

Minutes
Water Resource Management Utility Meeting
(Formerly Stormwater Utility)
July 8, 2008

Please note: Minutes are unofficial until approved by the Water Resource Management Utility (formerly Stormwater Committee) at their next regularly scheduled meeting.

Present: Alderman Ken Harenda, Alderman John Hopkins, Alderman Bill Moore, Mayor Jack Chiovaturo and Commissioner Jim Kern

Others Present: Nicole Hewitt (Division Engineer), JP Walker (City Engineer), Chuck Trevorrow (Stormwater Supervisor), & Sue Hanley (Administrative Supervisor Utilities & Streets)

Meeting called to order at 4:47 pm by Alderman Harenda. Roll call and declared a quorum with all members present except for Alderman Moore who was expected shortly.

Old Business

SW 01-08 Minutes from June 10th Meeting

Motion by Alderman Hopkins to approve the minutes from the June 10th Water Resource Management Committee meeting. Seconded by Commissioner Kern and upon voting the motion passed unanimously.

SW 07-06 Resident Request for Corrective Action Regarding Drainage Concerns

Remains tabled

SW 10-08 Update on Underground Storage at Eisenhower High School

Motion to remove this item from the table by Mayor Chiovaturo. Seconded by Alderman Hopkins and upon voting the motion passed unanimously.

Hewitt: We received a signed easement; it has not been recorded yet. I am in the process of updating the plans and specs. I met with Bob Pulliam and their engineer to go over what changes if any needed to be made to the plans and am putting those in there and updating those. I hope to get this advertised starting July 17th which would put us at a bid opening of August 1st, WRM Committee on August 12th and Council on August 26th. Construction would start about the 1st of September.

Alderman Moore arrived at 4:50 p.m.

Mayor Chiovaturo: When you say you got the easement done, that was the easement that the attorneys were working on, it is signed and taken care of? We have the full green light as far as the school district?

Hewitt: Yes.

Harenda: No other additions or attachments, we are good to go then?

Hewitt: Just our standard easement agreement with some insertion of language regarding the facilities that were included, some storm sewers that were included.

Harenda: What discussions did you have with Bob Pulliam? I know there were some issues they would like to utilize some of the capacity for potential future development. We have some limitations and I got some calls from school board members asking about that.

Hewitt: We did not have anything additional; really the only change was extending one section of pipe and adding a couple feet onto the fill area to accommodate what their future design was.

Harenda: They do understand the situation because of the divide.

Hewitt: Yes and it is not our call, it is MMSD's call and they are aware of that.

Harenda: You don't know what the bid numbers will be until they come in, any idea?

Hewitt: Mel Corley, Construction Services doesn't seem to think even though there are existing problems with gas prices, the environment is still competitive and we shouldn't see much higher bids than last time.

Motion to retable this item by Alderman Hopkins. Seconded by Commissioner Kern and upon voting the motion passed unanimously.

New Business

**SW 12-08 Communication from Bud Carriveau, 13110 W. Honey Lane
Re: Flooding of June 7th and 8th, 2008**

Harenda: We received some correspondence from the individual and Nicole on this. Do you want to give us a review on this?

Hewitt: I think Alderman Hopkins could discuss this since he has been involved with it. Cathy's letter does go into some of the items and background of that. It does appear that it has been recognized as a regional issue and has been looked at in the Stormwater Management Plan as a possible project which would be the Root 4 that she calls out, but again it has not been studied, there is no real design and projected design for that.

Harenda: What about the issues of the sewer backup. We addressed this a couple of years back and I see in the email from Utility Supervisor Jim Hart on that too. Has that been addressed or looked at specifically with regards to filtration and tie-ins to the sanitary sewer that might be a problem too?

Hewitt: On our end no. On the Utility end as far as Jim Hart that he believes it could possibly be a cross connection with the sump being connected directly into the lateral for the sanitary.

Hopkins: I would like to ask Bud a few questions.

My name is Bud Carriveau 13110 W. Honey Lane

Hopkins: Jim Hart of the Utility in addressing the problems with the sewer backup indicated that either a lateral to the residence is plugged causing a backup, the water on the floor is rain water getting into the basement or the sump pump is hooked up to the sanitary sewer.

Carriveau: The sump pump is not hooked up to the sanitary sewer it goes out the back wall with a hose coming out. It didn't have the sump pump in there for the first 40 years of the home, but I think it was 2 years ago I put it in when they found out the sewer was insufficient in size to handle the volume. That is when I used to get the water in, possible I still do. I can't say for sure because it was a weekend when the big rain happened and the only time it ever happened was when the sewer was at a level which was above the regular flow level, then it went back up into the basement. I have the drains all stopped up with the things that move up and down the rubber shut off, but one of them apparently leaks a little bit because it did get in the basement again. But as far as I know it always goes down so the sewer can't be plugged, the lateral should have been checked when they redid the sewers, I would assume they checked it.

Harenda: We don't check laterals. That is the responsibility of the homeowner.

Carriveau: You should know if it is plugged or not when you open it up you'd think.

Harenda: The Utility does not look at individual laterals. It is private property, you own the lateral. We don't inspect those, even if we reconnect it to an upsized main that might be in the street. That is the responsibility of the homeowner. Did you ever have the lateral smoke tested or televised?

Carriveau: No.

Mayor Chiovero: Is the only time you had the experience, when we had the bad rain?

Carriveau: Definitely. When it rains an inch it doesn't bother anybody. It is good for the gardens.

Mayor Chiovero: When is the last time you had any water or backup in your home?

Carriveau: I don't have any in my home. I have 2 crocks in my home, 2 sump pumps in each crock because it will not handle the volume of water that comes in. They are set at different levels and they ran at full speed and I have no problem. My neighbor next door to me had 6 inches right in the basement. This is where the water runs between the houses. I am not here for myself. I don't have a problem.

Chiovero: Ok. You are here for the neighborhood. You feel the issue hasn't been addressed?

Carriveau: It hasn't been addressed. Cathy took all of the specifications and was going to study it, sent me a letter via email a couple of years ago when I was in Arizona and she asked me for further information. Nothing has been accomplished. I talked to Mark the previous guy in stormwater before that. He studied it and found out it was coming from north of the railroad tracks, which is north of the bike path from the Elm Grove and Forest Drive homes that are there. It goes into their backyard. There is a culvert that comes underneath the railroad tracks between our 2 houses, 13120 and myself. The railroad has solved some of the problem by digging the ditch deeper and wider so that holds some of the excessive water, but it is not up to standards.

Kern: How many homes are impacted?

Carriveau: The home next to me is impacted. I don't know about the guy on the corner. The home, the Stocks at the corner of Elm Grove road south of Honey Lane have had water in the past. They have a one way valve put in the sewer line going out and shuts off when it goes too much, they also have the valve at the Wally Weindhold's the 2nd house south of Honey Lane on Elm Grove Road. They have one at Fred Tripp's house. This was all prior to your sewer project.

Hopkins: That sewer project came about after you had talked to us about some of the problems, some of the homes south of Honey Lane on Elm Grove Road that got literally flooded, that problem for the most part, as far as I know has been solved.

Carriveau: It has been solved. They put a bigger culvert in front of Weindhold's place that can accept the amount of water that is coming, but they need to increase the size of the one that runs along Elm Grove Road south of the tracks, under the road to Wally's culvert, or reduce the size of the railroad culvert that brings all the water to our area and shut off the water west of Sunny Slope road. We don't need that as far down as Elm Grove Road. That is ridiculous in my opinion.

Moore: It seems to me that Jim Hart examined your home, but you are saying your home is not the problem and that you are asking for an investigation to be done at these other homes. The 2nd thing is, while you say it is not true, our employee says that the sump pump is hooked up to the sanitary sewer.

Hewitt: No. There are 3 different things he said that could possibly be happening. He didn't know which one. It could be the lateral to the residence is plugged, the water on the floor is rain water or the sump pump is hooked into the sanitary sewer. It is not a definitive thing, they are just options.

Moore: I am reading from the next paragraph.

Hewitt: I think he doesn't know that for sure. He just saw a cut and repair.

Hopkins: It is one of 3 things Bill. He did not know.

Moore: It sounds like he is answering his questions from above. He says the concrete floor is cut and repaired so that the sump pump crock is hooked up into the sanitary sewer which is a cross connection. Then he says also the residents keep saying the sewer main is backing up but it is not.

Hopkins: That is the main sewer line not the lateral. He is saying that the sewer main is open.

Harenda: We had problems in this area a couple years back and it was rectified with some work. The Utility has been monitoring the situation and we believe the problem that has been creating some backups in the past has been corrected. Jim is inferring there is potential for a cross connect, but it is hard to tell without examining it and televising the lateral and checking the main.

Hopkins: I would agree with Bud there are still some problems at times in the area but at the same time I think we have to remember that we were dealing with a 500-year flood or rainfall. There are people in this room that saw my property and many other properties in the City, some up on hills were flooded. The ground would not take any more water.

Bud Carriveau passed around some photos to the Committee.

Harenda: I have a suggestion Nicole, if possible can you reply to the resident and explain what we the Utility and WRM has done in the area, as well as monitoring the situation from back then and what we currently see. According to Mr. Hart we have an improved situation out there from what it was in the past. Maybe include some recommendations for the resident to have his lateral inspected, there might be a problem with it, the Utility doesn't do that. That is left to the homeowner to deal with.

Carriveau: I know my sump pump has nothing to do with the cross connection you are talking about.

Harenda: If your lateral is partially plugged, there is no way to tell. It is just a suggestion.

Carriveau: I am not too concerned about the sewer water coming in any more the basement because it only happened in one of these excessive rains, but the amount of storm water is ridiculous. My neighbor is about 83 years old and she got 6 inches of rain and nobody does anything to correct any of the problems causing it.

Harenda: This Utility has worked over the last 4-5 years or more and spent millions of dollars in the northeast side of the City to make corrections and there are more corrections to be made, but we have limited funds to do these. Some of the issues have been identified by our Water Resource Management engineer all the way back to 2001 in the Stormwater Management Plan and we are still looking at these.

Carriveau: When I saw JP for the first time about 5 years ago, I was #6 on the list of people that had problems. What number am I now, 17 or 30 or 40? Each time I come here I seem to get further down.

Harenda: It is not an isolated situation in your area; it is a bigger problem in the entire area that we are trying to correct in the big picture approach.

Hopkins: I would ask Nicole if you can check the list and let Bud know where he is because he was on the list at one time. If you were 6th, it should have been taken care of.

Harenda: Was it the ditching list?

Kern: What was the correction that was going to be done?

Carriveau: Cathy was going to study it; I can show you letters that should be in her files saying that she is studying it. I haven't had any results.

Harenda: We can have our records pulled and we will take a look at the concerns in your letter and will respond to you accordingly.

Carriveau: She also has a video of the water from a few years back, they can look at that.

Trevorrow: Does the elderly lady with the water in the basement live to the east of you?

Carriveau: She lives to the west of me. The culvert water comes between our 2 houses.

Trevorrow: The water that comes underneath the tracks goes to the west around the west side of her house?

Carriveau: The east and the west.

Trevorrow: Under normal conditions?

Carriveau: Both sides. Her backyard is completely underwater when this happens and the culvert can't hold any more water.

Trevorrow: The neighbor to the east of you, you haven't communicated with.

Carriveau: He doesn't have any problems at all because he is up on a hill and higher than us.

Moore: Where do these homes lie in relationship to the flood plain?

Hewitt: I don't believe any of them are in the flood plain?

Kern: This project you refer to as Root 4, what exactly is that? Is the area that Bud lives part of it?

Hewitt: Yes. It is an area Root 4 that is called out that needs to be investigated with possible regional issues. There really isn't a project or design. It is on the list of items to be looked at. It is a regional issue. Issue and it keeps getting expanded.

Chiovatero: it sounds like Cathy may have researched and studied it, but never got back to Mr. Carriveau with the results. I think that's what we need to check.

Kern: It sounds like he is entitled to at least some investigation. You never heard anything back from Cathy?

Carriveau: Not as far as any solutions. She admits the culvert along Elm Grove Road is not sufficient to handle the water that comes down there.

Harenda: The problem is by upsizing culverts sometimes it can cause other issues. It is a regional issue. I believe it is in the original Stormwater Master Plan?

Hewitt: Yes. I believe the conclusion that she came to, without having her to speak for that, it was not something to be done to correct just his property. The drainage list items which get addressed on a first come and priority list are issues that are directly related to that property and with this being a regional issue and him admitting that he doesn't have issues on his property, he probably wouldn't be getting that addressed as a drainage list item.

Harenda: Please ask Cathy to pull the records and respond back.

Trevorrow: Is the property behind your homes and the neighbor to the west of you maintained, is the brush cleared out?

Carriveau: There is no brush, just the railroad brush. Nothing blocking the flow.

Trevorrow: I will look at it tomorrow.

SW 13-08 Preliminary Report on June 7th and 8th, 2008 Flooding

Hewitt: Scott Schulpus put together a report to FEMA based on the Emergency Management Services so we wanted to give you a couple of paragraphs out of that telling you what went on.

Hopkins: I see on the newspapers how much rain Elm Grove or Brookfield received. Do we measure it?

Hewitt: We have several gauging stations.

Hopkins: Which is probably good based on the size of our City.

Hewitt: We do have the data for the rainfall.

Hopkins: I would like to see that.

Harenda: Is there any way to do a comparison since the flooding back in the late 1990's, we probably would have seen more properties affected by flooding than we see today.

Hewitt: I could check the historical records. The information from this storm is actually online from the Weather Service. I will see if it is available back to 1998.

Walker: According to Scott Schulpus of the Emergency Government, the official recorded rain from that Thursday to Sunday was 10.96 inches here in New Berlin.

Hopkins: Thank you. That sounds reasonable.

Trevorrow: What I noticed in the last 8-10 years from what Water Resources has done, we feel there has been a big improvement, except for the one last month which was just outstanding. We noticed it in locations that stuff has been holding up much better.

Hopkins: I think even Bud would have to agree, that except for this storm, the last 100 year storms, your area has weathered fairly well, I'm not saying there are not problems, but it is better than it was. There is no area down where we are that could have taken 10.96 inches of rain in less than 3 days.

Moore: I would like to echo what Alderman Hopkins said in relation to the size of the storm. There are some storms that no system can handle, certainly Noah found that out. I think we weathered this storm comparatively good. I grew up in a home that flooded out 3 times and the worst was a 7 inch rainfall that occurred within just a few hours and a 11" rainfall like we had is simply something that you can't expect every home and every street and every system to handle.

Kern: Do we think this is the largest rainfall we every had over that period of time in the history of the city?

Hewitt: It broke all of the Madison and Milwaukee records.

Kern: Over the past 15 years we have had at least 2 or 3 major rainfalls. If you have some sense of the number of homes flooded in past events compared to this event, we could hopefully see that all the dollars we've spent.

Trevorrow: I think the big determining factors over this storm and the other ones we've had in the past is that there were more power outages back in 1998 and there were no sump pumps running so the comparison isn't fair.

Hopkins: The 1993 flood we had the 2 or 3 day power outage.

Harenda: WE Energies has spent a considerable amount of money to clear out some of the corridors where lines run and that has improved the number of power outages in this City. That is a good point.

Motion to adjourn at 5:24 p.m. by Commissioner Kern. Seconded by Alderman Hopkins and upon voting the motion passed unanimously.

Please Note: Minutes are not official until approved by the Committee

Respectfully submitted by Sue Hanley, Administrative Supervisor Utilities & Streets