

Conewago Online

Report on the March 19, 2003 Meeting of the Conewago Township Board of Supervisors

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The Conewago Township Board of Supervisors held a special meeting on March 19, 2003. Some of those present were:

The Supers:

John Graybill (chair), John Rochat, Jay Brandt

Their trusted Assistants:

Shirley Bretz (secretary)

Jon Yost (solicitor)

The Reporters:

Tom (*Scoop*) Rumpf, The Sun

Joel (*Flash*) Buckley, ConewagoOnline

The Utility Men:

Ralph Watters, Jeff Foreman, DTMA

Interested Citizens:

Todd Kreiser

Cathy Scott

Chantal Atnip

Mark Widome

Ruth Siegel

Kent Bachmann

Gary Burk

Call Meeting to Order

This was a special meeting to present and approve a sewer service agreement with DTMA. The agreement was summarized, including the status of some unresolved issues. Basic financial details were disclosed. The floor was opened to questions and then the agreement was adopted.

Public Comment Period:

Fees

"Tapping Fee" is projected to be \$6000. Of this, \$1300 is paid to DTMA and \$4700 toward Conewago sewer system costs.

"Sewer Fee" is same as for DTMA customers, currently \$25.50 per month.

"Capital Surcharge Fee", \$50-55 monthly, the amortised cost of the system not paid for by the "Tapping Fee". Theoretically, this fee will disappear in 25 years. (Don't hold your breath.) This

fee would be adjusted from time to time. Up to account for additional expenses. Down to account for money from fees from additional users.

This doesn't include individual plumbing fees, the cost of running a sewer line from your house plumbing to the "lateral" near the street. These will vary considerably depending on the length of the run, the depth, and whether plumbing modifications are required.

It is still expected for construction to take 18 months. Portions of the system may become operational earlier. After the sewer becomes operational in a certain area, a "Notice to Connect" will be given to residents. Residents then have 60 days to pay the "Tapping Fee" and contract for a plumber to make the actual connection.

Assistance

DTMA may offer to finance the "Tapping Fee" for six years at its bond rate (4.91%).

Low-income residents may qualify for county grants.

Grinder Pumps

Grinder pumps are used to make sewage go up hill to the sewer main. They are installed and maintained by the individual property owner. About 12-15 homes will need grinder pumps. They cost about \$8000. Apparently some credit toward the "Tapping fee" will be granted to individuals with grinder pumps to help offset their higher costs.

PennVest

The numbers assume financing through DTMA's 4.91% bond. DTMA funding would be 25 years. PennVest funding is still being pursued. This refers to lower than market interest rate financing. In spring of 2002 PennVest funding was explored based on the criteria of severity of well contamination and the township apparently would not qualify. Evidently, funding may also be granted based on high per-dwelling-unit cost and perhaps Conewago would qualify on that basis. PennVest would be 20 years. Current PennVest rates are in range of 2.75-3.25%. To qualify for PennVest funding, Conewago Township would have to retain ownership of the system. If PennVest funding is not obtained, Conewago intends to transfer ownership and operating responsibility to DTMA.

System Costs

To clarify some questions from prior meetings:

\$3,375,000 is the construction cost. This, and interest on it the loan to finance it, will be paid for by the sewer users from their "tapping fees" and "capital surcharge fee".

\$209,500 in design fees paid by Conewago Township to DTMA will be the township's contribution to costs and will NOT be charged to the sewer users.

Some other costs I didn't get.

\$3,664,900 total costs (not including interest)

User base (# of dwelling units) costs are divided over is 282.

By my recollection there were 190 existing units, 82 to be constructed in the Hills of Waterford.

This includes 10 units in Londonderry Township. Don't know where the other 10 come from.

Note: if the Hills of Waterford doesn't happen, the "capital surcharge" would increase considerably.

OLD BUSINESS:

John Rochat moved to adopt a sewer service agreement and supplement. Second by John Graybill. Passed unanimously. Members of the audience broke into applause to celebrate this long-awaited moment. The meeting was adjourned about 8:15 and the supervisors and solicitor were reported going to a local watering hole to celebrate. Its been a lot of meetings for a long time.

Originally they were going to make available copies of the agreements. But then they didn't. I wasn't clear on whether DTMA has actually officially approved it yet. When I get a copy, if it looks interesting and is not too long, I will post it on the website.

Remember- Next regular Board of Supervisors Meeting is Wednesday April 9 at 7:30 pm.

That's it – *Flash*