

MILFORD CITY COUNCIL
MINUTES OF MEETING
April 16, 2014

A Meeting of the Public Works Committee of Milford City Council was held in the Joseph Ronnie Rogers Council Chambers of Milford City Hall, 201 South Walnut Street, Milford, Delaware on Wednesday, April 16, 2014.

PRESIDING: Chairman Owen Brooks, Jr.

IN ATTENDANCE: Committee Members Councilman Bryan Shupe and Dirk Gleysteen

ALSO: City Manager Richard Carmean and City Clerk/Recorder Terri Hudson

Transfer/\$3.5M/Water Reserves to Separate Fund created for Water System Improvements (continued later in meeting.)

Public Works Committee Chairman Brooks called the meeting to order at 9:15 a.m. and turned the meeting over to the City Manager.

City Manager Carmean said the budget transfer is the first item on the agenda, but had requested Erik Retzlaff of Davis, Bowen and Friedel to discuss the matter.

However, Mr. Carmean will speak with Finance Director Portmann to find out if he is willing to put this money in its own separate account or leave it in the reserve account, earmarked for the two projects that were part of the 2014 Referendum (valve program and SCADA system).

Mr. Carmean stated that Mr. Retzlaff asked to discuss how Davis, Bowen and Friedel wanted to start the project right away.

(Mr. Retzlaff arrived later in the meeting.)

Smart Meeting

The city manager announced that he asked Electric Department Superintendent Rick Carmean to give a report on smart metering.

Mr. Carmean reported that he has met with the Siemens Group on several occasions. He explained the problem we may run into is the exact situation that occurred with the Public Works Radio Replacement Project. Public Works Director Brad Dennehy invited a company to come in. They spent a lot of time and effort reviewing our radio system to determine our needs. That company later provided the specifications that were included in the bid. In the end, the bid was awarded to the lowest bidder who was another company and not the one Mr. Dennehy had been working with.

The city manager wants to get in front of any potential problem with the Siemens Group because they are flying people in here and spending a great deal of time with our staff.

Mr. Carmean believes there are several ways the city can contract with them on a project of this size. However, that will be discussed once he has more information himself.

Mr. Brooks recommended Rick Carmean discuss the advantages, disadvantages and projected costs of the project. Mr. Carmean explained that he has some information on Newark's costs though we have no idea of what our costs will be at this point. He feels that when we see the numbers on how many meters were installed, the city can take that percentage and compare to the number of meters in Milford. We can then come up with some idea of the costs

Mr. Brooks said he was able to keep up with Newark's progress through the News Journal. Those articles included the costs and the cost to the electric customers. Mr. Carmean noted that Rick Carmean is unable to speak too much to the cost of the project.

Rick Carmean then explained that during the meetings with Siemens, they did not discuss the cost of the project at all. He said the only thing they discussed was the time our employees spent handling reads. They reviewed the number of trips to different residences which smart metering will eliminate.

He said this will allow us to turn someone's power off from the office. We will no longer need an employee, who takes twenty to thirty minutes plus the cost of gas, time and overtime, to go out and turn someone off and then come back.

Once a smart meter is installed, it will provide an IP address which is an address on a computer. That will then provide a GPS location. He said they can then overlay that on Google Earth and see exactly where the meter is by lighting up a color. If it has power, we will be able to circle the road on Google Earth and determine if there the power is out in an area. He said it will show dots of red if it is out of power and green if it on.

Rick Carmean stated that it would be the same with reading a meter. When a customer is changing at a rental, they can call up that meter by the IP address and read it. That prevents sending an employee out with a van, which takes twenty or thirty minutes to read and the cost of gasoline to get there and back.

Councilman Gleysteen arrived at this time.

Rick Carmean explained that though we get a lot of calls when the power is out, we have no way of knowing why the customer is out. If Google Earth is showing green, they will know the meter has power. Instead of sending one of our employees, they will tell the customer to call an electrician.

Rick Carmean pointed out there will be a substantial savings on personnel costs, gas and mileage. Overtime will be the big saver.

He believes the Smyrna Finance Director handles disconnects through his phone after hours using the smart meter program. The disconnected customer in Milford will no longer go to the police department to pay. It will be handled as is done in Smyrna with one of our employees being called. If the customer agrees to pay their bill the next morning, they will turn them back on. If the money has not been received by 9:00 a.m., the customer is turned off again.

This system will prevent overtime with the meter personnel.

When asked if the Finance Director is familiar with the customer's history and whether there are medical issues, Rick Carmean explained that they would be turned off during the day by the customer service staff. They would be familiar with those situations before considered for disconnecting.

Rick Carmean explained that there will be very little electric used after the phone call is made and if and when the customer does not take care of this bill the first thing in the morning, they will be turned off again. At that point, they will not have their electric turned back on until they have paid their bill in full.

Rick Carmean said that Smyrna has a disconnect list and those customers are turned off during the day. A lot of times the meter readers are on call after hours if people go to the police department to pay their bill. Then the meter readers are called in to turn them back on.

In Smyrna, they call the Finance Director's cell phone and he can turn them off by the cell phone. No other department is involved including the meter reader. The Finance Director is given a new list and if that customer has not paid by 9 o'clock that morning, they are turned back off. Their electric is not turned on until we have the money for their bill.

The city manager advised the city cannot legally turn off a customer with proven medical conditions. However, they must be registered with the city and provide official documentation from the doctor.

Rick Carmean explained that their account is flagged with a sticker and notification is provided.

The city manager pointed out we have a number of customers who have their electric disconnected every month and are notified with a pink disconnect beforehand. On the other hand, we have customers who sometimes forget to pay their bill or they might be away for two weeks. The due date may fall during that two weeks and the customer has forgotten to take care of it. In addition, there are many times when someone's electric is disconnected and causes their freezer and food to thaw.

Mr. Carmean noted that even if they are historically late and always paying penalties, the customer will no longer get away without paying for electric between 6:00 p.m. and 8:00 a.m. the following morning.

He explained that a meter person is paid to be on call. When they come in, they get are paid a minimum of overtime for turning the customer back on. It is common for the meter staff to get into an argument with the customer when they arrive at their home to turn their electric off. Typically these are the customers who know they will be disconnected. When one of our city trucks pulls up and the employee walks to the meter, the customer confronts them. All that will be avoided with the smart metering program.

The city manager asked Rick Carmean to cover smart metering from the customer service side and what they can do within in their own homes.

Rick Carmean advised that the customer will be able to go online and through the use of a password see a graph showing their usage from an hour to within fifteen minutes depending on the distance of the broadband or how we are able to bring the data in. He said it can be as close as five minutes depending on how everything is set up.

He said they will also be able to compare the current bill to last year by going on line.

Mr. Brooks pointed out the current electric bill has that comparison for the previous twelve months.

Rick Carmean stated that the billing staff will have a computer available where they can access this type of information and discuss with any customers at their office.

Mr. Brooks asked if there will be a way to compare temperatures and the amount of electricity being used by similar homes; Rick Carmean said it depends on how far we want to go with the program. He suggests we have the temperature, humidity and other weather related items added with a graph.

Mr. Brooks feels that would be an advantage and would answer a lot of questions as to why more electricity was used during a specific time frame.

Rick Carmean said that Siemens is willing to put in a data management system that will bring in information from each meter. In turn, it will talk to billing, to GIS and three or four other things running at public works.

Rick Carmean is hoping to get a GIS system with mapping. With the IP address and GIS with meters, he will be able to bring information into the GIS. He can do that with the transformers and will be able to tell how much load is on each transformer in town. They could then determine if it is overloaded or under-loaded.

He reported that we have a lot of losses in the city and the finance director continually reminds him to keep the losses down. Part of the losses are the result of a customer with a 1,000 amp service which causes the city to put in a larger transformer to feed it. Then it is determined they only have 200 to 300 amps which creates a loss. This will allow him to see that through the system. Then two or three years down the road, they can change their transformer out and downsize the load to 80% instead of 40% which cuts their losses. The transformer otherwise burns power and it is a cost to the city.

He reported that can also be done with smart metering. They can review each transformer and see what size that is in real time and can correct them to the appropriate size after a couple years.

A recorder was installed at different businesses several years ago for three to four weeks to determine what was being used in July. Either the transformer was changed out or it was left there. He said that two or three transformers were lost over the winter because they were overloaded.

Mr. Carmean noted that this will provide a network that the police can use. As a result, they will no longer have to pay for that service separately.

Rick Carmean then explained that some smart meters have a mesh network. The city has upgraded the switches at the yard for fiber optic because the new substation and tap station will be on fiber. More things are being put on fiber because the FCC cut the frequencies of the radios they are using. They barely went to 12½ with the new radios that were just purchased. In 2016, it will be reduced to 6½ so the SCADA system will be put on fiber.

Smart meters have a mesh network they use and when the meters are plugged in, each meter will talk to different meters. They are considering putting a wide area network over the mesh so that any computer can communicate with it.

The city can also consider adding it to a phone which allows a wide area network app. Anyone in the city could then tie in using their smart phone.

According to Rick Carmean, the police department, electric and water crews can all access the billing software with computers in their vehicles. The mesh network can also talk to different SCADA radios throughout the city.

Rick Carmean explained the power source is right off the meters. The batteries last for twelve years. The same type batteries are currently used in the remote radio readers that are a backup when the power goes out.

Mr. Gleysteen asked if smart meters will control peak demand; Rick Carmean said yes that can be done. With the mesh network, they can add hot-water heaters and thermostats. Currently, load switches are used that talk to the SCADA system.

Mr. Gleysteen verified this would require the homeowners' approval; Rick Carmean explained there are currently more than 400 switches used during peak loads in the summer. They would probably replace the switches on the hot water switches and thermostats.

Mr. Brooks asked how many meters are needed to get started and will extra ones be ordered; Rick Carmean explained the vendor would come in and put everything in for water and electric. We would have two or three on the shelves. They would assist with installing the first batch. Following that, Siemens would train our employees to handle everything from that point on.

According to Rick Carmean, we have smart meters currently on the shelves. We are just using them with the radio that we read directly from the trucks. He explained this is a smarter module that will be put into the meters than currently exists. The present modules only transmit data and this will provide the capability of talking back and forth to the new one. It can be told to shut off or can be asked the usage for a previous time frame.

Rick Carmean said we will need 6,500 to 6,800 for electric and approximately 3,400 for water though that is an estimate. The city manager pointed out there are a number of possibilities we have not yet discussed with Siemens.

Mr. Carmean then referenced some project highlights he received from the City of Newark regarding smart metering:

- *Honeywell successfully analyzed, designed and is installing Automatic Meter Infrastructure (AMI) smart meters.

- *\$11.7 million project with total savings and revenue impact of \$24,056,120 over a fifteen-year period.

- *Residential and commercial installation - 11,968 electric meters and 10,142 water meters

- *City-wide broadband system for AMI meters as well as police vehicles.

*New wireless security cameras

*67 smart pads

*New billing system provides website with up-to-date utility usage information

*Project is completely self funded and no taxpayers' dollars are required

*Guaranteed results

Newark's City Manager Carol Houck provided the city manager with other references including the City of Wilmington (\$14.4 million energy project), Wilmington Housing Authority (\$6 million) and Delaware State University (no numbers provided).

City Manager Carmean compared Newark's cost of \$11.5 million for 12,000 electric meters and \$10,000 for water meters to 6,800 electric and 3,435 water meters in Milford. He noted that we are talking with Siemens right now though Newark purchased their meters from Honeywell. He reported the project will come in less than \$5 million. He emphasized that the smart metering program pays for itself over a ten to fifteen-year period.

City Manager Carmean pointed out we have two meter readers right now. Through attrition or a different assignment, he will not lay anyone off because of an upgrade to technology. He wants our employees to be reassured they will not lose their jobs.

Mr. Gleysteen noted using the City of Newark's \$11.7 million project, would take 15 years to see \$24 million savings. He asked if that is a six or seven-year payback but for the ease of use and convenience, it is worth looking into.

Mr. Gleysteen's concern is that technology changes a lot. He asked if 15 years is the expected life of these meters or would they need to be upgraded prior to the end of that time.

Rick Carmean said that what is being used currently is the AMR which started in the 1990's. He expects they may need upgrades overtime similar to computer upgrades. He is not willing to say the city will have to pay for them but feels we will have to be upgraded as is needed.

He believes the life expectancy to be around 15 years.

Mr. Gleysteen asked what other suppliers would be considered. Rick Carmean said we also use Elster meters, GE meters and Itron meters. There are other systems such as a TWACS system though he is unsure we want to do that because we would only reduplicate the SCADA system already in place.

Mr. Gleysteen questioned the savings in large part and asked if we would purchase only one type of meter and one type of system. Rick Carmean stated yes adding that this is a smart reading meter though there is more on the operation and maintenance side than just reading the meters. He said there are many possibilities and we could go as far as having the ability to see our meters on Google earth and being able to determine if they are on or off.

Rick Carmean said that daily, the SCADA system sends him a text at 3 o'clock to confirm things are up and running. Before that is sent, every meter is checked. The smart metering program can be set up in a similar fashion.

He reiterated that when a customer calls in and reports they do not have power, smart metering will prevent sending a truck to their house. Instead they can call up the meter and look at the data. They can then inform the customer the problem is on their side and that they need to call an electrician. Right now, it involves two employees in a bucket truck and a minimum of an hour to determine whether or not it is a city problem.

Rick Carmean stated that when we receive several outage calls, currently our crews do not know which substation has the problem. The city has gone from four circuits and one substation to eight circuits, two stations and a tap station. We have a lot more flexibility though it is more complex.

The city manager pointed out this will make meter tampering very easy to monitor as well. Notification will be immediate.

Rick Carmean emphasized this will involve much more than meter reading. He has even seen switches talking to meters. Hopefully, the city can consider that in another ten years or so. With multiple substations, switches can be installed and if the tap station is lost, the entire substation can be switched to another which provides a lot of backup.

Mr. Brooks asked how many Delaware towns have smart metering. Mr. Carmean said that Smyrna has either built out or is partially built out. According to Rick Carmean, Newark has built out and Dover currently has installed ninety smart meters through a pilot program.

The city manager noted that Delmarva Power and Delaware Electric Cooperative both have the ability to turn on or turn off meters through this program.

Rick Carmean believes Delaware Cooperative has something similar to the TWACS system because they are able to monitor their trucks, meters and what is working and what is not.

Delmarva Power uses a power line carrier system to talk to their meters. Besides thermostats, they are able to talk to different appliances. Delmarva Power has been completely built out on the entire peninsula.

Mr. Shupe reported there are programs that allow meters to talk to the structure in relation to heating, for example. He said if the large industrial users have that information on a daily basis, they can probably save a lot of money by being informed of peak times.

Rick Carmean explained that is the reason they want fiber optic run into the new stations. His plan is to run it to US Cold Storage so that their meter can be added to the SCADA system. He hopes to do the same with Perdue and their water usage. Our employees would then inform US Cold Storage and Perdue when this occurs. They have been considering this for years though they have not had the capability. With fiber optic throughout the town, we now have that capability.

Mr. Gleysteen referenced the various line items on the bill and the one that bothers him the most is the demand charge. He asked if the smart meter can control the customer's usage to reduce the demand charge. Rick Carmean answered no, but added that the customer can control it. The customer logs into their account, looks at their usage, turns various pieces of equipment on and off to determine how each affects the load.

Mr. Brooks pointed out that can be done with the current system. Rick Carmean explained it is a little different with demand because that is based on peak. He explained that another industry in Milford has a solar system and asked why they had a 90kW demand charge. They reviewed it and put a recorder on their meter. It was determined they were turning their heat off at night and when they opened the next morning, turning it back on caused an in rush which jumped their demand up to 90kW. Their solar kicked in at 9 a.m. and shut their entire system down. During the two hours, they peaked their demand.

To resolve the issue, they brought their heat up at night and at 9 a.m. brought it on line so that the solar would knock it down. He has not checked recently, but at one point it had been reduced to 20 to 40 kW demand.

According to Rick Carmean, Delmarva Power and other electric providers are charging demand on residential accounts now. A lot of people are waiting until late at night to use their washers and dryers after the peak time which saves a lot of money.

With no further smart metering discussion, Rick Carmean left at this time.

Siemens Industry, Incorporated

City Manager Carmean advised that Public Works Director Brad Dennehy has been working with Siemens for some time. Mr. Dennehy asked them to perform energy audits on all city buildings and to determine how savings can be accomplished. The cost of that work will be added to this project.

He feels the city will get at least twelve to fifteen years out of the technology being offered at this time. Even then, he anticipates only one upgrade to our software will be needed though all the meters would not have to be changed out.

The city manager brought this before the committee so that they could decide whether to present this to council at a future workshop. He will contact Siemens and ask them to prepare a presentation of their offer.

Mr. Gleysteen noted the cost of the project and asked how this can be done without public bidding. The city manager explained it can be done. He wants to make sure we take into account all the work this company has done and prevent another company from later coming in after they learn what we are doing and then have to consider them. He wants to stay on top of this and does not want to utilize Siemens' services and they end up not getting the bid.

He said the public works radio project bid award bothered both he and Mr. Dennehy though they are happy with the work the other company did. However, he feels we were very unfair to the company that did the feasibility study and determined the specs of the products we needed.

Mr. Gleysteen said we need to make sure the city receives the best deal possible.

Mr. Carmean then pointed out that Newark was extremely happy with Honeywell.

The city manager then asked the committee whether to proceed with the smart metering idea. The committee agreed the idea should be presented to council.

Southeast Milford Water Project/Water Tower and Main Extension

Mr. Carmean asked Erik Retzlaff of DBF to speak on the status of this item.

Mr. Retzlaff advised the tower is out to bid and bids are due in early May.

They have not yet completed the design of the water main extension though they are close to finishing. One of the things they need to determine is how to get power to this area.

He recalled that during the 2008 referendum, voters approved up to \$5 million for the project. The budget is at \$5.6 million though there was no location for the water tower at that time. At this point, there is a \$600,000 shortfall that needs to be transferred from the water reserve account to complete the project.

Mr. Carmean explained the only reason we are over budget is because we did not know where the water tower would be placed. He recalled a few years ago, the plan was to place it on the Mills Farm east of Route 1.

The city manager said there have been a lot of recent discussions among the mayoral candidates about the water tower project and why it has not been completed. He agrees it was approved at the same time the Washington Street substation was approved that was also just completed. According to Mr. Carmean, the city was misled about getting some free land for the water tower which held the project up several years.

As soon as Mr. Carmean came back as city manager, he said the first thing he did was secure the land which he was able to do at no cost to our taxpayers. The deed has been recorded and all easements from the Hall family are now in place.

He explained that the Wickersham development will get water run down Route 30 to this development.

During a conversation with one of our reporters, Mr. Carmean explained that someone can provide an easement across their property. By the time the surveying, engineering and attorney fees are paid, another six to seven months have passed. When he was rehired by council two years ago, the project was not moving along because the city did not have a site. It has taken him almost two years to get to the point of bidding the project even though he was able to secure the land right away.

Mr. Retzlaff advised the construction on the tower will begin sometime in mid summer. There will not be a lot of work performed at this location initially because the construction and welding of the tank will be handled off site.

Mr. Brooks said that Mr. Carmean indicated that approximately \$800,000 had been saved because of the new location of the water tower; Mr. Carmean said yes, there was a substantial amount of money saved. However, the city did agree to run the water main to the new site and will eventually serve a couple of very large tracts of land in the area. At that point, the city will collect some impact fees to recoup some of that money.

Transfer/\$3.5M/Water Reserves to Separate Fund created for Water System Improvements

Mr. Carmean advised that DBF had suggested that \$3.5 million be transferred from water reserves into a separate project to fund the Water Improvements Project originally planned for the 2014 referendum.

Mr. Retzlaff recalled that this project was initially referred to as the Water System Improvements because it touches three different areas in the city's water system. It includes the distribution system and valve exercising replacement project as well as some SCADA controlled and programming upgrades. Some additional upgrades were needed at the water treatment facilities as well. Portions of that were related to the Seabury Well and Abandonment of Well 9. Also included was the additional work for the test well and production well as well as treatment facilities.

Since then, it has been determined we need some upgrades to our aerators in some of the different treatment systems.

He explained that the way the project was originally proposed to be funded was through the Drinking Water State Revolving Funds. The city was offered 1.5% interest. Council chose to go to referendum and then later decided to come back and actually pay for it out of reserves. That is the reason he is proposing \$3.5 million be earmarked and placed in a separate fund which will allow the work to begin.

Mr. Retzlaff reported the first step is to go out and get a physical location of all valves. The purchase of a valve exerciser was approved last June and is part of the current budget. The key is to locate where they are, determine which ones work, which ones spin and which ones do not work. We would then get an idea of the scope of the valve replacement work. Some mapping would be prepared with valves numbered/named so that the information can be recorded.

He explained that even if the top nut works, he cannot guarantee it will actually hold. Once we determine how many there are, two valves will be shut off and the hydrant opened between to determine if water comes out. Water coming out means that one of the two does not work.

Mr. Retzlaff does not believe it will pay to have a contractor on site sitting around waiting for something to break. If we run into some difficulties, that valve will be marked and revisited at a later date for further investigation.

The replacement valve project will then be bid.

He is hoping the committee will agree to proceeding with the work.

Mr. Carmean likes the plan because he recalls talking about having a full-blown construction firm on hand as the valves were being checked. The mapping of the valves is the first phase of this project.

Mr. Retzlaff advised that a similar project was done in Georgetown where 500 plus water services were replaced. They actually located all the services and valves. If there is a break, instead of having forty sets of blueprints in the back of city trucks to determine the location of the valve that needs to be shut off, once the GIS system is in place with the valves

located, the entire system can be seen on a computer versus referencing the different blueprints to figure out when the main was installed. In that manner, the valves needing to be shut off can be determined as well as the ones that actually work.

This is an area where technology will help out a great deal according to Mr. Retzlaff. They just need a place to store the data once they begin to observe these things. It will then be used to build a map of the system.

Mr. Carmean said that once we pay the cost of having the work done, it will become proprietary as far as the city is concerned. The information will be available to our in-house staff and we will not have to continue paying DBF to obtain it. Mr. Retzlaff agreed that the information will be put into a format in a database. That database will fall under the ownership of the city.

The city manager expects the total costs to come in below the \$3.5 million estimate, considering we will be using our own money and eliminate some of the restrictions associated with the borrowing.

Mr. Retzlaff emphasized the \$3.5 million was an estimated number based on the anticipated valves that may be working or not. Until they begin the work, it is an unknown. That is why the scope is so broad on the project as well. If they did not spend as much, other work could be added with money left over.

Any valves in the grassy areas just outside the street will not cost as much to repair as the ones on Route 113 or at the intersection of Route 14 and Route 113, for example.

He emphasized there will be some disturbances to the water as well as some discolored water. But right now, it is difficult to flush mains and do targeted flushing to try and eliminate some of the scale and discolored areas. Mr. Retzlaff explained that the valves not working are pulling water from different directions and stirring things up throughout the system. This is the first step and once the valve numbers are obtained, they will begin to generate work orders and individual valves will be turned.

This will allow an annual flushing program to be put in place which will prevent this from occurring again. The maintenance program will then be reinstated again.

Mr. Carmean feels the public does not need to be apprehensive about this. He explained the valves are open and water is flowing. Most of the pipes are as old as the valves and the water will continue to flow. He has heard some people say that 40% of our hydrants are not working. However, that is far from the truth. The city has no problem getting water out of our hydrants throughout the entire town.

The city manager said the only problem is shutting water off in a situation where a main needs maintenance or a similar situation. There is no concern to the public and this will only strengthen the infrastructure in the future and provide a clean start with our valve program.

Mr. Retzlaff agreed this is not a response to any significant deficiency in the system. He reiterated there is nothing wrong with the bulk of the system and water finds its own way. Milford does not have customers with discolored water. If we are not proactive and try to do this at this point, it will cost two to three times as much when the work is needed. This is only an attempt to get it under control before it gets too far away from us.

Mr. Carmean said he has discussed this with Mr. Portmann and setting up a separate account. Our finance director knows government financing and he will know the best way to do this.

The city manager agrees it is easy to earmark a certain amount and make draws from reserves as was done with the substation. Council talked about the earmarked amounts for capital projects. He reiterated that the money is in reserves to pay for this work, in addition to the \$4 million needed for the substation this year.

The initial work involving the GIS and mapping will not cost a lot of money so \$1 million does not need to be set aside.

Mr. Carmean asked Mr. Retzlaff to provide some type of proposal, showing the phases or steps on how DBF will carry this through. For example, the first step Mr. Retzlaff described was the GPS work; the next step will be to spin the valves and have the water hydrants checked out.

Mr. Carmean confirmed the work would be done in phases; Mr. Retzlaff explained the valve exerciser that the public works department was considering has a GPS device and when connected to a valve, it registers its location. They can then exercise the valve and try to operate it and determine if it works.

Mr. Shupe confirmed that after the valves are located, a maintenance program would be put into place. He asked if Mr. Retzlaff feels there will be an improvement on the hardness of the water being distributed. Mr. Retzlaff explained the hardness is related to the makeup of the raw water coming out of the aquifers. They are pumping more water from one aquifer versus the other aquifer. In addition, the aerators are not functioning as they should. The makeup in the actual treatment is changing. Additional treatment would be needed to adjust the hardness. It could mean the addition of a sequestering agent that will keep it in suspension and from forming.

Currently, water is coming from four different locations and is contributing to the problem. If we stray too far from the hardness and scalene, a corrosivity is developed that will actually eat the pipes.

Mr. Retzlaff pointed out it is a fine balance that keeps the system operating though some upgrades are needed to the aerators. Then some modifications can be made.

Mr. Brooks said the water department runs tests on the water in his house on a regular basis. The results indicate water quality is where it should be. Mr. Retzlaff agreed adding that the hardness is more of a secondary or aesthetic issue. They are willing to work to improve that in order to keep the customers in Milford happy.

It was agreed to proceed with the GIS and GPS mapping which is the initial evaluation.

Mr. Brooks asked the city manager to verify there is enough money to do this project.

Mr. Carmean said he will eventually ask for a report from the committee once he determines the cost of the project. At that time, he will have Ms. Hudson add it to the agenda. Council will need to set aside the money in a different account or earmark funds in the reserve account to ensure the money is not spent on something else.

Mr. Brooks said he feels this is a necessary project. He recalled Mr. Carmean discussing the seventeen projects that were sitting idle when he was rehired as city manager. As the city manager mentioned a couple months ago, fifteen projects have been completed and the other two are being worked on.

The city manager said that when he left in 2008, the city did not have a public works director. Mr. Dennehy was put in that position during his absence and has overseen all these projects since that time. Mr. Carmean now realizes that a town this size needs such a position filled.

Mr. Brooks noted the sign on Rehoboth Boulevard stating that roadwork would begin on April 28th. He asked who is overseeing that project. Mr. Carmean said it is the result of Perdue expanding their workforce and improvements were required by DelDOT at their entrances. Additional parking was also required.

He noted that Perdue is paying for the cost of the upgrades and not DelDOT.

Mr. Brooks stated he is pleased with the eight to nine streets that will be paved over the summer. Mr. Carmean agreed adding that some additional street work will be done. With the warm weather here, he has also directed Mr. Dennehy to start the street damage repair caused by the bad winter we had.

Mr. Brooks asked if Public Works Director Dennehy had any comments.

Mr. Dennehy said that a citizen who regularly attends council meetings stated that 40% of our hydrants do not work in the city and pointed out that is such an incorrect statement.

He noted that Water Department Employee Steve Ellingsworth is also a line officer in Carlisle Fire Company. Anytime a hydrant is not working, Carlisle Fire Company calls this employee. Because of the accusation, Mr. Dennehy asked Mr. Ellingsworth how many hydrants are not operating properly and Mr. Ellingsworth answered two. One was hit by a car and the other was being repaired.

Mr. Dennehy stated that he is unsure where the percentage number came from and he thinks there may have been some confusion between the hydrants and valves.

He concluded by reiterated that the money was allocated last June for a valve exerciser. What is needed right now is a GIS and GPS mapping on how to attack some of these problems.

He pointed out that we have in-house staff that are capable of doing this work.

The public works director stated that the only problem with the system right now is when there is a water main break, we do not know which valves to turn off to do the repairs.

Mr. Carmean said that he may have made the mistake one night by saying that 40% of the hydrants did not work instead of valves. He has since told this citizen five times that it was said in error.

Adjourn

With no other business, Mr. Shupe moved to adjourn the Public Works Committee Meeting, seconded by Mr. Gleysteen. Motion carried.

The Public Works Committee meeting adjourned at 10:34 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Terri K. Hudson, MMC
City Clerk/Recorder