



**MARQUETTE AREA WASTEWATER TREATMENT FACILITY  
ADVISORY BOARD MEETING MINUTES  
April 17, 2025**

A regular meeting of the Marquette Area Wastewater Treatment Facility Advisory Board was held at 10:01 a.m., April 17, 2025, at the Marquette Area Wastewater Treatment Plant.

**ROLL CALL**

**PRESENT** Leonard Bodenus, Marquette Township  
Greg Elliott, Chocolay Township  
Jim Compton, City of Marquette  
George Patrick, City of Marquette  
Sean Hobbins, City of Marquette

**ABSENT** Brad Johnson, Chocolay Township (Chair)

**OTHERS** Mark O'Neill, City of Marquette  
Melissa Erkkila, City of Marquette  
Mary Schlicht, City of Marquette

**AGENDA** It was moved by J. Compton, supported by S. Hobbins, to approve the agenda. Approved 5-0.

**MINUTES** It was moved by G. Patrick, supported by J. Compton, to approve the March 20, 2025, meeting minutes as written. Approved 5-0.

**FINANCIAL**

• **Financial Report**

M. Schlicht, City of Marquette, presented the Financial Report. M. Schlicht stated the report is as of March 31, 2025. We are halfway through the fiscal year. Any of the budget that is over 50% shows where we are at for trending. Of course, expenditures don't always happen smoothly. At this point, there is nothing of concern except for chemicals and professional services. M. O'Neill will address these today. There has been one off expenditures that have caused these to bump up some. Staff is keeping up with these needs and discussing appropriately if we need to make changes to this budget or next year's budget. M. O'Neill stated the chemical budget is generally \$170,000 each year and we usually come in around \$130,000. This allows a little leeway in case we need extra chemicals. We knew this year we would be adding a new chemical due to the new project.



M. O'Neill stated he expected approximately \$20,000 a year and decided to keep the budget the same as last year. We are using more of the chemical than we thought we would and it is more expensive than projected. The other issue is, due to a valve failure, we lost our bug population that biologically removes phosphorus. That required us to use the chemical backup to remove the phosphorus so we would not violate our permit. Due to that, we just ordered our third load, which is generally what we use in a year. We will definitely need to order one more load. This will cause us to go over in our chemical budget and adjustments will be made next year. M. O'Neill stated he did know that starting up the new plant process would require more chemicals, and he should have raised the budget to \$190,000. L. Bodenus asked how long it takes for the bug population to come back up. M. O'Neill stated it took about a month and the bugs are back. M. O'Neill stated when these bugs stop working, our phosphorus shoots up and we are on a monthly average. We must have 1 part per million or less on a monthly average per our permit. If we get three or four bad days, we will violate our permit. Staff consistently adds a small amount of this chemical for maintenance purposes. If we had it completely off and the phosphorus raised due to a bug issue, it would take several days for the chemical to take effect causing a permit violation.

M. Schlicht stated there was a question last month regarding how much is in the replacement fund. Prior to the purchase of the pump, the replacement fund had \$582,000 and that was before we added the additional \$300,000 contributed annually. M. O'Neill stated the project budget came in higher than anticipated and we were using the replacement fund to pay for that as agreed by the board. Our contingency fund was around \$600,000 and we have used around \$200,000. Once the project is closed, that money will be returned to the replacement fund.

J. Compton asked about the operations labor in the budget. M. Schlicht stated there are one-time payments coming out of that fund and it does not flow appropriately with the fiscal year.

G. Patrick asked about the professional services in the budget. M. Schlicht stated that annual expenditures are paid out of that. It is high because we have our SRF engineering costs going through there. The notes should be corrected from \$7,300 to \$123,902. This will be capitalized at the end of the year, which will reduce it to within budget.

## **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 March.



**PLANT NOTES:**

- S&T Electrical was on site to replace the step-down transformer that serves the laboratory. This unit had been making a loud buzzing noise for over two decades, and it finally got so bad that it needed to be replaced.
- We have begun to take loads of septage/FOG (fats, oil, grease). Currently, however, we are requiring the haulers to give us notice before they arrive until we are confident that the system is working the way we want it to work.
- We have been working closely with Donohue to eliminate problems and fine-tune operations with the Waste Receiving Station. I've compiled a list of controls-related issues, and Donohue's integrator/programmer, David Porter, was on site this week to resolve them.
- Matt Warner of JCI was on site to get our facility access system running. This included configuring the two cameras that are in our new belt press building (the last of our ten new cameras). G. Patrick asked what all the cameras are for. M. O'Neill stated cameras are around the plant to automate the system so staff can monitor the plant from a computer. Examples are at the belt press, in the cake storage area, yard, etc.
- Kraft was on site to perform regular maintenance on both CoGen units. There appears to be a definite reduction in the expected amount of wear on the engine components. This is most likely is due to our having dialed down the output setpoints by 5 kW. S. Hobbins asked if we should have had a larger engine installed. M. O'Neill stated that we do not have enough gas. One engine is running on biogas and the other is mostly ran on natural gas. The engines are designed to give out max 100 kW. We backed them off 5 kW to reduce wear.
- Kraft is also helping us chase down some random ignition system and power output problems we've been experiencing with the performance of the #2 unit.
- Staff installed a new oil recirculation pump in CoGen #1.
- The City's IT Department aided us in establishing the connections we needed for the new systems to communicate properly. Without their help, vital portions of the solids handling project would have been greatly delayed.
- Staff completed fabrication and installation of hoses and fittings for the hose stations in the new buildings.

**INDUSTRIAL WASTEWATER ACCEPTANCE ACTIVITY FOR MARCH 2025**

Source	Volume (gallons)	Total
Fabick/CAT	8,000	\$1,120.00
UPS	5,500	\$770.00
LS&I	20,700	\$2,898.00
Wisconsin Electric	38,000	\$1,520.00
<b>Grand Totals</b>	<b>72,200</b>	<b>\$6,308.00</b>



## Charter Township of Chocolay

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### NEW BUSINESS

- None

### OLD BUSINESS

#### a. Solids Handling Project

M. O'Neill stated this was discussed during the Operations Report.

### PUBLIC COMMENT

- None

### BOARD COMMENT

- S. Hobbins welcomed Chocolay Township Supervisor, Greg Elliott.

### ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 10:14 a.m.

Reviewed by:  
Mark O'Neill  
Director of Municipal Utilities

Prepared by:  
Melissa Erkkila