

LAPORTE COUNTY REGIONAL SEWER DISTRICT

MEETING MINUTES December 17, 2024 9:00 a.m.

Time and Place:

The LaPorte County Regional Sewer & Water District monthly board meeting was held on Tuesday, December 17, 2024, at 9:00 a.m. Central Time, at 809 State Street, Room #3, LaPorte, IN 46350 and by Zoom Meeting, Login:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82015295897?pwd=SjllK0FsYnFzM3B5TFZxNUsxQ0xvdz09>

Meeting ID: 820 1529 5897 Password: 060992

A. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 9:00 a.m. by John Carr.

B. Pledge of Allegiance

Pledge of Allegiance was said.

C. Roll Call

Roll call was taken. Those present included the following: John Carr, Mitch Bishop, Corey Campbell, Mark Danielson, and Marcella Kunstek.

D. Bid Opening – Hudson/Saugany Wastewater Project – Phase I

The Bid Envelopes were opened., Steve Henschen read the bids as follows:

Contract A – Big pump station, force main, and improvements at the wastewater treatment facility.

- Selge Construction, Inc., from Niles, Michigan bid amount of \$4,461,692.00.
- Woodward and Sons, Inc., from Michigan City, Indiana bid amount of \$6,793,559.88
- Grimmer Construction, Inc., from LaPorte, Indiana bid amount of \$6,100,290.00

The Engineer's estimate for Contract A was \$3.5M.

Contract B – Collection System at Saugany Lake

- Selge Construction, Inc., from Niles Michigan, bid amount of \$8,236,471.69
- H&G Underground Utilities, from LaPorte, Indiana bid amount of \$11,163,715.70

The Engineer's estimate for Contract B was \$6.1 M.

Mark Danielson made a motion to accept the bids and refer to District Engineers for a recommendation. Corey Campbell seconded it. All were in favor. The motion was approved unanimously.

E. **Approval of Minutes:** Marcella Kunstek motioned to accept the November 26, 2024 minutes. Mitch Bishop seconded it. All were in favor. The motion was approved unanimously.

F. **Public Comments:**
No Public Comment

G. **Reports**

• **Steve Carter – Claims and Finance**

Steve Carter, the Board's accountant, presented the financial report to the board with the following reports and reported that month-end reports have been completed and reconciled to the bank accounts.

Financial Report

1.) Hudson/Saugany

A.) Ending balance of \$2,183,794.84 as of November 30, 2024.

1. Interest Paid: \$8,333.38
2. Disbursements: \$43,189.90
3. Voided check \$0.00

2.) Rolling Prairie Service Area

A.) Horizon Bank Checking-Rolling Prairie Account - had an ending balance of \$298,312.85 as of November 30, 2024. Of that amount, \$234,832.13 is in the Operation and Maintenance Fund, \$8,500.18 in the Debt Service Reserve, and \$54,980.54 in the Bond and Interest account.

3.) Toll Road – Horizon Account.

A.) As of November 30, 2024, ending balance of \$522,970.36.

1. Improvement Fund (Hoosier Fund): \$363,422.22.
2. Operation and Maintenance fund (Horizon Checking): \$159,548.14.

4.) Claims

Steve Carter stated claims totaling \$75,265.54. Astbury submitted 8 invoices totaling \$28,309.94. The total claims submitted for approval is \$103,575.48. Mitch Bishop inquired about the status of the invoice from the City of LaPorte indicating it was a final notice. Steve Carter indicated the \$247.75 invoice from October 1 for Vactor Wet Well cleaning services performed on September 13. Jennifer Ransbottom will follow up with Jerry Jackson on the invoices in question.

Mark Danielson made a motion to accept the claims in the \$28,309.94 as submitted. Corey Campbell seconded it. All were in favor. The motion was approved unanimously.

• **Reports - Astbury Water Technologies**

Chris Vogler reported looking at servicing the generators at the wastewater treatment facility. Mark Danielson inquired when the generators were last serviced. Chris Vogler indicated there is no record of when they were serviced. Marcella Kunstek

will provide Jennifer Ransbottom with the names of three companies to service the generators. on a yearly basis. Chris Vogler reported that the filing of the communication to the EPA has been completed indicating the WWTF complies with no lead and copper inventory.

H. JPR Billing/Collection:

Jennifer Ransbottom stated the November end-of-the-month report was included in the Board packet. Collection and Lien Notices will be sent in January. liens.

- **New Billing Provider – Administrative Services**
Barry McDonnell stated the Executive Committee met to review and discuss the two billing proposals. Marcella Kunstek indicated the Executive Committee decided to accept the billing services from Jennifer Ransbottom. Marcella Kunstek indicated Jennifer has been doing the billing services since its inception and they are happy with her services.

Marcella Kunstek made a motion to accept Jennifer Ransbottom’s billing services subject to review of the agreement by Barry McDonnell and signature by John Carr. Corey Campbell seconded the motion. All were in favor. The motion was approved unanimously.

I. Phase II Update –

Jennifer Ransbottom stated processing of funds from Phase II and moving to this project.

J. Hudson/Saugany Project

1. General Design Progress Update

- a. Proposed Project Contracts
 - i. Phase I
 - Contract A – Saugany Lake Pump Station and Force Main
 - Contract B -Saugany Lake Wastewater Collection System
 - o Phase II
 - Contract A – Travel Plaza #3 WWTP Expansion
 - Contract B – Hudson Lake Pump Station and Force Main
 - Contract C -Hudson Lake Collection System I
 - o Phase III
 - Contract A -Hudson Lake Collection System II
 - Contract B -Hudson Lake Collection System III
 - Contract C -Hudson Lake Collection System IV
 - o Wastewater Treatment Plant
 - The design of WWTP Improvements to be included in the Phase I Project has been completed.
 - The proposed WWTP Expansion for Phases II and III will be designed in 2025.
- b. Wastewater Collection System
- c. Design of Wastewater Collection System included in the Phase I Project has been completed.
- d. Hudson Lake pressure sewer system plan and profile drawings to be continued to be worked on into 2025.

e. Project Permitting

- The following permit applications were submitted on behalf of the District this month:
 - LaPorte County MS4 Erosion Control Permit
 - LaPorte County Highway Department – R/W Use and Driveway Permit
- The IDEM Construction Stormwater General Permit Notice of Intent will be submitted following approval of the County MS4's permit.
- Currently awaiting approval of permits from various agencies.

Barry McDonnell inquired since the bids are high, will there be a meeting with the Executive Committee or a special meeting. Steve Henschen stated there will be work between JPR and Steve Carter to work through the numbers, and interest rates and finalize the numbers. Marcella Kunstek inquired if there is a definite date to respond to the State. Steve Henschen stated the State would like to close in their 3rd quarter. SRF's target rate is about \$102 a month but with the higher bids.

f. Land Acquisition

g. Grinder Station Easements (Saugany Lake Only)

Owners with Parcels that need easements	275	
Needed but not completed	89	32%
Needed but not completed (main, no GS)	3	1%
Completed	183	67%
Exemptions Granted	0	

h. Below is the Timetable and Checklist for 2025 Project Financing developed by Randy Rompola of Barnes and Thornburg:

<u>Date</u>		<u>Action</u>
Tuesday, December 17, 2024	-	Special Board Meeting -- Bid Opening.
Tuesday, January 21, 2025	-	File form of Rate Ordinance (and amending bond ordinance if necessary – see note 3 below) and Rate Study with Board.
Thursday, January 23, 2025	-	Deliver 1/30/25 and 02/06/25 Notice of Public Hearing to newspapers.
Tuesday, January 28, 2025	-	Regular Board Meeting – 1 st reading of Rate Ordinance.
Thursday, January 30, 2025 & February 6, 2025	-	Publication of Notice of Public Hearing in the <i>LaPorte County Herald-Dispatch</i> (two (2) times once each week with 2 nd publication at least 7 days prior to hearing).
Thursday, February 13, 2025	-	Special Board Meeting – Public hearing on Rate Ordinance and adoption of Rate Ordinance.
Tuesday, February 18, 2025	-	Municipal advisor completes due diligence report (at least four weeks prior to pre-closing) and draft closing letter; Bond Counsel submits draft closing documents.
Tuesday, February 25, 2025	-	Municipal Advisor submits closing disbursements to SRF.

<u>Date</u>		<u>Action</u>
Monday, March 3, 2025 (Noon)	-	Submit final transcript to SRF.
Tuesday, March 4, 2025	-	Pre-closing on Sewage Works Revenue Bonds (11:00 a.m.)
Saturday, March 15, 2025	-	Rate Objection Period expires (30 days after adoption of rate ordinance).
Tuesday, March 18, 2025	-	Closing on Sewage Works Revenue Bonds.

2. **Just Compensation**

Steve Henschen presented the Just Compensation for customer grinder pumps and service leads for the District. Notice was given to the property owner that they have a right to request compensation. What Just Compensation shows is the benefit of the proposed easement far outweighs the value of the land that is being taken. The approach is for the District to have a formal policy not paying for grinder station easements. Steve Henschen stated an outside firm conducted the valuation of the area. Barry McDonnell indicated he has reviewed the Just Compensation and recommended the Board to adopt the methodology. Steve Henschen stated that mainline easements are a completely different situation than a grinder station easement.

Mark Danielson made a motion to accept Just Compensation for grinder station easements. Corey Campbell seconded the motion. All were in favor. The motion carried unanimously.

J. **Executive Committee - Engineering Committee**

- Engineering Committee – no meeting held
- Notice of Statutory Exemption and Extension of Service Letter
Jennifer Ransbottom stated have received approximately a dozen exemption letters that have been forwarded to Amanda Lahners. On the certified letters that were mailed and what to do for those that were returned. Barry McDonnell indicated as long as we made a good faith effort additional notification is not necessary. Jennifer Ransbottom to follow up on the publication notices.

K. **New Business**

- Next Meeting – January 28, 2025⁴, in person and Zoom/Teams Links.
- Pre-Agenda Meeting & Attendees – John, Marcella, Steve H, Steve C, Randy, Jennifer – January 21, 2025 @ 9:00 AM Central (10:00 AM Eastern)
- 2022 and 2023 Audit – Jennifer Ransbottom reported this is continuing and plans to submit the remaining requested information.
- Meeting Room Approved for 2025 dates – 4th Tuesday of every month₂

L. Old Business

- Interlocal Agreement

Informational item - the next step will be after closing with SRF will have 30 days to submit invoice to County to obtain the money. This is to remain on the agenda as a reminder.

M. Adjournment

Marcella Kuntsek made a motion to adjourn. Seconded by Mitch Bishop. All were in favor. The motion was approved unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 9:53 AM.

J:\Projects\2019 Projects\2019-0071 Laporte\Administrative Tasks\Board Packets\2024\12-17-2024 - December Meeting\2024-11-26 Meeting Minutes.doc