



Chautauqua County
**DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

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Chautauqua County Sewer Agency
Meeting Minutes
February 22, 2016

Attendees: V. Horrigan, P. Chagnon, D. Emhardt, T. Carlson, B. Boria, S. Carlson, M. Stow, T. Walsh, S. Carlson, A. Churchill, B. Wilson, D. McCoy

1. Organizational Structure of the Chautauqua County Sewer Agency - Pierre Chagnon volunteered to Chair the Agency. Don Emhardt volunteered to be the Vice Chair.
2. Summary of the 2/5 NCLSD & Chautauqua Heights Stakeholders Meeting – Tom Carlson said that JC Smith spoke about EFC loans and grant opportunities for the NCLSD projects and the Chautauqua Heights project. The outcome of the meeting was that three projects were defined. (1) The NCLSD will complete the plant upgrades to satisfy the NYSDEC's SPDES Permit phosphorous limits. (2) The Town of Chautauqua will advance the Chautauqua Heights Conversion & Forcemain project and (3) form a district to include new users between Chautauqua Heights and the NCLSD.
3. Project Status Reports:
 - a. Tom Carlson said that the NCLSD expects to receive AECOM's final design proposal for the phosphorous upgrades at the NCLSD treatment plant (Project 1) in March. He anticipates it will take approximately 9 months to build the project at an estimated cost of \$2.8 million.
 - b. The Town of Chautauqua has requested that AECOM prepare a Map, Plan and Report for Projects 2 & 3. Emhardt added that the Town meets the second Monday of each month and hopes to have a proposal for the preparation of the Report for the Board to consider in March. The Town plans to finance the anticipated \$5.3 million project with a 30-year bond. The need for a district referendum will be determined by Counsel when the Report is done. User fees are anticipated be about what they are now, around \$1700/yr.

A discussion ensued regarding two trailer parks on Plank Road that were near the proposed new district. Carlson noted that the parks had been evaluated previously and that it would be very expensive to connect them and they would not be included in the proposed NCLSD expansion plans.

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- c. Tom Walsh updated the Agency regarding the status of the SCCLSD projects. Walsh said that he and their consultant recently met with the NYSDEC to discuss the District's plans for upgrades and expansions. The outcome of the meeting was very positive in that the SCCLSD will not be required to undertake the estimated \$3 million in plant upgrades before they are allowed to move forward with their district expansion plans. Walsh added that they have engaged their consultant to evaluate their plant systems, such as their influent measurement capabilities or addressing residual chlorine concentrations, or even further reducing phosphorous concentrations in their effluent. None the less, the district anticipates that the proposed district expansion will cost approximately \$39 million.

The Agency members then discussed the feasibility of taking flows from the remaining unsewered properties on the north side of the Lake to the Maple Springs area, where they could be treated by the SCCLSD treatment plant. Tom Walsh explained that the vacuum collection system in Maple Springs would not be easily adapted to take the increased flows; therefore, taking the flows north to the NCLSD might be a less costly option.

4. Project Funding Options:

- a. Recap of EFC Eligibility Determinations – Chairman Chagnon stated that there were 5 Chautauqua Lake wastewater projects listed on the Intended Use Plan, all of which were above the funding line; however, one of those projects, the SCCLSD \$3 million plant upgrades are no longer necessary due to the NYSDEC's recent determination.. Walsh noted that their consultant is currently evaluating a phased approach to district expansion that will maximize funding opportunities.
- b. EFC Water Grants – McCoy said the application period for these grants was now open and applications were due on April 15.
- c. USDA Rural Development (RD) interest in co-funding – Chairman Chagnon noted that RD has expressed interest in co-funding the Town of Chautauqua Heights project but the mean household income (MHI) for the Town may be an issue. RD is also seeking a determination of eligibility from their regional office for the Chautauqua County projects because of the unique aspect of County ownership of districts.
- d. Appalachian Regional Commission Funding – McCoy noted that ARC prefers to be the funder last in line, offering only a maximum grant of \$150k. These funds are evaluated locally by Southern Tier West (STW) before they are sent to ARC's regional office. Having our projects identified as a high priority in STW's Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) document is a key step to getting a favorable recommendation for ARC funding.

- e. USDOC – EDA - McCoy followed by explaining that STW also is responsible for local prioritization of EDA grants. Again, having our projects listed as a priority in the CEDS document is an important aspect of being competitive for EDA grants. EDA awards are also influenced by the recommendations of members of the US Senate and House of Representatives. County Executive Horrigan said that he would work with STW to update the CEDS to reflect the County's focus on the ISMP.
- f. WIFIA – McCoy provided some introductory information on the federal WIFIA program, and offered that this is a new program which is seeking “shovel ready” projects to demonstrate the program's efficacy. WIFIA is a loan program at the US Treasury Rate, not a grant program.
- g. EB-5 – McCoy gave a brief summary of the EB-5 Visa Program and explained that it is probably not a good match for public utility infrastructure project with a 30-year useful life, rather it is better suited for private development opportunities such as hotels and conference centers as “unsecured funding”, much like a second mortgage that might be used to complete a funding plan.
- h. Looking forward at the next round of CFAs – McCoy said the REDC is accepting Letters of Interest (LOIs), which are intended to assist staff with matching projects with funding opportunities. LOIs also helpful to build awareness of projects and project sponsors before the CFAs open, which is likely to happen between May 1-July 31.

Alison Churchill asked the group if any of the charitable foundations in the region had expressed an interest in the Integrated Sewage Management Plan for Chautauqua Lake. A discussion ensued about bringing the foundations up to date with our progress and County Executive Horrigan suggested that Randy Sweeny with the Chautauqua Regional Foundation would be a logical point of contact. The group agreed that a presentation to the foundations would be a good idea and that McCoy would begin to work on a draft presentation.

- 5. Mailing of Fact Sheets, Frequently Asked Questions and CCDOH&HS Inspections – McCoy said that 1426 letters had been sent out and the both the CCDOH&HS and CCPED offices had been receiving calls from concerned land owners. Bill Boria noted that the CCDOH&HS was the only agency that had a telephone number listed on the fact sheets and his department was taking the calls that were related to the septic system inspection program, while calls related to the sewer district formation were being referred to CCPED. McCoy said that CCPED had been receiving 2-3 calls per week and would continue to address those callers until the NCLSD and SCCLSD projects were better defined. Once that occurs, the calls should be directed to the districts that the property owners would be included in.

6. Dates and Times for Future Meetings – The Agency discussed the merits of meeting monthly, bi-monthly, quarterly or as necessary. The agency agreed that bi-monthly meetings would be best and that special meetings could be convened if necessary. The group agreed that the 4th Monday, every other month at 4:00 pm would best suit the Agency member’s schedules. Sally Carlson agreed to host the next meeting on Monday, April 25 at 4:00 pm at the Stow Senior Center.

7. Other/General Discussion
 - a. Tom Walsh announced that March 15th was the date of the Greater Buffalo Environmental Conference and the Chris Humphry was to receive a national award for Laboratory Supervisor of the Year.
 - b. Walsh also noted that the SCCLSD and NCLSD would be the subject of presentations at the conference.