

Union Township Board of Supervisors
Workshop, Overlook Street Sewerage
February 13, 2017

The Board of Supervisors Meeting was called to order by Chairperson Deborah Sargent at 6:00 p.m. The meeting was held at the Union Township Municipal Building, 3904 Finleyville-Elrama Road, Finleyville, PA. The pledge of allegiance was recited.

Board Members in Attendance by roll call were Larry Spahr, Paul Chasko, Heather Daerr, and Deborah Sargent. Charles Trax did not attend. Also in attendance, Mr. James Harshman—Township Engineer, one of his employees also, Debra Nigon—Secretary, and Judy Taylor—Treasurer.

A drawing showing the plan for the Overlook Street Sewerage System was posted in the room for viewing by all who attended. James Harshman, Township Engineer, described the plan and provided financial information.

The construction estimate to date is \$470,000. The financing options that the Township is looking into may involve financing through PennVest. If that is the only financing, estimated monthly user costs would be approximately \$75 per month. He is hopeful that more grants can be secured. The Township will be applying for an H2O grant. If that funding is received, it will take user costs down to approximately \$55 per month.

Public Comment

Mr. Opferman, 3 Airport Road, owner of a rental property in the sewerage area, inquired about the tap fee and length of debt service. The debt service will be 30 years. If the Township only receives PennVest funding, the tap-in fee will be \$5,500 which includes \$2,500 for the South Park tap-in fee and \$3,000 for the Union Township tap-in fee. If an H2O grant or small sewer grant were to be secured, residents may be looking at \$3,000 in tap-in fees.

There are 26 EDUs being provided for service capacity, per the project; however there are only 23 actual taps with 3 being allocated for future development by the property owners. The EDU information is detailed in the Act 537 Plan document and will be part of the record to be submitted to the DEP.

Mr. Dolinar, 6658 Library Road, as well as Mr. Opferman, commented that they would prefer a lower user charge and higher tap-in fee.

Mr. Opferman also inquired about whether the \$75 monthly sewerage cost included the surcharge. Per the engineer, the \$75 per month is all inclusive

The engineer explained that the \$75/month charge is an average. The Act 537 plan estimate is based on 220 gallons of water used per EDU per day which equals about 7500 gallons per month. This is the computation he must use in the plan; however, each homeowner's monthly bill may be less, if less than 7500 gallons of water per month is used.

Mr. Opfermann inquired about whether there is a flat fee (*a minimum*). Mr. Harshman explained that users will pay \$21 in debt service plus the sewer authority's flat fee, whatever that may be.

Ms. Kathleen Orr, 6648 Library Road, 6640 and 6644 Library Road, inquired about the \$75 per month sewerage cost since she has a house and two apartments. She will be paying three tap-in fees as well as three \$75 monthly sewage bills. She has a three-bay garage with two small apartments above the garage. She spoke with her plumber who she said that he couldn't see her needing more than two connections, one for her and one for the two apartments. Mr. Harshman explained that, even if you have one physical connection, there will still be two taps assigned based on the EDU's. He added that, since the apartments are small, water usage may be less than 7500 gallons, which means it's likely that the bill will be less for each of the apartments.

Mr. Dolinar further inquired as to how soon he could remove his septic tank. The engineer explained that when there is an Act 537 plan, you become eligible for a temporary holding tank, since there is a plan in place. In terms of timing, if the township is successful in obtaining funding, they could break ground possibly the summer of 2018. It could also be five years down the road.

Mr. Dolinar asked about the possibility of obtaining funding at a bank instead of through PennVest. Mr. Harshman explained that PennVest financing is not a quick process, but thought that the Township should go through the grant process before making any decision. He also explained that the issue with the discovered illegal tap started the process. However, because of the documented septic problems and failed dye tests, the DEP required that the Township undertake sewerage. If the Board desired, the construction project could drag out ten years from now.

There were questions on the plan drawing as to whether it identified owners with failed dye test, which the engineer addressed.

The engineer also announced that public comment forms were in the back of the room and that owners were encouraged to write down their comments. Those comments will become part of the permanent record on the project.

Printed copies of the plan will be made available at the Township building for any owner who wants one. Mr. Opferman asked for an electronic copy of the plan so that he could see it better. His contact information was provided to the secretary.

Mr. Harshman also responded to a question as to whether the plan could change. It could change during the DEP review process. Also, as one example, since a Phase I Archaeological Study is required as part of the project, the results of that study could cause something to be moved.

Board Approved: February 23, 2017

At the conclusion of the meeting, Mr. Harshman took time with individual home owners who had questions pertaining to his/her property up until the start of the Regular Board Meeting which was scheduled at 7:00 p.m. and immediately followed.


Debra A. Nigon, Secretary