individual costs to the Members similar to how the 2017/2018 building maintenance project was handled. Each of the Members should compile a list of the doors that need to be replaced.

10. Water sales report through April 30, 2021

Sparacio reported on water consumption for the previous month. We are not seeing the big drop in water consumption that we saw last spring, but due to lower-than-normal water use in January, we are still just under 1% behind this same time last year. There were no questions on the water sales report.

Old Business:

11. None

Next Meeting:

Agenda Items for the Tuesday, June 8, 2021 Meeting

Potential agenda items for the next meeting include:

- Draft 2022 Capital Improvement Program

Adjourn:

Motion made by Ledgeview, seconded by Allouez to adjourn at 3:40 p.m.

MOTION UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED

Respectfully submitted,
Nicolas Sparacio