

Lost Lake Sewer Committee Minutes
June 13, 2013

Present: John G. Petropoulos, Selectman; Jay M. Prager, Finance Committee
Dr. Horowitz, Board of Health; Thomas D. Orcutt, Water/Sewer Superintendent; and
Angela Garger

Old Business

- I. Approved meeting minutes for May 30
- II. Selectman Petropoulos brought up the recent Woodard and Curran invoice for roughly \$13,000. He reminded the Committee that he had asked the Town Manager to withhold payment of the bill until backup detail to justify the total cost was provided. Mr. Orcutt indicated that he had a conversation with Woodard and Curran about the expenses and referenced notes from the conversation. Selectman Petropoulos asked for a more formal set of line item costs to be presented by Woodard and Curran.
- III. Included in the explanation presented by Mr. Orcutt was the cost for Woodard and Curran to provide an estimate for the cost of providing a Nitrogen filtration contingency for the Whitney well. Mr. Orcutt noted that he requested estimates from 2 sources and that he was not certain if the second source would also expect to be paid for their estimate. Selectman Petropoulos asked to be informed the next time that costs would be incurred for requests made by the Committee.
- IV. The committee had an extensive discussion about water quality testing and the vote taken on May 30, 2013
 - a. Mr. Prager had been absent at the last meeting. He said that he did not necessarily have an issue with going forward with the testing.
 - i. He said that clearly a sewer system would not go forward without testing. It could provide the basis to justify a system, or not.
 - ii. Mr. Prager noted comments that Savos Danos made in his email reviewing the water testing.
 1. Specifically “in the absence of” wet weather and dry weather testing “the committee is subject to ridicule” and that the proposed price is “very very expensive”
 2. Mr. Prager thought that we should get a quote from Woodward and Curran for wet and dry testing
 - iii. Mr. Prager also stated that he felt it was important to differentiate between nitrates in the water testing
 1. Dr. Horowitz noted that this was included in the motion on May 30.
 - b. Selectman Petropoulos said that he did not agree with going forward with the water testing as proposed by Woodward and Curran
 - i. He thought that comments from the Peer reviews suggested that the Woodard and Curran scope was not comprehensive enough and therefore would be questioned at town meeting.
 - ii. He also stated that he did not think that Woodard and Curran should do the testing because it could be seen as a conflict of interest for them.
 1. They have a 3 million dollar incentive to build a sewer system. He felt that any appearance of a conflict would be removed if an independent firm did the testing.

- c. Dr. Horowitz disagreed and reiterated that if we did not use Woodard and Curran for the testing that a new company would not accept their data and would need to start the process from the beginning which would create a delay as well as cost a great deal of money.
 - i. She further said that we needed to get further clarification from Savos Danos about what he meant by wet weather and dry weather testing
 - ii. Dr. Horowitz referenced our objective of replicating the 1989 testing
- d. Selectman Petropoulos said that he did not think that our objective should be to replicate the 1989 test
 - i. He feels that we have to first determine our objective and then do testing, which supports that objective. Replication could result in unnecessary tests as pointed out by one of the peer reviews, and fail to provide other important tests as pointed out by both peer reviews.
- e. Mr. Orcutt commented that Woodard and Curran had already said that nutrient loading is from septic systems and run off
- f. Mr. Prager suggested the town hire a limnologist who could then tell us what testing needs to be done.
 - i. There was further discussion about hiring an independent person to help to determine what testing should be done and to help evaluate those tests. All agreed that the person need not be a Limnologist but that they should have similar qualifications.
- g. Dr. Horowitz stated that this initial water testing could lead us in a direction.
 - i. It could justify more comprehensive water testing or perhaps show that there was not an issue with the water
 - ii. Multi seasonal testing could be conditional on the results of the initial water testing.
- V. Selectman Petropoulos argued that testing first and then asking a consultant if we did the right test was a bad process and could result in unnecessary expense as had been referenced in the peer reviews.
- VI. Mr. Prager made a motion to hire a qualified independent consultant to review all prior and current (water) testing and to advise on subsequent actions to get to the objectives of the committee, (i.e. an understanding of the source and nature of the contaminants in the lake.)
 - a. Motion was unanimously approved
- VII. Selectman Petropoulos moved to amend the original motion to say that no future testing would be done without the review of the consultant who would act as an advisor to the committee.
 - a. 2 in favor and 3 opposed
- VIII. Next Meeting date June 27 at 7:00pm

Action Items

- I. Mark Haddad will be asked to go forward with the water testing as proposed by Woodard and Curran and as reflected in the vote from the May 30 meeting (maximum spend of \$86,000 with the addition of testing to determine the proportional source of any contaminants as originating from human, animal or chemical contributors.
- II. The committee will ask Mark Haddad to provide it with a number of candidates for the consultant role from which the Committee can select a vendor, and to assure that the vendors understand that they may not be

eligible to compete for future contracts relative to implementing any solution that comes as a result of the testing.