



**VILLAGE OF BARTLETT
COMMITTEE MINUTES
September 21, 2021**

CALL TO ORDER

President Wallace called the Committee of the Whole meeting of September 21, 2021 of the President and Board of Trustees of the Village of Bartlett to order on the above date at 8:00 p.m.

ROLL CALL

PRESENT: Chairmen Deyne, Gandsey, Gunsteen, Hopkins, Suwanski, President Wallace

ABSENT: Chairman Reinke

ALSO PRESENT: Village Administrator Paula Schumacher, Assistant Village Administrator Scott Skrycki, Sr. Management Analyst Samuel Hughes, Management Analyst Joey Dienberg, Finance Director Todd Dowden, Director of Public Works Dan Dinges, Assistant Public Works Director Tyler Isham, Public Works Engineer Bob Allen, Planning & Development Director Roberta Grill, Food and Beverage Manager Paul Petersen, Police Chief Patrick Ullrich, Deputy Chief Jim Durbin, Deputy Chief Geoff Pretkelis, Village Attorney Bryan Mraz and Village Clerk Lorna Giles.

BUILDING & ZONING, CHAIRMAN HOPKINS
Special Use Permit for Liquor Store at 955 S. Route 59

Chairman Hopkins stated a liquor store at 955 S. Rt. 59 is asking for a special use permit to sell packaged beer, wine, and liquor in a proposed liquor store located in a B-3 neighborhood shopping zoning district.

This item was forwarded on to the Plan Commission for public hearing.

FINANCE & GOLF, CHAIRMAN DEYNE
Sewer Rate Increases Review

Finance Director, Todd Dowden stated staff had been working on sewer rates for years now. We were on a three-year plan, the rate increases were performed for the first two years, then we paused the third year due to the pandemic and paused it again due to the extension of the pandemic. When going over the budget review, we were going to go over the budget rates for that third year, over a two-year time period, but now we are proposing doing that increase over a four-year period. We plan to do that with using \$2 million dollars of the villages \$5.3 million dollars the village will be receiving. We received half of that already and have earmarked \$2 million of that toward the sewer rehabilitation program. That would help free up the cash and we would not need to raise the rates as fast. What I'm showing now is that we would need to raise the rates to generate an additional



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\$475,000 per year, each year for the next four years. The big item we are ramping up for is the wastewater treatment plant IEPA loans. That would be just over \$2 million dollars a year in debt service for \$37 million dollars at .9%. We issued bonds in 2019 for the Devon excess flow facility and that would get the Cook County portion of the rates up to cover that. We have already started raising the DuPage rates, but haven't had to start repaying yet so that is why we are able to make the bond payment. We are using some DuPage money and some Cook County money for that.

For 4 years, the Cook County rate increase will be about \$1.25 per month for a bill of 6,000 gallons. That works out to be 5.1% the first year, 4.8% the second, 4.6% the third and 4.4% the fourth year. DuPage County rates would increase an additional \$3.72 per month for a bill of 6,000 gallons. Those increases would be 8.6%, 7.9%, 7.3% and 6.8% increases for each of the four years. Right now, the sewer fund has a good cash balance. We are projecting the April 30, 2022 balance to be about \$3.5 million dollars. Part of that is due to holding back a bit on the rehabilitation program. We have budgeted million per year, but if we stop right now at \$500,000 that would help us bridge some of the cash flow gap as well. With this phased in 4-year increases, our cash balance would be about \$50,000 over the minimum cash balance at the end of April 30, 2026. Staff is estimating \$3,589,000 at the end of the year with capital projects at \$800,000. The other thing that was put off was a lift station that was going to be over \$1 million dollars. We are looking at only doing the engineering this year and the project next year. Moving on to 2023, we have \$1 million dollars for a rehabilitation program \$1.4 million for a lift station and \$474,000 in additional revenue plus \$500,000 from the recovery money. We would be using about \$1.2 million next year and bring our balance down to \$2,381,000. In 2024, we would have an additional \$475,000 with \$1 million dollars of recovery money being used. In 2025, we would have another \$475,000 increase and \$500,000 of recovery money. This is when we would start the first year of the waste water treatment plant loan payments. That fiscal year would be about \$2,030,000 for the wastewater treatment plant. In 2026, we would see another \$475,000 and use \$306,000 in fund balance which takes us down to \$1.8 million which will be just \$53,000 over our fund balance. Those are the minimum increases we would see. The \$306,000 shortfall is not good, but is several years out, so will have time to make tweaks before then. That is the cash flow needed to keep our Capital Improvement Plan going and make our capital and debt service payments. In 2025-2026, operating is going to be about \$5.7 million including the \$1 million for rehabilitation and those kind of capital improvements. Then we have the Devon Ave. bond payment, wastewater treatment and wastewater IEPA loan from 2014, so our total cashflow needs for 2025-2026 is \$8.4 million. Currently, we are at \$6,245,000. If we spread the operating, 28% Cook County and 72% for DuPage County, then add the \$2,157,000 we need for Cook County and \$6,200,000 from DuPage. So, we need a \$408,000 annual increase from Cook County revenue and \$1,784,000 from DuPage.

Chairman Hopkins asked Public Works Director Dan Dinges why only DuPage County is paying \$38,000,000 for the project and not Cook County.



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Mr. Dinges stated the \$37 million-dollar IEPA loan we anticipate receiving is for the Bittersweet treatment plant. The Devon MWRD force main project we are building to eliminate the excess flow facility, will take the excess flow to the Bittersweet treatment plant. The majority of the Bittersweet project is treating DuPage County flow, and only Cook County flow during excess flow events.

Village Administrator Paula Schumacher asked Mr. Dinges to segue to the requirements the EPA is putting on the Devon Ave. facility and why that criteria changes between sending it down to Bittersweet vs. leaving it at Devon.

Mr. Dinges stated Cook County flow normally goes to a lift station at Berteau Ave. and Devon Ave. That pumps to an MWRD wastewater treatment plant in Hanover Park, east of Barrington Rd. and south of Rt. 72.

Chairman Hopkins asked who pays for the MWRD plant.

Mr. Dinges stated MWRD runs it, and is reimbursed through taxes from Cook County residents in their district. When it rains we see peaks because rain water gets into our system through direct connections or cracks in pipes, etc. There is an IGA with MWRD that says they will take 1.1 million gallons per day of flow. There is a manhole out in Berteau with a pipe that goes to that lift station and one that goes to excess flow facility. In that pipe is a weir where anything over 1.1 million gallons goes down to our plant. We get called and we run that plant. The plant is from 1920. It is very old and outdated and could not meet the new EPA limit in our permit which is removing 85% of contaminants before you can discharge. During the time when we are receiving those flows, it is essentially storm water mixed with waste water so it is very diluted. Trying to get to 85% removal is very difficult. After talking to manufactures about equipment we could install to meet that limit, they could not give us guarantees that we would meet the limit. So, we set a goal to remove that facility, get rid of the permit and look at other options. We spent years working with MWRD because the ideal situation would be to have MWRD take the flow.

Chairman Gandsey asked if the tax bill would change if the flow was sent to MWRD.

Mayor Wallace stated when there is a storm in this area, it goes over the limit we can send to MWRD so it goes to this 1920's plant that has to remove 85% of the contaminants which is almost impossible because 90% of it is rain water. This force main will take the rest of this overflow down to Bittersweet. The Cook County side of Bartlett gets taxed on their property tax bill for how much it costs to run the plants.

Chairman Gandsey mentioned that they looked at a graph previously showing the difference in DuPage and Cooks bills and trying to get them more even.



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President Wallace stated that does not include their tax bill so you need to include that to have a more apples to apples comparison.

Chairman Hopkins stated for current year rates, Bartlett Cook County pays \$22 per month for just their sewage charge, but a comparable community, Elgin, Schaumburg, Hanover Park, etc. pays \$12, \$13, \$14 and now we are going to be raising our rates even higher to cover a bond payment to put a force main in. He asked why Bartlett Cook is different then any other community in Cook County. He could never vote yes to raise taxes when there is such a disparity between their neighboring communities.

Mr. Dinges stated they tax based on the 1 million gallons. Anything beyond that is Bartlett's. It also includes the collection system in Cook County.

President Wallace stated that is the answer.

Chairman Hopkins stated it does not explain why other communities are paying less then we are.

President Wallace stated because their village isn't paying an over flow of whatever is coming over the top.

Chairman Hopkins stated he wants to know why we have to pay extra and other communities do not have to.

Mr. Dinges stated there is a 1971 agreement that Bartlett entered into with MWRD.

Chairman Hopkins confirmed it was the Village of Bartlett and asked why the village would do that and cause issues for the Cook County residents.

Village Administrator Schumacher stated that in 1967 or 1968, MWRD built the lift station in the Cook County side on Devon. Upon completion of that lift station, the towns flow coming from the Cook County side of Bartlett was diverted to the new lift station. That is the agreement that from 1967-68 and since that time, the village has gone to MWRD and asked them to take out that restrictor. We said that no one else in Cook County has that agreement or that restrictor. We were told no, they won't do that. She asked if they wanted to litigate that.

Chairman Hopkins stated he thinks we should. We should hire an independent attorney firm, an accounting firm to look over our budget and an engineering firm that specializes in working with MWRD. Plus, we need a law firm to find out what is going on here.

Ms. Schumacher stated we know what is going on.



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Chairman Hopkins stated he knows Cook County residents pay \$24 dollars, more than double of surrounding communities and now we want to raise it even more. Enough is enough and he is not going to tax our resident's anymore. He wants to litigate this and hire an independent law firm.

Ms. Schumacher stated she doesn't think it's a mystery of what's going on. The village made this agreement and we are being charged for the over flow. We have a restrictor and no one else does, that is the crux of the issue. We can ratchet up the fight with MWRD if we want to make that our next move.

Chairman Gandsey asked why they won't consider it.

Chairman Hopkins stated because they keep pointing back to this old agreement that he personally doesn't think the village had a legal right to enter into. He asked why we entered into an agreement like that.

Ms. Schumacher stated she doesn't know either, all she has is a summary of when things were done, she doesn't know what was in the mind of the board in 1967.

Chairman Hopkins stated he respects that, but what he has before him is rate increases that are going through the roof and they are going to keep going up. Eventually this pipe line is going to need to be fixed and its going to go up again.

President Wallace stated he agreed with him and he brings up a lot of good points. He stated our direction should be to see what our next steps are with MWRD.

Chairman Gunsteen asked if this was resolved, would the Devon project still be happening.

President Wallace stated yes, we need to remove the Devon treatment plant.

Chairman Hopkins stated that the cost of projects are going up and right now Cook County residents are paying 5% this year on money we are not using because its been sitting in an account since 2019. Now we are stuck with \$8.5 million dollars and making interest payments on a project that we are not going to even send out to bid until next year.

Ms. Schumacher stated in all fairness, no one predicted what we were going to see in 2020.

Chairman Hopkins stated that in his comments from the committee when this was being discussed are that he thought they should get an IEPA loan like Bittersweet because they are paying 0.9% interest on their loan and they don't need to start paying it back until the



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project is done. We do not have a project to bid and we are already paying interest on our loan. He feels like the residents of Cook County deserve some answers. He hopes that this committee would vote to get a private law firm in here to find out what is going on.

President Wallace stated that they can't vote in the committee, but he agrees with the fact that something has to change. He stated just to reiterate that he thought the last comment was a little off the wall with anyone knowing that the pandemic was going to hit. He agrees we should not be paying money for something we have not started yet, but there are a lot of villages that were in the same position as us.

Chairman Hopkins stated the reason he brought up the IEPA loan is because we got general rates of an IEPA which were 1.5 and 2% at the time. We knew our rate was going to be 5% in the first couple of years and then progressively go down from there.

Mr. Dinges stated we had a \$37 million-dollar loan we were already in with EPA. They look at communities and how much they are asking for. \$37 million-dollars was a big take compared to the other projects out there so the chances of getting two loans, one for \$37 million and one for \$8.5 million were a lot less likely.

Chairman Hopkins asked Mr. Dinges if he prioritized DuPage County.

Mr. Dinges stated he prioritized \$37 million.

President Wallace stated they prioritized the total amount of money.

Chairman Hopkins stated one county is paying for one-dollar amount and the other county is paying for another. It is unfair to prioritize one county over the other. He stated with all due respect, he knows this issue is contentious with him, but he did not like that comment.

Ms. Schumacher stated that she thinks Dans point is that those are competitive loans that many other communities are applying for, so yes, they did prioritize the wastewater treatment plant that needs to be rebuilt for \$37 million.

Chairman Hopkins stated another option would be to scrap this project, use these funds for another project in the municipality that we need and live with the system we have. If the IEPA wants to fine us, they can fine us. Tell them to give us the money to fund the project. There are so many other communities that are getting violations as we speak and they are not getting fined, they are just saying you have to improve. There are a lot of other ways to look at this. There are a lot of things we could use in this community with that bond payment to really move our community forward.

Chairman Gunsteen asked where we were with the Devon project.



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Mr. Dinges stated its in for permit right now with the EPA. Pricing right now is high so we are delaying it. We are hoping to go out to bid in the spring. We are touching base with contractors and suppliers to see where prices are at. That project is connected to the Bittersweet plant project. That project needs to get started before we can begin bringing it there so since that got delayed we have a little time. We figured why put it out to bid now when prices are high, lets see what spring brings.

Chairman Suwanski asked if contractors were considered essential throughout the pandemic.

Mr. Dinges stated yes, they have been working.

Chairman Gunsteen stated he shares a lot of the same sentiment as Chairman Hopkins and thinks the Cook County residents deserve an answer before moving forward.

President Wallace stated yes, this is just committee, but one of the reasons we had to have this on committee was because of the letter he received from the IEPA regarding the \$37 million and the thing coming up on the board is just the intent to accept the money.

Chairman Hopkins asked if we are voting on rate increases at the next board meeting.

President Wallace stated not if we do not have answers.

Chairman Hopkins stated he thought we should split it up. He knows there are other costs which are causing a rate increase and those are warranted, so he thinks there are ways we can look at this to pass something at the next board meeting, and appease the IEPA.

Chairman Suwanski asked if what is coming up tonight in the board meeting, is predicated on the rate increase.

Mr. Dinges stated there is two things, but the IEPA loan approval will be verifying that we have the rates in place to pay back the \$37 million-dollar loan. We just got the approval from the IEPA that are old financing plan was okay. That plan has changed based on our discussion today and will likely change again. He did not know when they would have to have those rates locked in. We may need to show them that the rates have been approved by the board, they were out years, but were approved by the board and it covered the loan amount. We may have to pass sewer rates that would cover the \$37 million dollars.

Ms. Schumacher stated they allow us to adjust the funding plan each year.

President Wallace asked if everyone was good with the staff providing us with more evaluation, more tactics and maybe getting Bryan Mraz involved a little bit on some avenues to put pressure on MWRD. He likes Chairman Hopkins idea on how we can use



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these bonds for other projects, but you can't exactly do that. We should put pressure on the IEPA about the other stuff.

There being no further business to discuss, Trustee Deyne moved to adjourn the committee meeting and that motion was seconded by Trustee Gunsteen.

ROLL CALL VOTE TO ADJOURN

AYES: Chairman Gandsey, Gunsteen, Hopkins, Suwanski, Deyne

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Chairman Reinke

MOTION CARRIED

The meeting was adjourned at 8:38 p.m.

Samuel Hughes
Deputy Village Clerk