

Delafield-Hartland Water Pollution Control Commission

Meeting Minutes for Tuesday, January 21, 2025 5:30 PM

Commission Conference Room, Treatment Plant, 416 Butler Drive, Delafield, WI 53018

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 5:30 P.M.

Roll Call of Commissioners:

City of Delafield: Tim Aicher, Mayor, Chairman
Erv Sadowski, Citizen Member, Secretary
Kevin Maples, Citizen Member
Mark Schaefer, Alderman
John Seymour, Alternate
Paul McAllister, Alternate

Village of Hartland: Dave Lamerand, Citizen Member, Vice Chair
Ann Wallschlager, Trustee
Linda Hallquist, Citizen Member

Also Present: Rob Minnema, General Manager
Ericka Buchberger, Finance Director/Treasurer

Approve Minutes of November 19, 2024 Commission Meeting

Motion (Schaefer/Maples) to approve the Commission Meeting minutes of November 19, 2024. Carried (6-0) Hallquist abstained

Commission Matters

Finance Director/Treasurers Report

Review Financial Statements (November and December 2024)

December 2024 closed with a net loss of \$406 thousand after recording a decrease in FV of restricted assets in the amount of \$425 thousand. At year end, connection charges collected were over budget by \$404 thousand, investment income was over budget by \$224 thousand, and general revenue items (user and hauler fees) were over budget by \$190 thousand. (Note: all of the financial data stated is based on the unaudited financial statements for 2024) While comparing 2024 financial graphs to 2023 financial graphs, there wasn't much change other than the decrease in restricted assets which was expected due to the BPR Project. The construction project was complete on July 31, 2024, and all costs related to it have been paid in full.

There was another discussion reviewing the topic of Del-Hart raising its user rate from \$16.50 to \$19.50 effective July 1, 2024. The anticipated outcome is that DHWPCC will operate at a breakeven and use the connection charges for investing in the infrastructure for the future. This year (2025) is the first year getting back to normal operations, meaning no construction project to consider and no more duplication of staffing positions (Finance Director/Treasurer and General Manager) which have been occurring since November 2022.

The Commissioners are encouraged to contact the FD/T if any questions come up.

Approve Expenses and Transfers (November and December 2024)

Motion (Sadowski/McAllister) to approve the expenses and transfers for November 2024. Carried (7-0).

**Motion (Sadowski/McAllister) to approve the expenses and transfers for December 2024.
Carried (7-0).**

Update on 2024 Audit

E. Buchberger started the audit with Baker Tilly for 2024. Bank confirmations have gone out, and the plan is to have all of the fieldwork complete by March 18, 2025. The audited financial statements should be presented to the Commissioners at the May 2025 Commission Meeting.

General Manager's Report

Wastewater Operator Hire

General Manager, Rob Minnema, announced that Steve LaChapelle accepted a wastewater operator position with DHWPCC, and will be starting January 27, 2025. Steve will fit in well and is anticipated to be a long-term employee. Welcome Steve!

**Motion (Sadowski/Wallschlager) to approve the hiring of Steve LaChapelle.
Carried (7-0).**

R. Minnema also read a letter received from Courtney Andrews as a formal notification of Courtney's retirement effective July 1, 2025. Courtney has been a dedicated employee for twenty-one years, and we wish him well.

Review upcoming January capital purchases

R. Minnema received two bids from local vendors for the floor replacement in Del-Hart's administration building. The low bid came in from an Oconomowoc vendor and is over the budget amount of \$20,000 by \$244.72. Rob will move forward with this vendor since the other vendor came in approximately \$4,000 over the budget amount. The cost for lawn/garden equipment came in at almost \$17,000 below the budgeted amount of \$50,000.

Discuss unexpected Digester operational issues

R. Minnema delivered a very detailed explanation of the digester process and the very extensive and expensive problems occurring with it right now. Delafield-Hartland WPCC has two digesters. The digesters breakdown sludge so we can process it, store it, and land apply it eventually. The sludge handling process is one of the more expensive portions of the whole wastewater process other than the wastewater coming in. One of the digesters plugged up due to a significant number of rags in it. The recirculation pumps were plugging up, heat was lost in the digester, foam started forming which upsets the whole process, so there was no choice but to shut the digester down. Currently, DelHart is operating on one digester which is working ok, but must be monitored closely. The solution involves getting DNR approval to get a contractor out to the plant to clean out 200,000 gallons of sludge from the digester and haul it off site to a vendor who is going to store and dispose of it for us. The occurrence of this digester problem brought up a number of issues that R. Minnema feels need to be addressed sooner rather than later which will require the reallocation of some already approved 2025 capital budget funds, and the addition of more capital asset funds presented and approved by the Commission.

Review and approval of the Revised 2025 Capital Budget

The General Manager stated that the needed increase in capital funds is \$550,000; however, with the reallocation of funds from removing and/or reducing other capital budget items, it is not necessary to add the entire \$550,000 to the budget. The 2025 capital budget will increase to \$1.4

million versus the \$1.16 million it was originally approved at. R. Minnema walked the Commission through the requested changes.

Motion (Lamerand/Hallquist) to approve the revised 2025 capital budget showing the reallocation of funds. Carried (7-0).

There was a final, wrap-up discussion regarding the digester issues beginning with the fact that there wasn't any warning (no alarms to tip us off, etc.). Based on past history, the digester is cleaned out every five years with the fall of 2025 being the next time scheduled to be cleaned. The existing screen is very inefficient, necessitating the screen replacement project planned for the fall of 2025. After the problematic digester is back up and running, the second digester will be cleaned out to avoid the same issue happening to it. In the future, both digesters will be equipped with automated alarms and monitoring which will allow Rob and the staff to monitor and troubleshoot issues before they become catastrophic. Another suggestion is for Del-Hart to put out a public notice of what can and cannot be put down a toilet.

Next Commission Meeting and Agenda Items

Adjourn Commission Meeting

Motion (Sadowski/Maples) to adjourn at 6:06 P.M. Carried (7-0).

Respectfully submitted by:

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