

**GAINES CHARTER TOWNSHIP
REGULAR MEETING
WATER & SEWER ADVISORY COMMITTEE
DRAFT MEETING MINUTES ~ April 20, 2016**

CALL TO ORDER

A Water & Sewer Advisory Committee meeting was called to order by Chair Haagsma at 4:00 p.m. on Wednesday, April 20, 2016 at the Gaines Charter Township (GCT) Offices located at 8555 Kalamazoo Avenue SE, Caledonia, Michigan 49316.

ROLL CALL

Members Present: Jan Boone, Jeff Gritter, Tim Haagsma, Don R. Hilton, Sr.
Members Absent: None
Others Present Mike Kortman, Byron Gaines Utility Authority

APPROVAL OF November 10, 2015 REGULAR MEETING MINUTES:

Motion: By Jan Boone supported by Don Hilton to approve the minutes for the November 10, 2015 Water & Sewer Advisory Committee meeting as presented.
Discussion: None
Yes: Jan Boone, Jeff Gritter, Tim Haagsma, Don R. Hilton, Sr.
No: None
Abstain: None
Motion: Carried

PUBLIC COMMENT:

None

CURRENT MATTERS:

- a. **Kentwood Public Schools**
(Note: Although invited, Kentwood Public Schools (KPS) did not attend the meeting. The Committee delayed discussion on this issue to 4:23 p.m. allowing KPS staff to arrive in the event they were running late.)

Kentwood Public Schools contacted the Township questioning a significant increase in metered water usage this winter. In reviewing the history for KPS accounts it was found that the increase in water use began between June and September, 2015 and has yet to decrease. KPS is questioning the source of the

increase. The attached **History Detail Report dated Wednesday, April 13, 2016** was provided to Larry King, the Budget Control Officer for Kentwood Public Schools for discussion. Mr. King, in his conversations with Township Staff, stated that he was of the opinion that something was wrong with the water meter. Township Staff requested that KPS review their plumbing system to investigate for the possibility of a leak. Water meters do not run “faster” than actual water use.

The BGUA was able to access reports from KPS high school water meter providing water use detail by the hour. The data showed the flow of water never goes to zero as one might expect to see in the middle of the night giving indication that there may be a leak in the building. The current rate of water use at the high school building is on an average, 20 gallons a minute being used 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Mike Kortman explained that similar usage would occur in a normal household where all faucets are left running, wide open 24/7.

In reviewing a rough schematic of the infrastructure, Jeff Gritter and Mike Kortman stated the pool would be a good place to begin an investigation as to the source of the potential leak causing that much usage. Some pools have sensors that identify when water needs to be added and would do so without human intervention. KPS pool is likely to have such a feature. The Township and the BGUA have offered to assist KPS in troubleshooting the source of the problem within the limits that they can work under. The Township and the BGUA can continue to monitor the water use and report this data to KPS as they investigate their internal plumbing system.

The Committee recommends that KPS work to identify the source of the water use. BGUA can continue to monitor the water use recorded by the water meter and share the information with KPS.

As representatives from KPS were not in attendance, Jan Boone, via e-mail, will communicate the Committee’s recommendations to Larry King. A recommendation to the Township Board is not needed at this time.

b. Hanna Lake Watermain Project (Update)

Jeff Gritter stated that the watermain is in the design phase and that he recently heard from the Developers engineer that they plan on submitting plans for review by late April 2016. Construction of both projects will occur this summer or fall.

c. Brewer Park Sewer Project – Construction Update/Assessment District

Jeff Gritter referenced the attached spreadsheet for *Voluntary Special Assessments (Project #243) for the Sanitary Sewer Extension Project from Brewer Park Condominiums to 84th Street*. The sewer project is now in the restoration stage and the Contractor is completing final punch list items relating to the sewer construction. Gritter stated the spreadsheet listing property owners is 95% complete. Preliminary construction costs and the cost to connect to the sanitary sewer are coming in at less than half of the Township’s ordinance rates. When the project is finalized letters can be sent to the property owners informing them of

their potential costs if they would chose to participate in the voluntary assessment district. An additional meeting of the Water & Sewer Advisory Committee should not be necessary and it was recommended that the Committee consider the first draft of the Voluntary Assessment District for a recommendation to the Township Board.

A motion was requested by Chair Haagsma.

Motion: By Jeff Gritter supported by Jan Boone to recommend approval of the Special Assessment District for the Sanitary Sewer Extension Project to the Township Board for action at their June 13, 2016 meeting or after final expenses are known if necessary.

Discussion: None

Yes: Jan Boone, Jeff Gritter, Tim Haagsma, Don R. Hilton, Sr.

No: None

Abstain: None

Motion: Carried

d. 84th Street and Kalamazoo Area Utilities

Jeff Gritter stated that with the recent approval of the sub-area planning document for the 84th Street and Kalamazoo area; consideration has to be given to serving the area with utilities.

A developer owns the property at the southeast quadrant of the intersection and he is indicating a desire to develop his property and he has recognized the need for public utilities to develop this area of the Township. The Developer has hired Holland Engineering to gather development information and begin to review the required utility extensions to serve the property with water and sewer. Gritter provided a hand-out indicating some preliminary locations for extending gravity sewer; hi-lighted in green, and watermain hi-lighted in blue.

The preliminary estimate shows that gravity sanitary sewer would cost around \$2.83 million and the watermain extension would cost around \$2.75 million. Although these are large numbers, the cost of extending utilities is never likely to be lower. Gritter stated that Holland Engineering has been in contact with him to discuss these utilities. While the developer has not been informed of Gritter's projection of cost at this time, they already recognize that the costs are not inexpensive.

The cost to develop the utility system in this area can be approached in two basic ways by the Township. A cost sharing agreement with the developer that may include payback arrangements can be set up with a developer or the Township's water and sewer funds can be used to build the utilities. Monies would be recovered as connections are made and either retained by the Township or in a payback arraignment the monies would be sent to the developer for a period of 10 years as connection fees are paid. It is not clear which way makes the most sense at this time but as the developer continues to be active in the development of his property the Township can continue to explore how to finance utility improvements.

The main point of the discussion is to give the Committee time to begin thinking about this area of the Township and be ready to discuss options should the developer express a desire to move forward. Public utilities make this area more attractive to the types of development supported by the recent amendment to the Master Plan.

Gritter stated that when looking at the specific sewer route there are some naturally existing difficulties that would need to be overcome; i.e. valleys, streams, ponds, wetlands, etc.... Not all of the homes with frontage on 84th Street would be serviced by the trunk sewer due to steep slopes, wetland areas and the need to locate the sewer near existing Sharp's Creek. Routing of the sewer line would need to be more fully analyzed if a project were to move forward. Serving existing homes in the area of the trunk sewer is a design consideration that would be included if and when more detailed sewer plans are created. Hilton noted that not all property owners will be in support of this project should it go forward.

The Committee discussed the diameter of the sewer pipe that would be needed to serve this area. Gritter stated that the existing sewer in the area of Countryside Elementary is 15" diameter and for the sake of being conservative with the cost estimate this diameter sewer was assumed to be necessary for nearly the entire length of the projected trunk sewer route. A detailed design analysis better determine if the pipe diameter could be reduced as the trunk sewer is extended south and east. The watermain would be a 16" diameter pipe to service the area adequately and in keeping with the Township's design standards of maintaining adequate fire flows and pressures to areas served by public watermain.

OTHER MATTERS:

1. Discussion – review of high water use responses by the Township/BGUA.

Jan Boone requested direction from the Committee on how much the Water & Sewer Department and/or the BGUA should be doing for residential customers to resolve questions regarding high water usage. Boone stated she suggests general troubleshooting activities to identify leaks or constantly running water; problems which result in higher water use and the higher utility bills that go with these issues. Mike Kortman stated if the BGUA enters the home to perform troubleshooting activities they are subject to liability for damages that may occur and that is not a position he wishes to put the staff of the BGUA. The homeowner has the responsibility to maintain their plumbing in a leak free condition.

The Committee agrees that troubleshooting steps including informing customers of common household issues including leaking toilets and or sinks, dye strips, informing customers how meters work and if there continues to be a need to further investigate the concern the BGUA can download detailed water use records from the homeowners water meter at the Township's request. New water meters come with this capability; however, older model water meters do not.

An uncertified test of the water meter can be done by the BGUA on their meter test bench and can be informative to customers that wish to see what the meter is doing in a controlled environment. As a last resort a customer can pay for a

certified test of their water meter but this is typically more expensive than a customer wants to pay.

2. Update of Projects:

- a. **Preservation Lakes.** Water and sewer systems for phase 1 have been installed and testing work is being completed. Work needs to be completed on the sanitary pump station and force-main. Indications from the developer and his contractor are that this project is on schedule to begin home construction around the end of May, 2016. There are two early starts under construction at this time.
- b. **Weathervane.** Progressing slowly. Sewer has been installed and work is still being completed on the laterals. The storm sewer, watermain and road construction remain.
- c. **SWITCH.** No activity has occurred with the exception of a request for Record Plans.
- d. **South Christian High School.** Aware discussions are taking place to construct the high school but nothing has been presented at this time. Haagsma stated the Kent County Road Commission has asked for a site plan as they are working on a road project and there is an opportunity for driveway cuts to be discussed and coordinated with the KCRC. Gritter stated there will be a fair amount of Water & Sewer work when the project begins.
- e. **Division Avenue “Road Diet”.** Work is in progress between 76th Street and 84th Street to restrict the road from 4 lanes down to two with a center turn lane and bike lanes on each side of the road. The only major water and sewer item is the relocation of a hydrant that will be impacted by a relocation of a curb. The BGUA is coordinating this work with the Contractor.
- f. **Turning Creek.** This project is still in the plan review stage and we are anticipating a revised set of plans will be submitted for additional review sometime in early May, 2016. The Developer has indicated construction of road and utilities will take place immediately after receiving permits.
- g. **Chick-fil-A.** The watermain plan was submitted on April 19 and comments will be sent to the Engineer as soon as they are finalized.
- h. **Pine Rest Christian Mental Health / Van Andel Addition.** The project is underway and moving ahead on schedule.

3. Election of Officers:

Chair Haagsma noted the limited slate of available nominees for the Water & Sewer Advisory Committee and opened the topic for discussion. Jan Boone stated that she would like to leave the officers in place for another year. Haagsma

requested a motion.

Motion: By Jan Boone, supported by Don Hilton to approve the nomination of Tim Haagsma for Chairperson, Don Hilton as Vice- Chair and Jeff Gritter as Secretary for the 2016 year.

Discussion: None

Ayes: Jan Boone, Jeff Gritter, Tim Haagsma, Don R. Hilton, Sr.

Nays: None

Abstain: None

Motion: Passed

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 4:54 P.M.

Respectfully submitted:

Jeffrey M. Gritter, P.E.
Township Engineer