

Coraopolis Water & Sewer Authority
Allegheny County, Pennsylvania
Regular Meeting
April 16, 2024
6:00 PM

The Meeting was called to order by the Authority President John Schombert.

A Roll Call of Members was then taken.

PRESENT

Robb Cardimen
Karl Groom
Charles Spencer
John Schombert

ABSENT

George Mihalyi

ALSO, PRESENT

Rich Deems – Superintendent
Drew Null – Authority Engineer
Devanté Miles – Authority Engineer
Bailey Gilchrest – Solicitor
Raymond McCutcheon – Manager

Mr. Schombert asked if there were any questions on the Agenda, being none, the meeting continued.

Mr. Schombert said we have a lot of people here today over the flooding that occurred last week and asked for Mr. Deems to give his observations.

Mr. Deems said on April 2nd there was a storm that brought several inches of rain that caused Thorn Run to jump its banks and come down 4th Avenue. At that time there was no property damage and it was all contained to the street. We cleaned the grates off. The majority of them have bicycle safe grates that are meant and designed to keep trash out, but they cannot handle the leaves flowing down the road from the stream. Last Thursday the same thing happened around 5:00 p.m. and we had it contained and handled within a half an hour, but unfortunately, another storm came behind it around 8:00 and we just couldn't handle that. At Howard Street that stream jumped over the banks and ran through the yard 1-2 days out onto Rt. 51. It isn't that our infrastructure failed, it is the streams jumped out of the banks and brought debris with them and plugged everything up. He continued to explain and a discussion pursued.

Mr. Schombert said Thorn Run Watershed primarily is in Moon Township and discharges at the lower end before it gets to the river and that small portion is the only part in Coraopolis. The heavy flow is coming from Moon Township and that along with the restrictions and conveyance part of that we need

to address with others. It is private property and in Moon Township. We need to have Moon Township involved in a solution as we move forward and he continued to explain.

Mr. McCutcheon said I met with the property owner in Moon Township who is right at 4th Avenue and Thorn, and then I contacted Moon's Manager to set up a meeting. They think that we need to dredge Thorn Run and I know that we will need approval from the DEP before we can do anything like that and a discussion pursued.

Public Comments

Mr. Larry Walker from 724 4th Avenue said the night of the 11th we had three feet of water in our basement. We lost our furnace, hot water heater, washer and dryer along with many personal belongings and no one from Coraopolis Borough knocked on our door to ask if we were okay. Neville Island VFD came by and pumped out the water and what discourages me is the lack of concern and he continued to explain.

Mr. Spencer said Neville Island responds on all calls in Coraopolis and we respond to all calls on Neville. They stayed to pump out basements while we were helping the Street Department get the storm drains open. There was nothing we could do about the basements until the storm drains were opened and get that water out of the street. He continued to explain and a discussion pursued.

Mr. Anthony Lucci of 904 Ridge Avenue said we had so much rain and my house is built where my sewer line goes level with the trap outside and the main sewer from outside came in and I had six inches of water all over the place in my cellar and he continued to explain. I would like for the Borough to come and take the carpet out down there and a discussion pursued.

Mr. Schombert said under County regulations we have a responsibility to make sure there isn't a health hazard there, not take care of the damage to furniture or anything else and he continued to explain.

Mr. Deems said it wasn't a back up from the main, it was his lateral. His house is high on a hill and there is no way we could have backed him up without the lower side of the street.

Mr. Schombert said we have an obligation to make sure there isn't a health hazard here so if we can, let's take responsibility for getting his rug out of there and disposed of properly.

Ms. Amanda Willich of 712 4th Avenue said the drain in the alley way clogs constantly. I find it hard to believe that the drains were functioning properly during the storms. We pay the annual stormwater fee, where is that money going for? Why are we always having these problems?

Mr. Schombert said the stormwater fee covers the maintenance of the storm system. The primary use of it is that the DEP mandated items that we have to do for storm water quality. We have been lucky to get some grant money along with this fee to do work on Brook Street and McCabe Run as part of our compliance responsibility to the DEP and he continued to explain.

Mr. Deems said that catch basin is on our list to be replaced. There are combined sewer inlets that are tributary to a sanitary sewer and unfortunately that alley is a combined sewer and is totally separate from the 4th Avenue problem. 4th Avenue is strictly stormwater that goes straight to the river so it's two separate systems and a discussion pursued.

Mr. Doug Johnston of 1032 Hiland Avenue said I want to address the issue with the catch basins at the end of Rose Avenue. There are two catch basins there at the end of Rose Avenue and the problem is there is a private driveway going to the houses behind those that is gravel. Any time we get a lot of rain

the gravel washes down and fills the catch basins. They need better maintained and cleaned out. One catch basin is completely filled and the drain closest to our property actually drains across the road into the other one and only a four-inch pipe comes out of both catch basins which is hardly sufficient for the amount of water that comes off that hill during a heavy rain and he continued to explain. Mr. Johnston said something needs done to take a look at it. Thanks to Public Works and Water and Sewer Authority for coming up today.

Mr. Schombert said we have had the engineer there to look at some options; we can't go onto private property.

Mr. Johnston said I believe the catch basin is on Borough property.

Mr. Deems said no, they are both on private property and a discussion pursued.

Ms. Morgan Amber from 914 1/2 Fleming Street said my yard and basement floods from Rose Avenue. I have lived here for years and it keeps getting worse. I spent \$30,000.00 to redo my yard properly with grading and french drains to avoid this and it still continues to flood. The catch basin on Rose Avenue is paved there, didn't the Borough pave that part of the road?

Mr. Deems said the Borough paved from Fleming down. There is a telephone pole that is roughly the boundary area. The Borough did install that catch basin to help alleviate water coming down from Rose Avenue, but it is on private property and a discussion pursued.

Mr. Schombert said we know we need to look into a long-term solution so this is on our agenda.

Mr. Dan Huit of 716 4th Avenue said I guess our real goal is to fix the creek. I actually know Valerie Gaydos so I'll call her on my way home and contact Anita Kulik and push this and a discussion pursued.

Mr. Austin Willich from 712 4th Avenue said a lot of stuff that I heard from you guys is that a lot of stuff is getting in the drains. If that is our big issue, what can we do to mitigate that?

Mr. Spencer said with that creek and the way it was flowing the other night, we had tree trunks coming down it.

Mr. Cardimen said every piece of trash in that Thorn Run Valley from the Pittsburgh National Airport to 4th Avenue is coming down.

Mr. Willich said I guess what I'm saying is we are having just a bunch of stuff end up there and it frustrates us all. If you walk down the street there is always trash everywhere and the best way to mitigate that is just have an option for someone. If I see a trash can within ten feet, I'll be more likely to use it than walk away so I'm wondering if something like that be an option? The other side of this is we don't in Coraopolis offer a weekly or biweekly during the summer grass trimmings, tree pieces pick up as far as curb side goes and that's what I usually see in the storm drains.

Mr. Schombert said Waste Management will pick up if they are bagged properly and a discussion pursued.

Mr. Schombert said I have made a couple of phone calls to the Council of Governments looking to better connect us with them. They offer a lot of options for equipment and manpower that we can partner together with Moon and he continued to explain.

Mr. Clarence Sellers of 1227 Vance Avenue said is this a money problem that we have? If so, is there any infrastructure money available in order to do any of this cleanup?

Mr. Schombert said the infrastructure money probably wouldn't be fast enough to do the kind of cleanup that we need. We have received grants to stabilize the streambank on McCabe Run.

Mr. Sellers said does it take time to get that infrastructure money?

Mr. Schombert said yes. I think our best bet is that Moon Township has to do better with stormwater management there from a water quality standpoint. There is also the issue of people dumping stuff like tires into the streambanks and continued to explain. Mr. Schombert said Waste Management picks up in both Coraopolis and Moon Township and they have special pickups for some of this.

Mr. McCutcheon said the Borough pays Waste Management to pick up E-waste and hazardous household materials. All anyone has to do is call Waste Management and they'll set up a date to pick up televisions, paint, chemicals and a discussion pursued.

Mr. Schombert said we have an email from Shane Sweeny of 1024 Buckingham Place requesting the Excessive Use Policy due to a tub leak and hot water heater issues causing the high bill.

Mr. Deems said we did a check reading today and it looks like it is back to the 8000/quarter mark.

Mr. Spencer made a motion to approve the Excessive Use Policy for Shane Sweeny of 1024 Buckingham Place. Mr. Groom seconded the motion.

APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY BY VOICE VOTE.

Mr. Deems said there is a second part of her email requesting that the deposit be waived. I don't think we can do that without changing our policy and a discussion pursued.

Mr. Schombert said we have a letter from Greystone Theological of 1305 State Avenue and it looks like they had problems with relief valves and a hot water tank problem.

Mr. Deems said I am not sure what it was, but we did do an MXU interval reading today and the last 35 days have been normal.

Mr. Groom made a motion to approve the Excessive Use Policy for Greystone Theological at 1305 State Avenue. Mr. Spencer seconded the motion.

APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY BY VOICE VOTE.

Mr. Bradley Phelps from 629 5th Avenue said I was here previously in regards to the excessive use. Mr. Deems was there and there are no visible problems; not the toilets, sinks, outdoor outlets or anything. My bill went from an average of \$340.00 to \$1,300.00. The house was empty and it was still at \$1,300.00.

Mr. Schombert said we like to know what caused it. I had a plumber there three times and Mr. Deems there once.

Mr. Deems said there are only a couple of toilets there. We did change the meter, but even before we changed the meter, the usage stopped. I have no idea what happened here, but it doesn't appear to be occurring still.

Mr. Cardimen made a motion to approve the Excessive Use Policy for Bradley Phelps at 629 5th Avenue.

Mr. Spencer seconded the motion.

APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY BY VOICE VOTE.

Mr. Schombert said we received an Excessive Use Policy request from the Presbyterian Church at 1201 5th Avenue saying they addressed the problem with a plumbing company.

Mr. Deems said they made some changes to toilets and sinks. I think they may still have something small going on, but it is nowhere near as bad.

Mr. Groom made a motion to approve the Excessive Use Policy for the Presbyterian Church at 1201 5th Avenue. Mr. Cardimen seconded the motion.

APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY BY VOICE VOTE.

Mr. Cardimen made a motion to approve the minutes from the March 19, 2024 Authority Meeting. Mr. Spencer seconded the motion.

APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY BY VOICE VOTE.

Mr. Cardimen made a motion to approve the minutes from the April 12, 2024 Special Meeting. Mr. Spencer seconded the motion.

APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY BY VOICE VOTE.

Mr. Cardimen made a motion to approve the Water Department Invoices for April 2024 in the amount of \$41,234.21. Mr. Groom seconded the motion.

APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY BY VOICE VOTE.

Mr. Spencer made a motion to approve the Sewer Department invoices for April 2024 in the amount of \$45,160.08 which includes the Riverview Sanitary fee of \$39,383.00. Mr. Cardimen seconded the motion.

APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY BY VOICE VOTE.

Mr. Cardimen made a motion to approve the Stormwater invoices for April 2024 in the amount of \$5,143.01. Mr. Spencer seconded the motion.

APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY BY VOICE VOTE.

Mr. Drew Null said we have a final reimbursement request in the amount of \$1,473.25 which is a couple of months of engineering and getting the closing documents for the Main Street Project. This should be the last one and I will notify PENNVEST to start the close out.

Mr. Cardimen made a motion to approve the reimbursement request from PENNVEST, Payment No. 11 (Final) in the amount of \$1,473.25. Mr. Groom seconded the motion.

APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY BY VOICE VOTE.

Mr. Schombert asked for a motion to approve Invoice No. 1507 in the amount of \$13,400.00 to Atlantic Underwater Services, Inc. for tank inspection services.

Mr. Null said the original proposal was for \$19,700.00 and they are asking for \$13,400.00 so they did come under significantly due to less cleaning being required. We have asked for a copy of the inspection report and TV footage, but haven't received it as of yet.

Mr. McCutcheon said you can approve it and we'll hold it until Mr. Null and Mr. Deems give us the okay.

Mr. Groom made a motion to approve Invoice No. 1507 in the amount of \$13,400.00 to Atlantic Underwater Services, Inc. for tank inspection services. Mr. Cardimen seconded the motion.

APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY BY VOICE VOTE.

MANAGER'S REPORT

Mr. McCutcheon said Water Rentals are at 25% which is where we expect to be after three months. The expenditures are at 20.6% so we are positive by \$24,000.00 year to date for water.

Mr. McCutcheon said Sewer Financials we are 25% on the sewer rentals. Expenditures are at 22.3% so we are favorable \$5,080.00 year to date.

Mr. McCutcheon said Stormwater Financials; we are starting to get the stormwater fees in and are up to \$129,000.00 for the year which is about 32% and he continued to explain.

Mr. Schombert said what is the total we would expect?

Mr. McCutcheon said around \$400,000.00 and he continued to explain.

Mr. McCutcheon said just today I got the forms from Paychex to do the unemployment compensation and the amount is \$2480.48. We have to pay this by the end of April and it wasn't on the agenda.

Mr. Spencer made a motion to approve payment for PSAB Unemployment Compensation in the amount of \$2480.48. Mr. Groom seconded the motion.

APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY BY VOICE VOTE.

ENGINEER'S REPORT

Mr. Drew Null directed everyone to the Monthly Engineering Report and said Water System Needs Assessment: there is nothing to report this evening.

Mr. Drew Null said Grant Applications; we do have several; the Flood Mitigation Grant is due at the end of May and I did not bring a resolution this evening. I believe there is discussion relative to the storm pumps on the Superintendents report for this evening and a discussion pursued.

Mr. Drew Null said Developments; we did send letters to Developers requesting status updates.

Mr. Drew Null said Water System Items; the request for reimbursement with PENNVEST was authorized this evening. We will get that submitted to PENNVEST and process close out.

Mr. Drew Null said Neely Heights; we are working to get this out to bid.

Mr. Drew Null said Lead Service Inventory; we have a resident questionnaire developed and I'll send that out and he continued to explain.

Mr. Drew Null said Well Cleaning; we reached out to the DEP and they are now looking for public water supply permits for well cleaning.

Mr. Drew Null said Sanitary Sewer System Items; the Long-Term Control Plan. We received comments from Moon and got them addressed, we believe they have been resolved and now trying to get a status update from them.

Mr. Drew Null said Storm Sewer System Items; there is nothing new to report with MS4 and no new updates from the DEP. Interns will be out in the next month or two that will start the outfall screenings.

SUPERINTENDENT REPORT

Mr. Rich Deems stated the total water produced for March 2024 was 9.2M gallons. The average system daily demand was 307,000 gallons per day. There was no change to the status of Euclid and Grace.

Water System

Mr. Rich Deems said we replaced both service lines including the corporation stops at the main and the curb stops for 510 and 512 Hiland Ave. We dug them up looking for the leak and all four valves were leaking. Afterwards we put our leak loggers back out and verified that a leak was no longer detected.

Mr. Rich Deems said we ordered a new spectrophotometer for the lab at the Water Plant, ours is obsolete so Hach would no longer support or repair it and he continued to explain.

Sanitary Sewage System

Mr. Rich Deems said the garage that was built at 1224 4th Avenue the plumber did complete the work for the wye replacement last week so the road restoration is the only thing left.

Mr. Rich Deems said we attempted to do a time of sale dye test at 1205 State Avenue but unfortunately were not able to complete the test because the sewer was backed up. We are pretty sure that all of the downspouts were tied in. The plumber has been there to unclog the sewer so that part has been fixed.

Storm System

Mr. Deems said we have already discussed the flooding on 4th Avenue and the stream running along Howard St.

Mr. Deems said the flood pumps; for the April 2nd storm the river was higher than this past week so we opted to operate those because the river level was reaching the CSO level. If it is above the CSO pipe at Main Street we can no longer bypass then we have a risk of backing up into basements. Initially we turned both augers on, they both operate and pump it down and then we turn one off and leave one run. During the course of the night the one running failed which resulted in a much higher level than what we wanted to see. H & L Electric came to trouble shoot and the one in the lag wouldn't operate due to a bad control transformer, but we were able to bypass the control transformer and to get that one to operate. He continued to explain and a discussion pursued.

Mr. Deems said I recommend we do the generator and not wait for a possible grant and a discussion pursued.

Mr. Deems said the McCabe Run stream bank stabilization project doesn't look good.

Mr. Cardimen said there are quite a few issues here, there is more of this stream gone now than ever.

Mr. Null said we sent people out to review it, but I haven't got the report back yet. We are still under bond so I will reach out to the contractor and have him look at it and a discussion pursued.

Mr. McCutcheon said I want to complement Mr. Deems for all of his hard work during the flood and he continued to explain.

SOLICITOR'S REPORT

Ms. Bailey Gilchrist said regarding the PFAS litigation Attorney Tucceri let me know that the Special Meeting was held where a settlement was authorized with and you named a class rep with Tyco for the overall settlement of \$750M. This is overall, not just for us, there are other companies involved. We now will go through the settlement process.

OLD BUSINESS

Mr. McCutcheon will the State or Federal help some of these people with their losses?
Mr. Schombert said not in my experience and a discussion pursued.

NEW BUSINESS

There was no New Business.

CORRESPONDENCE

Mr. McCutcheon said I received a letter from Philip Ameris from the Local 1058 and they are ready to start negotiating. The contract expires December 31st and he continued to explain.

Mr. Cardimen made a motion to go into Executive Session. Mr. Spencer seconded the motion.
APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY BY VOICE VOTE.

Mr. Cardimen made a motion to come out of Executive Session. Mr. Spencer seconded the motion.
APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY BY VOICE VOTE.

Mr. Cardimen made a motion to adjourn. Mr. Spencer seconded the motion.
APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY BY VOICE VOTE.

MEETING ADJOURNED