

A special emergency meeting of the Village Board of Page was held Wednesday, July 19, 2017, at the Village Office. Chairperson Rachel Linquist called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. with Trustees Mosel, Kennedy and Bartak present. Also present: Dave Gilmore (Gilmore & Associates Engineering), Cora Calkins, Don Linquist Jr., Dan & Jannan Sobotka, Audrey Buxton, Diane Heiss, Mary Jo Leichter, and Judy & Jim Summers. Chairperson R. Linquist informed all persons present, that this meeting was in compliance with the Nebraska Open Meetings Act and the Open Meeting Laws are posted for inspection at any time.

Chairperson Linquist deferred the floor to Calkins who advised that this meeting had been called strictly to review the finalized Preliminary Engineering Report and to discuss whether or not to apply to the USDA for project funding. Calkins advised that the necessity for the emergency meeting had been precipitated by notification from the USDA that grant/loan funds are still available this year, however, the application deadline was set for Friday, July 21, 2017.

Larry Peed, Sr. and Laura Asher entered the meeting at 7:02 p.m.

Gilmore & Associates – Final Report - Dave Gilmore was present to discuss recommendations and answer questions regarding the need and scope of the proposed project. Mr. Gilmore advised that the South Well for the Village of Page has excellent water quality being low in nitrates and adverse minerals / metals. He advised that Page is not currently operating under any deficiency status with any of the regulatory agencies in regard to water quality or distribution. When asked about the proposed scope of the project which the USDA has an interest in funding, he deferred the floor to Calkins.

Calkins advised that she had been informed by the USDA that they are proposing to fund Short Range Improvements cited on pages 61 – 62 (#'s 1, 2, 3, 4, & 5 – NOT 1A) of the final report, as well as, long range improvements as indicated on page 63 (#1 only – NOT 2).

Dennis VanEvery entered the meeting at 7:13 p.m.

Gilmore then briefly described each:

Short Range Improvements:

1. Well No. 94-1 Improvements and Connect Well No. 94-1 Directly to the Distribution System – Both Wells Can Operate Simultaneously. (\$18,000.00)
 - This would increase pumping capacity when water demand is high or in the event of a large fire.
 - This would enable either well to be off line for repairs with no interruption of service to residents.
 - This would allow – if desired – bypassing or limiting use of the North well which is above legal limits for nitrates.
2. Water Treatment Plant Improvements and Controls (\$65,500.00)
 - Current condition of the treatment plant resin is “found to be within near original specifications” with no replacement needed. A follow-up analysis is recommended sometime in next 7-10 years. (Page 50)
 - “Interior of the vessels, all PVC piping was in place and the interior coating was rated as excellent” (Page 50)
 - The major deficiency is “many of the control systems are not functional or are obsolete. The control panels, electric operated valves, and flowmeters all require replacement”.
 - Control panels & systems, electric operated process control valves, flowmeters and the gate valve on discharge of Well No. 79-1 would be replaced. Alarms indicating high / low water levels in the storage tank and an automated alarm dialer system would be added to alert staff of issues with supply.
3. Water Meter Replacement (\$150,000.00)
 - This figure was operating on the assumption that all meters / pits would require replacement and would include remote read features, new computer, and software to manage billing.

Calkins advised that this should be somewhat less since the vast majority of non-functioning meters have been replaced and that those replacements are upgradable to remote read. It was, however, noted that the remaining meters throughout the Village are at end of life and due for replacement and that there are connections which need to be metered and currently are not to account for water losses.
4. Standby Generator for the Water Treatment Plant (\$75,500.00)
5. Standby Generator for Well No 94-1 (\$75,500.00)
 - Currently the Village is contracted with NMC out of Norfolk to provide a portable generator should a prolonged electrical outage occur. This is problematic in that there is no guarantee of availability or timely delivery should the weather / roads / etc. be unsafe for transport from the NMC site to the Village. In addition to response time, the time to “connect and get running may be insufficient given the Village’s limited water storage capacity.” There is a hookup at the treatment plant for the generator, but there are no generator hook-ups at Well No. 94-1.

Long Range Improvements:

1. Distribution Improvement Project 1 – (6” main on Market Street, from Fifth Street to 6th Street; Sixth Street, from Market Street to Myrtle Street; Myrtle Street, from Sixth Street to Ninth Street, and Ninth Street from Myrtle Street to Main Street) (\$161,900.00)
 - The purpose of this project is to “improve water supply and operating pressures to customers and improve fire protection in the eastern area of the Village” by eliminating some dead end lines in the current system.

Public Comments – Chairperson Linquist opened the floor to public questions and comments.

Larry Peed, Sr. was present to discuss concerns about the cost of water, meter repair and whether or not water should even be metered within the Village. He expressed that the cost of water is prohibitive to encourage nice lawns and pride in personal property. He expressed concerns over the overall appearance of the town due to this and other issues that he felt are being overlooked.

Mr. Gilmore advised that meters are a requirement for grants from the USDA and often from NDEQ, DHHS, etc. He explained that this is due to the movement to encourage water conservation.

Jim Summers presented questions regarding the monitoring of the plant operations and was advised that water numbers are normally taken at a minimum 3-4 days of the week to ensure quality.

Questions were asked regarding the term and amount of the original loan for the treatment plant. Calkins advised that from the paperwork she has, the current loan originated in 1994, comes to term in 2033/34 and was originally for \$70,000.00. Annual payments are made in the amount of \$3880.00.

Mr. Peed left the meeting at 7:32 p.m.

Trustee Bartak read an email received from a concerned citizen who questioned the cost, expense and need for the treatment plant. The citizen advised that it is the Board’s responsibility to eliminate excess spending on these unnecessary expenses and instead focus on improving the quality of life in the Village.

Jannan Sobotka advised that she had come to the meeting in an effort to be informed about the issues and possible solutions. She inquired as to whether or not any portion of the project in its entirety could be adjusted and what the grant / loan amount and terms were being offered. Calkins advised that no offer had been formally made by the USDA at this time and that the above referenced repairs are what is being discussed verbally due to the expedited need for application to keep funds in state. The actual terms, amount and scope of the project would be discussed and accepted or declined at a future meeting.

Diane Heiss expressed her opinion that water rates are too high and that if the South well provides good water (requiring only chlorination) that the treatment plant should be retired and water rates should drop. She stated that other community’s water rates are much lower than ours.

Mr. Gilmore advised that rates are built off of costs to maintain the system and the median income of the residents. Often larger communities may have substantially lower rates due to the volume of customers or the lack of treatment facilities. He advised that no community water system should operate with only one water source and especially would not be wise given the Village’s inadequate storage capacity which would quickly be depleted should the well need major repair and no other source was viable.

Vice Chairperson Mosel advised that he had paid higher water rates before moving to Page and others had expressed the same to him.

Calkins also pointed out that even if the North well and treatment plant were to be completely taken offline, this would not eliminate those debt responsibilities. She also posed the question as to the cost of repairs for a known well quality vs. attempting to drill another well at any determined site and hoping that the water quality would be as good as our South well. Mr. Gilmore also noted that the cost to drill a community well is substantially more than to dig an irrigation well due to the regulations imposed by the state agencies.

Mary Jo Leichter took the floor to advise that she agrees with Vice Chairperson Mosel that the rates are fair and reasonable. She cited that before she moved here her rates were higher and often the water was mis-managed; often undrinkable without proper notice being given to residents.

Dan Sobotka advised that he was on the board when the water treatment plant was mandated and the South well was installed. He expressed concerns that no metering would result in excess water usage and that residents should not expect a reduction of water rates any time in the future. (His logic being that nothing has gotten cheaper over the course of the last 10 years and won’t in the future either.) He asked that the Village continue to try to maximize the benefits and minimize the cost to the residents as best they are able.

Mr. Sobotka advised that he feels most people are unaware that each facet of government utilities has to be self-sustaining as those funds are restricted. He also suggested that a challenge be issued to the community and/or concerned citizens to bring ideas for solutions to the Board instead of just complaints.

There being no further input from the floor, Chairperson Linquist thanked all parties present for taking the time to attend the meeting and express their thoughts and concerns. She invited them to continue to attend, as community input is not only welcomed, but

encouraged. She reiterated to those present, that everyone who resides here, including the Board members, want what is in the best interest of the Village as a whole, and each member has shown dedication to follow through on their commitment to represent those interests.

Chairperson Linquist then called for the Clerk to read the proposed Resolution before the Board for approval:

RESOLUTION 03-2017

AUTHORIZING THE CHAIRPERSON AND THE CLERK OF THE VILLAGE OF PAGE,
NEBRASKA TO EXECUTE DOCUMENTS REQUIRED TO RECEIVE UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE RURAL DEVELOPMENT FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

The following motion was introduced and adopted this 19th day of July, 2017, by the Board of Trustees of the Village of Page, Nebraska.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY:

The Board of Trustees of the Village of Page, Nebraska, resolves that the Chairperson and Clerk are authorized and directed to execute any and all documents and security instruments or other memoranda between the Village of Page, Nebraska and the USDA Rural Development so as to effect the Water Project application(s) for assistance.

If the Chairperson or the Clerk should change because of an election or other reasons during the processing of the USDA Rural Development application(s), the Village of Page, Nebraska will not need to amend this resolution so the Chairperson and the Clerk can sign any form(s) and security instrument(s) to finalize the USDA Rural Development financial assistance.

/s/RACHEL LINQUIST, CHAIRPERSON

/s/CORA CALKINS, CLERK

A Motion to waive a second reading and executed Resolution 03-2017 was put forth by Trustee VanEvery, 2nd by Mosel. Motion passed all ayes.

There being no further business, Trustee VanEvery made a Motion to adjourn; 2nd by Trustee Kennedy. Motion passed all Ayes. Meeting adjourned at 8:09 p.m.

Next month's meeting is scheduled for Monday, August 14, 2017 at 7:00 p.m.

/s/ Rachel Linquist, Chairperson

/s/ Cora L. Calkins, Clerk