



MARQUETTE AREA WASTEWATER TREATMENT FACILITY ADVISORY BOARD MEETING MINUTES January 18, 2024

A regular meeting of the Marquette Area Wastewater Treatment Facility Advisory Board was held at 10:00 a.m., January 18, 2024, at the Wastewater Treatment Plant.

ROLL CALL

PRESENT William DeGroot, Chocolay Township (Acting Chair)
Leonard Bodenus, Marquette Township
Sean Hobbins, City of Marquette
Jim Compton, City of Marquette

ABSENT Brad Johnson, Chocolay Township (Chair)
George Patrick, City of Maquette
Mary Schlicht, City of Marquette

OTHERS Mark O'Neill, City of Marquette

AGENDA It was moved by S. Hobbins, supported by L. Bodenus, to approve the agenda. Approved 4-0.

MINUTES It was moved by L. Bodenus, supported by J. Compton, to approve the December 14, 2023, meeting minutes as written. Approved 4-0.

FINANCIAL REPORT

M. O'Neill, City of Marquette, presented the Financial Report.

- **Financial Report:** M. O'Neill stated the financial report is standard for this time of year with no surprises. It was moved by S. Hobbins, supported by L. Bodenus, to approve the financial report. Approved 4-0.

OPERATIONS REPORT

M. O'Neill, City of Marquette, presented the Operations Report

PERMIT COMPLIANCE FOR THE MONTH(S):

- **PERMIT COMPLIANCE:** There were no permit violations for the month of December.



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PLANT NOTES:

- Staff continues weekly COVID-19 tracing sampling for NMU from the WWTP's influent, our four major lift stations, and from the sewer leaving the Marquette Branch Prison. J. Compton asked if we are notified of the results. M. O'Neill stated that the Health Department and the WWTP are notified.
- Staff replaced both pressure belts on our Belt Filter Press. One of the belts had torn completely in half. The gravity belt is scheduled for replacement as soon as possible. M. O'Neill stated the new project includes a second belt press which will help when one press is down.
- Supervisor replaced a failed overload unit for our #2 Digester Recirculation Pump. The original units are obsolete, making exact replacements difficult to find and very, very expensive. The replacement units, while much cheaper, are not configured the same and they require very specific programming to operate properly. With accurate reference material impossible to find, they are not fun to work with. A lot of trial and error is necessary to get them to operate at even a minimal level of performance.
- Staff from Kraft Power were on site to perform regularly scheduled service on our #1 CoGen unit. The replacement engine for unit #2 is being scheduled for installation. M. O'Neill stated the #2 engine was scheduled for a top end repair, but the engine failed to the extent the engine block was damaged. It was scheduled for a full rebuild this fall which is in the budget because both units are coming up on this "expected hours" maintenance. L. Bodenus asked if this recently happened about a year ago. M. O'Neill stated that this engine was last rebuilt in January 2022 with an expected 20,000 hours of life before a another rebuilt is required. Since we are not getting the 20,000 hours, Kraft is suggesting we reduce the kw from 104 to 95 kw. We are trying to get the reliability from the engines and still get the heat from them that we need. The engines we have are from Czechoslovakia. There are six of these units in the USA and ours is the only ones with significant hours on them. We are tasked with keeping them running. We are doing everything we can to keep them running and maintaining them properly with Kraft. S. Hobbins asked about running a larger unit. M. O'Neill stated there are more choices and more companies that use large units but we do not create enough biogas for a large unit. In this instance, Europe is where smaller engines are being produced. If at some point the maintenance of the engines supersedes the utility savings, it may be a future discussion of the Board to not run these engines. W. DeGroot suggested that if the Board has this discussion, a cost analysis should be created. This will allow the partners to understand the cost and make budget decisions accordingly. M. O'Neill agreed that, if shutting the engines down became a consideration, a compilation of the electricity cost and maintenance savings would need to be analyzed. S. Hobbins asked what the yearly electricity cost of the plant is. M. O'Neill stated, before the Co-Gens, it was about \$250,000 a year. That was drastically reduced to about \$50,000 the first year and then BLP made adjustments to their demand charge structure and rates. This has slowly increased our expenses over the years.
- Staff diagnosed and replaced the low water cutoff switch for our large dual-fuel Bryan boiler. This boiler is especially critical at this time of year as it provides the necessary backup heat source for our digesters in the event of a CoGen failure.



- Supervisor assisted the WFP with the setup of the new VFD for their #2 Low Service Pump. There is something wrong with either the motor itself or the wiring between the motor and the VFD.
- Supervisor diagnosed and repaired a loose control wire that was preventing our small dual-fuel Bryan boiler from starting up.
- Staff replaced the temperature probes for our Influent Sampler. The faulty probes were making the refrigeration unit think it was warmer than it was, thus causing the sample jug to ice up.
- Staff worked on faulty controls for one of the plant's sump pump stations. Supervisor diagnosed the problem as a bad alternator relay, however, the existing relay turned out to be the wrong part number. Corrective action is under way.

INDUSTRIAL WASTEWATER ACCEPTANCE ACTIVITY FOR DECEMBER 2023

Source	Volume (gallons)	Total
Fabick/CAT	1,900	\$266.00
UPS	4,000	\$560.00
LS&I	5,000	\$700.00
Wisconsin Electric	36,500	\$1,460.00
Grand Totals	47,400	\$2,986.00

MAINTENANCE MANAGEMENT

- Preventive Maintenance Work Orders: staff continues to perform routine maintenance tasks. I continue to create work orders that have not been created since we began using Lucity.
It was moved by S. Hobbins, supported by L. Bodenus to approve the operations report.
Approved 4-0.

NEW BUSINESS

- **Anderson, Tackman, and Company Audit Letter:** M. O'Neill stated the audit letter was sent to the MAWTAB chair, Brad Johnson, to approve and begin the yearly financial audit process. It was moved by L. Bodenus, supported by J. Compton to approve the authorization of the audit letter. Approved 4-0.

OLD BUSINESS

- **Solids Handling:** M. O'Neill stated the project has slowed down due to the climate. Miron was able to complete some of the scheduled spring work with the good December weather. The two buildings are up and weathered in. Electricians, mechanical workers, and carpenters are on site to continue interior construction. The MCC panels are expected to arrive in October. J. Compton asked if the underground work was completed. M. O'Neill stated it was not entirely completed and will continue in the spring. The new waste gas burner arrived, and it is much taller, at 25 feet, than the original. W. DeGroot



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asked if the project was still on schedule. M. O'Neill stated that it is on schedule with a completion date of December 2024. However, the delays of the MCC panels are causing concern and other ideas are being considered. S. Hobbins asked if we lose the Co-Gen units, are we concerned about pushing methane gas into the atmosphere. M. O'Neill stated that is why we flare it off. However, some communities capture it and use it in other ways.

- **Fire Alarm Project:** M. O'Neill stated the MCC panels have arrived. S&T has been on site every day. They will begin installing devices and the panels. J. Compton asked if there has been any discussion about a possible insurance reduction due to the fire alarm project. M. O'Neill said there has not but will look into it.

PUBLIC COMMENT

- None

BOARD COMMENT

- None

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 10:22 a.m.



Reviewed by:

Mark O'Neill

Director of Municipal Utilities

Prepared by:

Melissa Erkkila