

**UTILITIES SERVICE BOARD MEETING**  
**10/9/2023**

***Utilities Service Board meetings are available at CATSTV.net.***

**CALL TO ORDER**

Board President Burnham called the regular meeting of the Utilities Service Board to order at 5:00 p.m. The meeting took place in the Utilities Service Boardroom at the City of Bloomington Utilities Service Center, 600 East Miller Drive, Bloomington, Indiana.

**Board members present:** Amanda Burnham, Megan Parmenter, Jeff Ehman, Seth Debro, Jim Sherman, Kirk White, Molly Stewart, Ex Officio Scott Robinson

**Board members absent:** Ex Officio Jim Sims

**Staff present:** Vic Kelson, Michelle Waldon, Chris Wheeler, Kat Zaiger, Liz Carter, Caden Swanson, Matt Dabertin, Nolan Hendon, Dan Hudson, James Hall, Jane Fleig, Daniel Frank

**Guests present:** Michelle Cohen, Jane Martin

**PETITIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS:**

Executive director of the Lake Monroe Water Fund (LMWF) - Cohen provided a brief presentation outlining the LMWF. The organization is based on a framework initiated by The Nature Conservancy, where downstream users of water invest in upstream solutions - often nature-based - to protect water quality and quantity. Their fund started in 2021 and is the 43rd worldwide, 13th in the US, and the first in Indiana. Cohen highlighted a few projects, including willow staking and native tree planting along Clay Lick Creek in Brown County. LMWF also runs a septic cost-share program in Brown County to help residents afford septic system maintenance. Residents within the Brown County watershed can go to the Conservation District office and present receipts that they've either completed pumping, an inspection, or the installation of a riser in their septic system. LMWF has funded fifty \$200 cost share reimbursements for those residents. The organization aims to address the septic system replacement issue and has received a grant for that purpose. They are also working on an application for a \$24,000 grant to the US Forest Service to support invasive removal and native tree planting. The funding provided by Utilities has resulted in a \$3.60 return for every dollar invested, and LMWF is working on securing more grants, which could increase the return to \$15.40. LMWF also accounted for the value of in-kind volunteer time, which raises the return to \$16.50 for every dollar invested. Board member Stewart questioned the relationship between native planting of trees and plants with water quality in the area. Cohen explained that native species of plants and trees create a deeper, more robust root network that helps prevent erosion along with capturing and holding more moisture from rainfall.

**MINUTES**

***Parmenter moved, and Board member Debro seconded the motion to approve the minutes of the 9/25 meeting. Motion carried, seven ayes.***

## **CLAIMS**

### **Standard Invoices Question**

Board member Ehman noted the charge for The Etica Group, Inc. being applied entirely to Wastewater and acknowledged the site's former use as a wastewater plant, but questioned at what point would charges toward that property be applied to accounts other than Wastewater. CBU Director - Kelson advised that until the completion of the demolition project that is currently being planned, charges will remain Wastewater only. Once the project is complete, charges pertaining to the site will be charged to both Water and Wastewater.

### ***Parmenter moved, and Debro seconded the motion to approve the Standard Invoices:***

Vendor invoices included \$256,043.57 from the Water Fund, \$217,185.79 from the Wastewater Fund, and \$21,201.30 from the Stormwater Fund.

***Motion carried, seven ayes. Total claims approved: \$494,437.17.***

### ***Parmenter moved, and Debro seconded the motion to approve the Utility Bills:***

Invoices included \$5,492.62 from the Water Fund and \$6,427.40 from the Wastewater Fund.

***Motion carried, seven ayes. Total claims approved: \$11,920.02.***

### ***Parmenter moved, and Debro seconded the motion to approve the Wire Transfers, Fees, and Payroll for \$543,277.03. Motion carried, seven ayes.***

### ***Parmenter moved, and Debro seconded the motion to approve the Customer***

***Refunds:*** Customer Refunds included \$28.22 from the Water Fund and \$4,346.59 from the Wastewater Fund.

***Motion carried, seven ayes. Total refunds approved: \$4,374.81.***

## **CONSENT AGENDA**

Kelson presented the following item recommended by staff for approval:

- a.) Xylem Water Solutions USA, Inc., \$15,174.29, Repair of high service pump #5

**Consent Agenda approved as presented. Total approved: \$15,174.29**

## **REQUEST APPROVAL OF MOU FOR E. MORNINGSIDE DRIVE GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE**

CBU Assistant Director - Environmental - Zaiger presented the MOU with City of Bloomington Engineering to fund a Green Infrastructure project on Morningside Dr., specifically to install two rain gardens in the area. Parmenter, noting her experience in the selection process for Residential Stormwater Grants, questioned if the infrastructure being installed would be addressing any of the issues outlined by residents in the neighborhood. Parmenter also questioned if CBU has taken steps to ensure that the installation of this infrastructure will not cause issues for other residents in the area. Zaiger advised that this will not cause more issues for other residents in the area. This project is designed to capture runoff from the street that

would otherwise flow to gray infrastructure and is geared more towards water quality and only a slight improvement in quantity.

***Parmenter moved, and Debro seconded the motion to the MOU for E. Morningside Drive Green Infrastructure. Motion carried, seven ayes.***

#### **OLD BUSINESS:**

CBU Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System(MS4) Coordinator - Carter provided an update regarding Title 13. Carter advised that comments were closed the previous week, and CBU received comments from several departments along with several Board members. At the request of City of Bloomington Planning, CBU changed the language of 13.04.040 which had been Subdivision Standards to Regional Detention. Planning rightly pointed out that Subdivisions are under the purview of a Planning Department so instead of calling it Subdivision Standards, CBU is encouraging Regional Detention and providing guidelines on how to accomplish that. CBU also added sections to 13.05 to mimic the permit in 13.05.04 regarding erosion and pollutant control requirements. This relates to CBU staff visiting construction sites to check compliance, and provides a checklist of requirements along with additional guidance from the State in their section of this permit that will be added for clarification. City of Bloomington Engineering requested clarification on requirements for when they will and won't need to be in compliance, and CBU is working to address this issue for not only Engineering, but Public Works and Utilities projects as well. Burnham questioned when CBU would like updated comments for the most recently released draft of Title 13. Carter advised that CBU has requested to receive those comments and questions by October 18th. CBU plans to meet with City Engineering on October 19th and Public Works at a time to be determined, but prior to the release of the next draft on October 20th. Ehman questioned how CBU generally wishes to address leaves exiting a site either in a water course or via sheet flow to an off-site, and what's the overriding approach to that concern. Carter advised that in the 13.03 section on Illicit Discharge, CBU states that a leaf or a twig that is naturally introduced is exempt. Illicit Discharge is geared more towards targeting someone who is intentionally introducing a pollutant or blockage into the MS4. Carter noted a comment in 13.06.050 concerning Private Property Duties, which states that if debris or other obstacles are allowed to accumulate and impact the MS4, CBU can enforce a penalty. Sherman noted that this year, many Bloomington residents may likely be unaware that leaf collection will not be taking place. Since they are unaware they'll likely still rake their leaves to the roadway and interfere with the water course. Carter noted that raking leaves into a ditch and creating a blockage is already considered illicit discharge and changes to the ordinance are not needed for that to be an enforceable action. If leaves being raked into the street create a water course issue, then CBU will be the department to handle the issue. Sherman noted that years ago the City attempted to lessen the amount of leaves being vacuumed by providing free lawn bags to residents, and questioned if that had been considered. City Legal Assistant - Wheeler advised that he is unaware if that option was being considered. Carter noted that the information distributed by the City regarding fall leaves directs residents to either Sanitation or Public Works, and either of those departments should be able to provide more information. Ehman questioned, regarding Title 13, who determines rainfall event size. Zaiger advised that CBU is specifically using National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) - Atlas 14 model and will switch to Atlas 15 model once it is fully established. Ehman

questioned if this was simply modeled precipitation based on radar readings. Zaiger advised yes, the NOAA model is considered one of the most accurate. Ehman questioned if the data provided by the service is spatially specific enough to determine if the threshold for a specific site has been met, especially given the variability of rainfall events in the area. Zaiger noted that the requirement is listed in the Construction Stormwater General Permit, so it is specifically up to the contractor to monitor the rainfall on their site. CBU will typically check construction sites after any significant rain event in Bloomington. Ehman noted that if there are specific guidelines of ½" to 1-½" citations, then CBU will need to follow those guidelines. Zaiger advised that an option would be citing NOAA as the source for rainfall data that will be used for enforcement of the ordinance. Ehman suggested adding a Best Practices to the Stormwater Design Manual, along with stating how the thresholds are determined in order to promote clarity with developers. Carter noted that CBU can go onsite and review inspection logs within 48 hours of a rain event to ensure that they are performing the proper inspections to maintain their job site. Ex Officio and Director - City of Bloomington Planning - Robinson noted that his department oversees Title 20 and Title 13 will potentially impact the former. Robinson wanted to reiterate the importance of referencing definitions from Title 20 to avoid confusion. If CBU has specific issues with certain definitions, Robinson will defer and amend in Title 20 and not conflict in Title 13. Robinson also wished to address another area of coordination regarding consistency of the Unified Development Ordinance (UDO) regarding incentives for affordable housing and sustainable development. CBU offers an incentive payment for some green infrastructure and Robinson wants to ensure that both parties are incentivizing the same things. Robinson noted another area of concern is the Stormwater Design Manual, specifically regarding who reviews and approves that manual. Robinson stressed the need to review this document to ensure that it also maintains consistency across departments. Carter noted that she will look into potential conflicts of the sustainable development Incentives. Burnham thanked Robinson for his comments and seconded the importance of maintaining consistency and clarity between ordinances across each Department. Carter advised that the Stormwater Design Manual will be brought to the USB for approval. There will likely be several iterations of the document and CBU welcomes comments from Engineering, Planning, and any other department that would like to participate. CBU is meeting with a plan review consultant in the coming weeks to develop a first draft.

**NEW BUSINESS:** Burnham wished to thank the Customer Service group for the thank you card that was received regarding the lunch provided during Customer Service Appreciation Week.

**SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS:** None

**STAFF REPORTS:**

Kelson noted the following:

- Tyler Steury took over the role of Superintendent at the Blucher Poole Wastewater Plant.
- Melissa Ruszkowski received certification as an Underground Storage Tank Operator from IDEM
- Board member White emailed regarding CBU emergency planning. Kelson advised that plans are in the works, but it is a very busy period of the year and it may be January

before this can be completed. CBU performed tabletop exercises several years in the past and it is certainly time to perform them again given that there are new staff members in leadership roles.

- The recurring taste and odor issue has returned later than expected this year. The Monroe Water Treatment Plant switched to activated carbon derived from coconut several months ago, and while the taste and odor issue has lessened compared to last year, it is still an issue. CBU is continuing efforts to determine what specific variables cause the taste and odor issues. CBU is looking at potentially monitoring in the lake to see the distribution of things in the water column and the presence or absence of algae at different elevations, along with other potential options for managing it. CBU is considering the addition of some type of post-treatment filtration prior to water being distributed, though it is an expensive option. Kelson noted that it will not take many instances of taste and odor issues before customers will start switching to bottled water, and that is something CBU hopes to avoid. Once options have been explored, they will be brought to the Board and potentially the Council if it is included in a rate case.

Parmenter requested a reminder on the process for testing and if monitoring allows CBU to pinpoint when the taste and odor issue will begin. Kelson advised no, because the issue can be caused by several different factors. The material that causes the issue occurs inside the cells of blue green algae. Parmenter questioned if during the treatment process, CBU is aware that the taste and odor issue will be present. Kelson advised no, it's not evident until after the treatment process, and people have varying sensitivity to the issue. CBU operators test for it every shift, but once it arrives, there is really nothing else that can be done. Activated carbon is currently being used and filtering out everything that it can, so the only alternative is to find a way to somehow use more activated carbon in the process, which would be difficult. The other alternative would be to post process filtration, that would essentially be installing a large filter at the back of the process before it leaves the Monroe Plant. Ehman questioned if a study of the water column could determine where the highest concentration of algae was and then CBU could potentially draw the water from another level. Kelson advised that CBU has discussed ordering samplers to perform depth transects to find the concentration of algae at different depths. Water quality can vary greatly from shallow to deep water. The intake building at the Monroe Treatment Plant has three different elevations and since the building began operation, CBU has always taken the water from the middle intake. There is a possibility that if the water level in the lake drops to a certain level, the plant may start getting more water from the shallower part at the intake without changing the normal operation. There are many variables happening as the seasons progress: water level, temperature, and the concentration of blue green algae increasing during periods of warm dry weather are all factors to consider. CBU is working to determine specifically which of these factors contributes the most to the taste and odor issue, and will then focus on finding the best way to deal with it.

**PETITIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS:** Ehman noted that Saturday morning he got to see a main break in his neighborhood and wished to thank the responding crew.

**ADJOURNMENT:** Burnham adjourned the meeting at 5:52 pm

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AMANDA B. BURNHAM

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Amanda Burnham, President

Oct 24, 2023

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Date