

# ***Rensselaer County Sewer District No. 1***

## ***Meeting Minutes***

June 28, 2023

### **I. Call to order**

Chairman Miner called the regular meeting of the Rensselaer County Sewer District No. 1 to order on June 28, 2023 at 6:00 pm in the Rensselaer County Legislature Conference Room.

### **II. Roll call**

Chairman Miner conducted a roll call. The following persons were present: Miner, Dolgin, Lewandusky, Lourinia, Poletto, and Masone. Others present: Vice Chair of the Legislature Bob Loveridge, Tom Garrett- Siemens, Dan Durfee- CDM, Jaime Thomas, and Harry Tutunjian.

### **III. Pledge of Allegiance**

Chairman Miner led the Pledge of Allegiance

### **IV. Adoption of the Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

The minutes of the May meeting were approved after a motion from Poletto and a second from Dolgin.

### **V. Reports**

**Siemens presentation-** Tom Garrett distributed the updated reports. Dan Durfee said that he received the dust reports from Dekra today, and they have 10 high priority items that will need to be reviewed and addressed. Durfee said that Siemens authorized this additional expenditure today.

Poletto asked if the dust situation is getting better. Durfee said that he doesn't believe that it is getting better.

The Huber Strain press pilot machine was moved again. The first location produced too much material and the second location did not produce any materials. A 2 mm screen will replace the 5 mm screen that is in the unit now. It is expected to arrive in August. The pilot will be run for 3 to 4 weeks in August then the internal investigation of the dryer will commence.

Poletto asked if this screen was the same as the grit screen, and Durfee said that it is different.

Miner stated that a few meetings ago, it was mentioned that we had a list of obsolete equipment. Miner said he asked for a price breakdown to replace each piece of equipment. Durfee said that he gave Siemens a project scope and just received authorization to proceed from Siemens today.

CDM has received test results of the biosolid product that was blended with Troy's sludge.. We would need to update our Beneficial Use Determination (BUD) permit. Derrick Gardner stated that NYS released guidelines today. Durfee said that we will have to sample for PFAS this summer to see if we meet state standards. Dan Durfee said that we need to find end users of the blended product.

Legislature Vice Chair Bob Loveridge asked if Troy would be interested in participating in a joint program with us. Durfee said that they have spoken to Troy, and they are interested.

Durfee said that they are looking at vibratory and gyrating screens to help reduce the dust at the plant. The fine dust would be removed from the stream and recirculated back into the dryer.

Miner asked if these screens were considered when the replacement dryer was installed. Durfee said that initial tests did not show that dust would be created. It seems that the digester is breaking down solids and creating dust.

Masone asked if speeding up the dryer would stop dust production. Durfee said that it would cause the product quality to drop.

Loveridge asked if we have looked at other facilities that have similar problems. Durfee answered yes, and that CDM staff have travelled the world looking at other systems. Loveridge said that Jason Wheeler at our plant had said that he spoke to other plants with the same dust issues, and learned that they have other equipment that we don't. Durfee said that dust wasn't an issue back then.

Durfee stated that the dryer evaluation will take place on August 28<sup>th</sup>.

Miner asked if the make-up air unit has been moved yet. Garrett said that it has not been moved and that they are waiting to see if the temporary wall has helped. Tutunjian said that the temporary wall is not meant to be a permanent solution and that dust is still making its way into the boiler room.

Durfee mentioned an evaluation of the staff and everyone agreed that we need to move forward with an operator and maintenance staffing assessment. Loveridge supports moving forward and was surprised to learn that NYS no longer offers this service. Loveridge stated that the Legislature wants to be involved with evaluations.

**Staff Issues** - We recently hired two new process tech trainees and they should be starting soon. We continue to try and fill the open positions as they are created.

Our civil service approved the creation of the new Executive Director and Deputy Executive Director titles and we are awaiting final approval from the state.

**Siemens-** Dryer Replacement Project- Covered earlier.

**Aeration and Miscellaneous Projects-** We are still awaiting approval from NYS EFC. It is getting very frustrating. I reached out to our engineering firm and asked them to get to the bottom of this because we are getting jerked around for a long time. As it stands now, if things move forward tomorrow, we may see construction late next year. I reminded Ramboll that the project is part of our consent order, and the state's lack of approval of our plan is delaying us from meeting the deadline that they have imposed on us. Derrick Gardner stated that he is expecting more comments from EFC by Friday.

**Internet Service at Treatment Plant-** We approved the next step of the improvements to the system. We are assured that this will resolve our issues. We also have received an estimate of \$48,000 to run fiber between our buildings to improve connectivity. This won't happen until the first phase is completed. We are waiting to hear to see if we need to go out to bid for that work.

**HVES Report--** HVES completed their first visit as part of the Electrical Maintenance plan. They sent a report to our staff. The only issue was that several lightbulbs on the electrical panels are burned out. Our staff will be replacing the bulbs. Their next inspection will be in December.

**County Sewer Vac Truck Usage-** We started using the county's new vac truck. So far it has worked out well and without incident. We still feel that we should have a backup truck of our own. Mike Wilcox does not feel that we should put any more money into the truck. I inspected the vehicle two weeks ago and I tend to agree with that assessment

## **VI. Old Business**

**Troy Pump Station Mediation-** The latest update is that Gallo was to deliver the parts and manuals, and we believe that this took place so we should be getting even closer to resolving this.

## **VII. New Business**

**2024 Budget-** Budget time is beginning. Chairwoman Hoffman wanted to inform this body that the Legislature will be reviewing the sewer rates as they relate to the budgetary needs of the plan operations. We have not raised rates in many years, and many of costs have risen. We have been very conservative with our spending over the last few years and this year's budget will be an indicator of where the rates should be.

Derrick Gardner stated that he is working with staff at the plant to compile data to apply to renew our State Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (SPDES) permit.

Poleto mentioned that commissioners have not been receiving budget performance reports. Tutunjian apologized and promised to send them out.

## **VIII. Open Discussion**

**IX. Next meeting: July 26, 2023 at 6pm at the Rensselaer County Office Building 99 Troy Rd. 2<sup>nd</sup> floor Conference room**

**X. Adjournment-** Meeting was adjourned at 7:22 pm after a motion from Poleto and a second from Masone

Minutes submitted by: Harry Tutunjian