

STORMWATER COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

Meeting via ZOOM

Monday, March 8, 2021

Present: Members: Matt Hasel, Greg Drew, Kris Horton, Ken Hummel, Steve Herron (Council Representative). Absent: R.J. Hickey

CALL TO ORDER:

Gwen Fisher, Certified Municipal Clerk called the Monday, March 8, 2021 Stormwater Advisory Committee to order at 6:00 p.m.

ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN/VICE CHAIRMAN:

G. Drew MOVED, K. Horton seconded to appoint Matt Hasel as Chairman for 2021. Roll Call Vote 4 YEAS. **MOTION CARRIED.**

M. Hasel MOVED, G. Drew seconded to appoint Ken Hummel as Vice Chairman for 2021. Roll Call Vote 4 YEAS. **MOTION CARRIED.**

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

G. DREW MOVED; K. Hummel seconded to approve the minutes of July 15, 2019. Vote 4 YEAS. **MOTION CARRIED.**

OLD/NEW BUSINESS:

Review of Stormwater Fund 604:

Amy Hendricks mentioned the spreadsheet the members received is the operating budget for Fund 604, which is the work that is done internally by the street department along with general engineering, items for ongoing maintenance and repairs, and the debt service. She said last year they paid \$30,000 less in debt service than what was on the schedule because the Ohio Public Works suspended all payments that were due on the July 1 cycle due to COVID. This payment will be added on and they have it in their cash balance. She said in 2019 going into 2020 without meetings to name specific additional projects, they had about \$250,000 available, and without the funds being used they were able to carry forward, so they have a total of \$500,000 going into 2021 available in the fund. She took the liberty of looking at the debt service schedule to see how they would be as far as borrowing money given the competitive interest rates to see if they can see if they have more available for more projects in the next couple of years. She explained the stormwater ordinance specifies that the annual debt service may not exceed 50

percent of the prior year's operating revenue, and stormwater for 2020 ran at \$407,250, which is relatively steady because it is fee generated, which would allow an annual debt service of \$203,625. Currently, they have a maximum during the debt service schedule of just under \$120,000, which would leave them a little over \$80,000 available that could be used for debt service for borrowing. She provided scenarios for debt service to the members they might want to consider. She said the fund does have a healthy balance at this point due to not a lot of projects being done in the last couple of years, but this does situate them well to move forward.

Greg Drew said in being new to the board, he understands the finance director is saying there is about \$500,000 allocated for 2021 projects and a potential \$80,000 they could borrow to add on top of this. A. Hendricks said the city can borrow money that yielded a payment of up to \$80,000, so estimating interest rates for 20 years of borrowing they could borrow around \$1.2 million; 25 years just under \$1.5 million, and at 30 years about \$1.7 million. She would recommend staying in the 20-25-year range given the minor jump in funding they would get as it will really be absorbed in extra interest because of the higher rate and additional payments they would have. She said this money would have to be spent within three years. M. Hasel asked if this money must be used on one big project or can it be used on several projects. A. Hendricks said they can write the language that the funds will be used for stormwater improvements which can be used for a combination of projects. K. Horton asked what the interest rate would be on this. A. Hendricks said back in January they were estimating the interest rate at a 20-year mark of 1.4 percent and 25 years at 1.6 percent, but again they would do a competitive sale to get the best interest rate. G. Drew asked if they anticipate the rates remaining this low and is it a good time to take advantage of this. A. Hendricks said it is definitely a great time to take advantage of this as they are sitting on historical low rates and for the foreseeable future, she did not think it would be drastically anticipated, but it does not take a lot of economic happenings to give those a jolt. She thought the board would want to proceed with borrowing by June.

Updated Stormwater Project List

C. Howard provided the committee with an updated potential project list as of March 5, 2021. He said he took the previous list from 2019 and updated the list to add projects the administration would ask the committee to consider. He listed each project with an estimated cost shown by each ward. He explained that Morton Road has been a problem for years as there is a resident at 461 Morton that continually has a flooded back yard. There is a storm sewer that has been there for years that runs through their back yard that drains from the Wendy's and Liberty Avenue area, so they do need to reroute this because it is impacting this property. He said the Brownhelm Station Road Culvert was on the previous list because there are some headwalls that are failing that need replaced. There is no guardrail, so it is dangerous in that area. This section is east of Claus Road under the bridge. There

are not many residents, but it is a concern for the residents that live there. He said there are no storm sewers on Jackson Street and this project has been on the list for years as well. He said the Sunnyside Road Ditch Enclosures south of Cooper Foster Park Road was repaved with state money and some of the edges are failing because the ditches are close to the edge of the road. They would need to make storm sewer improvements on North Ridge Road by rerouting the storm sewer at 2550 North Ridge to the east. The VOL Outfall at Rowland and local storm sewer system has been on the list for years, which could be reviewed. With regards to the Linda Drive storm sewer improvements, they would need to replace the existing storm sewer from the pond and clean the existing ditch within the city easement. He said there are storm sewer issues at the south end of Riverside Drive and water from Vermilion Road goes down the bank and impacts those property owners. He said there is erosion at 1184 Wildwood Drive. He also included repair/replacement of catch basins and various ditch cleaning the street department performs every year. He said other people may have other ideas, but this is a starting point.

M. Hasel asked council members if they were aware of any storm sewer issues in their ward that may need to be addressed, which were not already on the list.

B. Brady thought ditch cleaning in the VOL area would make a tremendous difference. She suggested possibly purchasing equipment that does the ditches. She said the city could go to the residents to work on the driveway drains, which would make a huge difference to get the water flowing, probably even in the sanitary sewers. M. Hasel agreed with the maintenance of the ditches as he lives in the rural part of the city that also has a lot of standing water in the ditches, so maybe they could look at the section in the ordinance to differentiate the maintenance versus the homeowner and the city, so they can look at ditches city wide to alleviate the standing water, which causes problems for everybody else.

F. Loucka said on Riverside Drive when the road was paved 20+ years ago there was a storm drain that was put in across the street from 1000 Riverside – the undeveloped side of Riverside. However, the rest of Riverside going south has no storm drain at all and when it rains heavily the entire street is standing water until it drains five or six days later. He suggested running a couple of catch basins and run it into the existing catch basin. He thought this would make a huge difference in making the street dry. M. Hasel asked if this was close to the other issue. F. Loucka said the other issue is at the turnaround and this would be on the east part of the 'U'. The addresses would be 1000, 1010, 1020 and 1007, which is across from the others. He said he could submit a sketch to the board of what he is talking about.

B. Holmes said at the west end of Riverside there is a storm fallout area that has been looked at by the city engineer, but he would like the committee to look at this where the storm drain comes off Vermilion Road into the area below. He said the fallout is on private property and where it drains is on private property and then

down onto the road and into the river. The residents sent the committee videos of the rain events. He said on Vermilion Road heading south there is standing water on the east side, so again this is something that might be part of that runoff going down onto Riverside. Another area he would like the committee to look at in ward five is the Sunnyside Ditch at the south end by the cemetery. He thought this would alleviate some issues with the water shedding off the cemetery.

B. Brady said it has been a long time since anyone has looked at the city's stormwater policies; separating city versus private responsibilities and part of this is when does city put pipe into the ground as opposed to cleaning a ditch. It might be interesting as a committee to look at some of these issues and see if they agree with the ones that are in place and how they might want to manage these, so the residents are clear on what their responsibilities are.

B. Holmes said Hazelwood is another concern because the residents have expressed they have a lot of water in their back yards, so where is it coming from and where is it going.

S. Herron said there always seems to be the question of what the property owner's obligation is, so they may want to see if there can be some uniformity to this. He suggested maybe discussing this at the next meeting by reviewing the ordinances.

M. Hasel asked if the Riverside Drive Storm Sewer Improvements as listed on the project sheet are in ward five. C. Howard said yes as the last so many houses on Riverside are in ward five. F. Loucka said the other part he addressed is in ward two because there are no storm drains in that area and it also feeds into ward five on the southern loop.

Elizabeth Vasil of 1015 Riverside Drive submitted correspondence, a petition, pictures, and videos of Riverside Drive. She said the water coming off Vermilion Road is horrendous and strong, and it should be routed into the river instead of it coming down on the properties. Even though it is on private property, she was aware the city researched an easement, and she thought the property owner would allow equipment to go onto his property to get this fixed. M. Hasel said the videos were pretty telling, so he appreciated the board receiving those as it is helpful for them to understand the problem.

M. Hasel said the problem on Riverside has been the same problem that has been discussed and documented in the Photojournal for some time. His opinion is that if this is water coming off the roadway, then there is no easement there, and if it were to be constructed new, the best situation would be to do a better job of rerouting this to the place where it is supposed to go, which is the river. He said it makes sense to recommend a project for this site and recommend the other Riverside

issue addressed by F. Loucka and adjoining them as one project as a recommendation from the Stormwater Committee.

M. Hasel MOVED, G. Drew seconded to recommend the Riverside erosion and looking for an easement and making sure the city helps the residents by doing it right, and to fix the other Riverside problem as addressed above and to make this one project. Vote 4 YEAS. **MOTION CARRIED**.

Homer Taft of 3972 Edgewater Drive said one issue he has not heard discussed about stormwater which seems to be serious is stormwater intrusion into their sanitary sewers that is an extremely serious problem. As he understands, they get up to as much as four times more water sent to the Wastewater Plant as the plant can treat. This will become a problem with the EPA. In the VOL area over the past 14 years, they have had a problem with raw sewage coming out of the ground into the streets and going into their homes, and into the ditches that go right to the lake without any treatment. In a previous city council committee meeting he had asked the finance director - who said the stormwater fund cannot address this, and he believes it should address it. He said the areas with serious stormwater intrusion are in the VOL and Elberta Beach areas. There may be others that have intrusion. He said keeping the storm water out of the sanitary sewers to begin with is a fairly important issue he would hope the committee would consider. A. Hendricks said to clarify the monies they would be able to use was a question she referred to the Service Director and City Engineer to determine. M. Hasel asked the administration if they did any research as to the availability of this. C. Howard said they need to determine if stormwater funds can be used for the sanitary. There is a lot of I&I issues in the VOL area with a lot of the laterals. They have done flow metering of the streets and it is evident there is I&I getting into the sanitary, but it is a function of the sanitary laterals and the stormwater, but they need to look at whether stormwater funds can be used. M. Hasel said it is infiltration and there is not a stormwater project out there that will solve the infiltration into the joints and the failed sanitary, so to him it seems like it is a sanitary problem, and there is not a stormwater project that can really solve this problem besides repairing the sanitary, which does not seem to be a good use of stormwater funds. C. Howard said there was a project in 2009 where all the main lines sanitary sewer was relined and repairs were done to the main line system, but the issue was the fact that the laterals were not addressed at the time and this is a concern right now. M. Hasel said the only true way to solve this problem is to line the sanitary. C. Howard said this would be the laterals since the main line was relined. He said a lot of the open ditches have separation and storm water is getting into the sanitary laterals, but some are on private property and some are on the right of way.

H. Taft said to be clear the sanitary was lined and they are still paying assessments for that, but in addition the problem occurs only from storm water during rain events. This is not just a generalized problem – it is something that is severe when

there is substantial rainstorms and raw sewage is going into these ditches and into the streets – feces, toilet paper, and geysers two feet high in the streets and it is a bad problem.

M. Hasel said the committee received a lot of information in the last two weeks and asked the members to review the project list so they could come back with more discussion on recommending additional projects. He thought they should look at the stormwater codes as they pertain to maintenance and responsibilities to see if they have any recommendations in bringing the stormwater codes up to date.

S. Herron thanked the committee for serving and their preparation for this meeting.

G. Fisher suggested meeting next month on April 12 at 6:00 p.m. at the Vermilion Municipal Complex, 687 Decatur Street.

Adjournment:

K. Hummel MOVED; G. Drew seconded to adjourn the meeting after no further discussion came before the committee. Vote 4 YEAS. **MOTION CARRIED.**

Announcement of Meeting Date:

The next meeting has been scheduled for April 12, 2021 – 6pm @ Vermilion Municipal Complex, 687 Decatur Street, Vermilion, Ohio.

Gwen Fisher, CMC, Certified Municipal Clerk