THE TOWN OF ANDREWS
Wastewater Improvement Project (WDW)
Public Hearing Minutes
October 12, 2016
6:00 P.M.

Public Hearing Opened at 6:00 P.M. at Andrews Town Hall, 66 N. Main Street, Andrews, IN 46702.

Those in Attendance:
Town Council: John Harshbarger (President), Bonnie Walker, & William "Bill" Johnson
Clerk-Treasurer: Laura Dillon
Utilities Superintendent: Colin Bullock
Region 3-A: Matt Brinkman & Shaun Tilghman
Project Manager: James McNulty (Strand Associates, Inc.)
Audience Members: David Walker, Jen Peryam (Herald-Press), Cheryl Chopson, & Tim Ness

Matt Brinkman: I am Matt Brinkman and I am a grant administrator with Region 3-A. We are assisting the Town of Andrews with a Community Development Block Grant (CDBG). The grant is for a wastewater improvement project. On October 14, 2016, the Town of Andrews will be applying to the Indiana Office of Community and Rural Affairs (OCRA) for federal funding from Housing and Urban Development (HUD).
The town is applying for the maximum amount available, which is $600,000. Of this, $312,600 will benefit low- and moderate-income persons. The maximum amount available is based on a sliding scale, which is determined based on sewer rates and the percentage of the town that is low- to moderate-income. We have completed our income survey and have received the results. The income survey found that 52.1% of the town is classified as low- to moderate-income.
The town anticipates providing an estimated $4,180,000 in matching funds towards the project. The local match portion will be in the form of a State Revolving Fund (SRF) loan.
This is the second public hearing, which we must complete before applications are due on October 14, 2016. The first public hearing took place back in August, prior to the letter of intent being submitted.
I would like to give a brief overview of the project. The improvements are for a wastewater project that includes the construction of two oxidation ditches, two new clarifiers, and a new disinfection structure. Also, there will be rehabilitation of existing headworks, digester, and administration building.
Jim McNulty from Strand is the project manager, and he will provide additional information in a moment.
The project will occur along right-of-ways and property owned by the Town of Andrews at the wastewater treatment plant and an adjoining property. It is anticipated that no displacement of persons will occur. However, the town will provide a displacement plan.
Laura, have you received any written comments since the release of the legal notice?

Laura Dillon: We have not.

Matt Brinkman: I would like to provide an overview of the grant scoring criteria. This is a competitive grant with a total possible of 600 points available. We must achieve a minimum of 300 points to be eligible. Points are achieved in four ways: project design, distress score, local match, and gap score.
The project design category is worth 300 points. The breakdown of this is 50 points for description of the project, 125 points for project need, and 125 for financial impact. One way to achieve a better score in this area is by evidence of need. I will be opening up for comments shortly and those will be part of the meeting minutes that will be submitted with the application. We would also like to submit letters of support from residents affected by the project. If you would like to submit a letter, I ask that you email it to me by noon tomorrow so that we can include it in the application.
The distress score category has a maximum available of 175 points. This score is based on the distress score calculated by Indiana University for the town. There is nothing we can do to impact this score within the application. The factors that go into a community distress score are percentage of households with income under poverty level, median household income, percentage of housing units that are vacant, median home value, unemployment rate, and labor force participation. The distress score for the Town of Andrews is 115.26.
The local match area has a maximum available of 100 points. For each percent of the project that is funded through local match you get a point, up to 75 points. Our project would be funded at 87% local match.
The final category is gap score and 25 points are available in this area. This will be determined by OCRA. The calculation on this is related to the impact on sewer rates if the town gets the grant versus if we don't get the grant.

At this time, I would like to ask Jim McNulty from Strand to speak on the project. Jim, I gave a brief description on the project. Would you like to make any additions or corrections regarding the project?

Jim McNulty: Thank you. Again, I'm Jim McNulty, I'm with Strand, and I'm the project manager and I've been working on this project for quite a while.

The primary need for the proposed project is based on the inadequate redundancy within each treatment process and the failure of most current processes to meet design standards. The existing plant has failed to meet limits established in the Town's discharge permit on a number of occasions. The failure of the plant to meet discharge permit limits has negatively impacted the water quality of the Wabash River.

The screening facilities, oxidation ditch, and digester lack redundancy that is needed to perform proper maintenance of each process. This lack of the ability to perform proper maintenance has resulted in the two aerators in the oxidation ditch becoming non-operational and only one operational clarifier at times due to lack of parts availability. Further, the manual bar rack at the headworks is a confined space safety issue because it requires an operator to climb down into the existing channel to provide the necessary routine cleaning of the bar screen so that it does not clog and create an overflow event that bypasses all screening.

Additional need for the project is demonstrated by the existing wastewater treatment plant equipment that has reached the end of its useful life. Typically, mechanical equipment such as pumps, blowers, and motors can be relied upon for between 15 to 20 years. The existing wastewater treatment plant was constructed in 1984. At this time, the existing plant still uses the original equipment, with the exception of one raw wastewater pump that has been replaced with a new Flygt pump. This is an issue when equipment begins to breakdown. Old equipment is more likely to breakdown and more likely to cause problems when trying to obtain replacement parts that are likely no longer manufactured. The Town is encountering this problem currently with both of the aeration drive motors and a clarifier drive and motor out of service due to lack of parts. Due to their age, it is difficult to quickly repair and return to service each piece of the old mechanical equipment.

The Town has installed temporary circulation and aeration equipment in the oxidation ditch to temporarily treat the wastewater while improvements are planned. The temporary measures are not providing complete, adequate treatment, putting the Town at risk of additional regulatory violations until permanent improvements are made.

As a result of the physical age of the plant and repeated permit violations, the Town has been issued a proposed Agreed Order from the Indiana Department of Environmental Management that lists areas where the plant is not in compliance. The Town has responded to the Agreed Order with a proposed compliance plan that includes plant improvements.

A preliminary engineering report has been prepared by Strand Associates, through a grant from the Office of Community and Rural Affairs. The report evaluated five alternatives:

Alternative 1 was to do "no action" at the plant, but that will not correct plant deficiencies and was not considered further.

Alternative 2 considered was to pump the wastewater to the City of Huntington. This option was also considered but was dismissed due to extensive right-of-way requirements to put in the pipe to get to Huntington.

Alternative 3 was to rehabilitate the existing wastewater treatment plant. Under this alternative, we would construct one new oxidation ditch and rehabilitate the existing oxidation ditch, add two clarifiers, a new RAS/WAS pump station, add new disinfection, add new headworks, and administration building rehabilitation. That was Alternative 3, and it was dismissed due to the age and size of the existing oxidation ditch and the clarifiers. So, we went on to look at another alternative, which was Alternative 4.

With Alternative 4 we looked at constructing a new Aeromod wastewater treatment plant. This alternative would construct a complete, new package plant on site using this Aeromod-type of treatment plant. It was dismissed because the way wastewater is treated would change dramatically from the way it is right now. So, that was not a preferred option.

Alternative 5, the last option, and the one we ended up going with, was to construct a new oxidation ditch wastewater treatment plant. This alternative would construct two new oxidation ditches, two clarifiers, a new RAS/WAS pump station, new disinfection and headworks, and administration building rehabilitation and other miscellaneous items. And this was the preferred option.

So, our selected alternative, which was the new oxidation ditch plant, would consist of rehabilitating the existing headworks, digester, and administration building. Additionally, two new oxidation ditches would be constructed and the old one would be demolished. Two new clarifiers would also be constructed, along with the RAS/WAS pump station, a new scum decant manhole, and disinfection/post-aeration structures would be constructed. Finally, the existing clarifiers, and flow measurement processes, would either be rehabilitated or they would be demolished. And I'll go into a little bit more detail while we're into that.

The existing headworks rehabilitation would involve addressing safety issues by adding a mechanical fine screen, which helps separate out the fine material that comes into the plant. We would remove the existing grit process, we would be replacing the influent pumps, and removing the existing above-ground building and replacing it with a new concrete block building to contain the electrical equipment and blowers. So, there would be rehabilitation of that existing headworks.
The mechanical fine screen and influent pumps would be sized to handle flows up to 1.4 million gallons per day.
The new oxidation ditches would be what we call a carousel-type construction. The total volume of the ditches would be approximately 200,000 gallons based on your influent biological oxygen demand loading of 300 pounds per day.
The new clarification process would include two 32-foot diameter clarifiers with about 14-foot side water depth. This size would allow for clarification of peak hourly flows with surface overflow rates that meet current Ten States Standards for design. The new RAS/WAS pump station and scum decant structures would be built to be hydraulically compatible with the clarifiers.
The existing clarifiers, that are being used now at the existing plant, will be repurposed as digesters by taking the mechanical equipment out and adding aeration equipment to those so that they're repurposed for that function.
The disinfection, post-aeration, and flow measurement processes would all be combined into one structure. The disinfection process would receive new equipment and will likely change to ultra violet disinfection to get away from chlorine disinfection. We'll also add a six-inch flume, which is a flow measurement device to perform accurate flow measurement. At the end of that, cascade aeration would be provided to satisfy post-aeration requirements. Basically, water just cascades over a series of steps and aerates the process, so you get aeration before you discharge to the river.
Finally, the administration building would receive updates to include new HVAC units, potentially new windows, along with some new lab equipment as well, to kind of bring that to current standards and make it more useable to the staff.
The improvements in Alternative 5 are currently under design and expected to be completed by the end of 2016.
The improvement design will address issues identified in the Agreed Order that are related to the mechanical condition of the plant. This will improve the water quality of the Wabash River due to the plant meeting the permit discharge limits. The new headworks fine screen and other improvements will reduce the frequency for confined space entry and improve overall safety of Andrews' staff. The residents of Andrews will benefit from a wastewater plant that is both more efficient and will be less costly to maintain.
That's all I have.

Matt Brinkman: At this time, I will now open it up for public comments. Since this is a public hearing we need to document those that speak – if you do comment, please state your name before speaking. Are there any comments?

David Walker: My name is David Walker. I'm a resident here in Andrews. I have Social Security and a pension – I'm retired. As you well know, Social Security has not kept up with the cost of living; we haven't had a raise…well it hasn't been raised in several years really. And once it goes up, something comes along to take what you're getting away. Since I'm on a fixed income, basically, paying higher water bills or sewer bills is going to drastically crimp my standard of living because I don't have any income. So, I definitely am for some kind of grant to help defray some of the costs.

Matt Brinkman: Any other comments, questions, concerns?
I know this is the second time we've applied for the grant application, so we've had our fourth public hearing on this now overall. So, I know we have generated a lot of comments in all those meetings, and we do have letters of support. But again, if you haven't written a letter and you'd like to, I just ask that you submit that to me by tomorrow at noon.
If there's nothing else, we'll close out the public hearing.

Public Hearing Closed at 6:17 P.M.

Minutes submitted by:

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Matt Brinkman, Director of Housing
Region 3-A Development & RPC