



Gardnerville Water Company
Regular Board Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, November 12, 2024 5:00p.m.
Board Room
1579 Virginia Ranch Rd
Gardnerville, NV 89410

Board Members Present:

Doug Sonnemann, *Vice Chairman*
Barbara Henningsen, *Secretary*
Ken Deering, *Member at large*
Carl Spahr, *Treasurer*

Staff Members Present:

Mark Lovelady, *GWC Manager*
Kristien Bennett, *GWC Financial Officer & HR*
Mikayla Webb, *GWC Administrative Assistant*
Chuck Zumpft, *GWC Attorney*

Doug Sonnemann called the November 12, 2024, Regular Board Meeting to order at 5:03 PM.

Public Present: Keith Scott.

Approval of Agenda: Ken Deering made a motion to approve the Agenda for the November 12, 2024, Board Meeting. Barbara Henningsen seconded the motion. Motion was approved.

Minutes of the October 8, 2024, Regular Board Meeting: Carl Spahr made a motion to approve the October 8, 2024, Regular Board Meeting Minutes. Barbara Henningsen seconded the motion. Motion was approved.

Financial Statements for October 2024: Ken Deering made a motion to approve the October 2024 Financial Statements. Carl Spahr seconded the motion. Motion was approved.

Public Comment: (No Action) – This portion of the meeting is open to the public to speak on any topic not on tonight’s agenda, limited to three minutes.

Agenda Item 1: Old business

A. Well 10 CMAR Project

Items completed:

- Clay Valve adjusted by Western Nevada Supply 10/31
- Have all alarms been addressed on generator and panels – 10/31/24
- Landscaping – complete by staff and volunteer
- Ran well with different scenarios - everything working
- Ran generator - everything working

Items not completed:

- Final inspections with Douglas County and Town of Gardnerville
- Final completion letter from RCI

B. 1409 Interest Lane Sewer Line Issue

Mark Lovelady and Ken Deering meet with Keith Scott to discuss the possible lift station. Mr. Scott asked for drawings and specs on the lift station. He has met with MGSD and wants to discuss other options for correcting the sewer issue.

Email received Tuesday, November 5, 2024

Mark, Ken,

Thanks for meeting me a couple of weeks ago (October 22nd) at the well site next door and offering to put in the sewage lift/pump system. At this time, I respectfully decline the offer to install the lift/pump system and have emailed Mark to ask him to put me on the agenda for the November 12th Board meeting to discuss sewer lateral options. Please be patient with this email as you read through it. For your and the Board's consideration, I provide further explanation below.

SUMMARY

The sewer holding tank, pump/lift, floats, electronics, electrical connections and control panel create ongoing maintenance; sewage odors will come out of the vent; and there is risk of failure at any time due to equipment failure, clogging or power outage.

The biggest shortcoming with the lift/pump proposal is that it provides a second solution for a problem that has already been better solved (gravity flow in 6" pipe). In my view, the gravity flow solution (our currently documented proposal) and the lift/pump proposal are non-conventional, both with an 80-90% chance for success. The problems I have with the GWC proposal returned to me on September 17th are that it strips out specific actions and timelines related to performance, testing and access. For any non-conventional system, I believe I should only give up the perfectly working system that I now have only 1) if the new system works as well as the current one, 2) if the new system is properly tested and good easements are in place, as outlined in the July 25th proposal, so that I am not indefinitely being put out of house and home and paying the subsequent costs to do so; and 3) if, now, I am not forced to accept long term maintenance requirements and potential loss of quality of life. In short, as I see it, the lift /pump proposal moves the problem of coming to terms for the up-front testing of the gravity flow proposal we have been working on for 20 months and pushes future problems of uplift/pump system onto me forever.

BACKGROUND

When I bought the house at 1409 Interest Lane, my primary intent was to move into a lower maintenance property, in town, near medical facilities, as I aged into my sixties. While the house needed a one-time cosmetic upgrade, I intentionally sought out a property for which I would not need to maintain water, sewer, electricity, or fuel supply. My last house was in a remote location, and I maintained 1) power (solar grid, batteries, inverters/controllers and a 10KW generator), 2) a complex water system (300 foot well pumping into a 5000 gallon holding tank, a second pump then pumping water uphill 300 vertical feet through 1000 feet of 2" pipe into two 5000 gallon holding tanks, and a third pump and two pressure tanks pumping water into the house), 3) sewage system (two part septic tank requiring a mechanical blower, timer/controller tied to solar control system, annual copper sulfide application to leach field and tank, required annual inspections by independent contractor plus county fees) and 4) fuel supply (gas tank and underground gas line). As I get older, I do not want to take on the maintenance of a sewer lift/pump station. A simple connection to a "public sewer" is a primary reason I bought the house.

UPLIFT/PUMP SYSTEMS

Non-conventional sewer systems require more care than conventional gravity fed ones.

As you suggested, I researched on-line, I talked to a supplier, contractor and met with Peter Barrati at MGSD. While I understand that a lift station sewer approach should work, no one can understand why we

would put one in when a gravity fed system would work as well, and probably better over time with none of the maintenance or potential failures of a pump system.

- While the mechanical features of a lift/pump/mulcher system usually work well when new, the system requires significant maintenance annually and always leaves me on the brink of a non-functioning sewer system should any component of the system fail or if someone flushes anything much more or different than human waste and nominal amounts of toilet paper, for example, wads of paper, tampons, condoms, diapers, small toys, wash cloths etc.
- "Common problems include pump failures, false alarms (or no alarm when needed), clogs and electrical malfunctions." Annual maintenance includes (per contractor sites on the internet):
 - o cleaning of the pump and components inside the tank
 - o inspections of pump, floats, electrical connections and control panel
 - o inspection of check valve
 - o inspection of control box, (overflow) siren and back-up battery

Although an annual maintenance for a few years after installation was suggested at our meeting, typically new, clean systems work well, but older systems wear out, clog and fail over time. Also, a mitigation plan would need to be created and the money to implement set aside if there is 1) a pump station failure, or 2) a power outage. I don't want to face ever increasing probabilities of failure and the costs and work associated with an aging system as the years go by. I believed I had bought and still believe I need a property where I would not have to deal with such prospects as I get older.

I have also been warned that while most systems don't smell because they are installed in the basement and vented through the roof of the house or are located far enough away, the current proposal places the tank/pump just outside my front door. Even if it were moved to the property line, it still needs to be vented, and the prevailing south and south-westerly winds will bring the smells toward the house. The crawl space in the house is shallow and access is limited, making it an unsuitable location to install a pump/lift system. The proposal effectively puts a vented sewer tank in my front yard, and I don't want that. I believe the proposed outdoor tank and the sewer fumes from its vent will diminish my quality of life at 1409 Interest Lane.

Other considerations include the long-term availability of repair/replacement parts. In the modern world, it's now customary for companies to maintain replacement parts and/or offer service for a product for a limited number of years. Just this Summer we tried to find parts for, and then just a same size replacement for my Dad's 25 year old macerator/lift pump with zero success. Ultimately, I took on the job of cleaning everything and coming up with non-standard parts to make it work. My 92 year-old Dad couldn't physically do it, and I do not want to put myself into that position if I live to an older age.

Lifetime of the pump/uplift systems is only 20 years. If I live that long, the prospect of dealing with repairs/replacement of the system, and the cost to do so, at 85 years old is not what I want. I specifically (thought I) bought a property with a direct connection from my property to the MGSD sewer main because I want to minimize or eliminate homeowner utility problems in old age.

POSSIBLE NEXT STEPS

I do want to continue to work with GWC to come to an equitable solution. Based on the content of the September 17th proposal that GWC returned to me, I would like to propose the following:

- I get on the GWC agenda for the November 11th Board meeting (email request sent to Mark this morning)..
- I will explain to the Board why I need, as opposed to just want, the content of the July 25th proposal that was stripped out of the September 17th proposal sent back to me.

- I will explain why I believe that it would be best if 1) GWC and I could agree on a version of the July 25th proposal, 2) agree to jointly present this to Five B's in a live meeting, and 3) formally request Five B's to provide a written response to any rejections to our joint proposal that aren't resolved at the in-person meeting.

Lastly, after almost two years with no resolution in sight, I have not moved forward with any further renovations of the property and am coming to wits end. If you feel there is no path forward, maybe GWC wants to buy back my property. The price is \$410,000, which I don't want to negotiate. If this is of interest to GWC, we can talk through it.

Please let me know.

Thanks,
Keith

Keith Scott presented at the meeting to check in and revisit the contract that has bounced between Chuck Zumft and Mr. Yates. Mr. Scott was worried about all the safety measures being taken out of the contract. He is ultimately worried about giving up a perfectly good sewer line without ensuring that he can get it reconnected of the "suboptimal system" does not work. Mr. Scott stated that each party needs to compromise a bit to get to the end of this situation. He feels as though GWC and himself have compromised plenty but feels as if Mr. Benigno needs to compromise by allowing reconnection if the chance that the new system does not work to ensure he does not lose out on a house and a home. Mark came up with the idea of having the line potholed by a contractor and to survey to obtain elevations. Once the percentage is known then have things reviewed by RCI. Ken had a conversation with the Community Development Director who stated that with a public easement as a property owner Mr. Scott has a right to connect to the sewer. Ken referred Mr. Scott to Jeremy Hutchins to get all the information and facts regarding the public utility easement. This will allow for Mr. Benigno to be out of the contract.

The consensus of the board is to have Mark get the line potholed and surveyed to obtain elevations to be able to create a plan.

C. Well 7 Generator

As of 10/21/24 Empire-Cat has ordered the parts and will schedule a visit to pull the engine once everything is in. The transfer switch was order was confirmed 10/24/24, delivery is 4-8 weeks.

D. Sensus FlexNet

Staff has been experiencing issues with the Sensus FlexNet system. The system is the meter reading system that all the meters link to for meter reading. Staff have experienced meters not reading, not connecting to the base station, and errors. Western Nevada Supply requested Sensus rerun a propagation study to determine what is causing the issues. The study showed that the current base station is out of date and needs to be replaced. It also showed that a second base station is required to successfully cover the area and connect to all the meters. Rough estimates for 2 base stations and installation are \$150,000. We are working with Sensus to determine if we can replace the current base station and install the second in a few years.

E. Well 11 Water Right Protest

A letter from RCI was received and it recommended that a meeting be held with the 2 protestors along with a Board member and Mark. Getting the protestors to retract their protest is the end goal and can be succeeded by giving some reassurance in case of a issue in the future. If the protest is not retracted, then this could lead to a hearing to allow for the continuance of the well project.

Doug Sonnemann agreed to meet with Mark, RCI, and the two protestors.

Agenda Item 2: Attorney Report – Chuck Zumpft

No report.

Agenda Item 3: Manager’s Report

1. Meters, Plan Reviews & Impact fees
 - A. There were 16 meter(s) installed or replaced
 - B. There were 0 plan reviews
 - C. There were \$40,486 in impact fees invoiced

2. Service Orders, Locates & Leak Notices
 - A. There were 26 locates completed by GWC staff
 - B. There were 180 service orders completed by GWC staff
 - C. There were 49 leak notices completed by GWC staff

3. Monthly Water Operations Update
 - A. Well 10 landscaping – JS/EW/BA
 - B. Hydrant repair – JS/EW/BA
 - C. 1351 El Dorado water leak – JS/EW/BA
 - D. Built irrigation box for well 10 – EW
 - E. Meter & MXU replacements – EW
 - F. Irrigation shut-off’s – BA

4. Current Projects in Review
 - A. Stoneridge
 - B. Virginia Ranch – Well 11
 - C. Maverik Gas Station

5. Current Projects Under Construction
 - A. Village at Martins Trail

6. Save The Date
 - A. Christmas Kickoff – Thursday December 5, 2024
 - B. GWC Christmas Dinner – Carson Valley Country Club - Saturday December 14, 2024

Agenda Item 4: Board Comments

No comments.

Agenda Item 5: Adjournment

Barbara Henningsen made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Ken Deering seconded the motion. Motion was approved. Doug Sonnemann adjourned the meeting at 6:32 PM.