

**UTILITIES COMMISSION MEETING
MAY 18, 2009**

Mayor Bailey called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. In attendance were Council Members Harrison C. Bristoll, Jr. Gibson Anthony, Mauritz Stetson and Mabel Mumford-Pautz, Bob Sipes, Utilities Manager, Jennifer Mulligan, Stenographer, and guests.

Mayor Bailey asked if there were any additions or corrections to the minutes of the meeting of April 20, 2009. **Mr. Bristoll moved to approve the minutes as submitted, was seconded by Mrs. Mumford-Pautz and carried unanimously.**

Mayor Bailey stated that cash on hand and in the banks was \$391,062.20.

Mr. Sipes stated that they were changing out a pump at the Radcliffe Pump Station. He said that everything on the pump, with the exception of the shaft, was provided as part of the upgrade. He said that they were considering swapping out another pump in a couple weeks if clogging became a problem.

Mr. Sipes stated that a second pump at the water plant was rotated into the shop for rehabbing.

Mr. Sipes stated that the work on Cross Street was due to a blocked sewer line. He said that they had to dig for the sewer line. Work would resume Tuesday, May 19th and hopefully would be finished by the end of the day.

Mr. Anthony asked if the mapping that was done did not indicate where the sewer line was located. Mr. Sipes stated that the mapping was for the sewer system, but only the mains. He said that the mapping did not locate any laterals as it would have been much more expensive and time consuming.

Mr. Anthony asked if there was any concern about this project becoming more involved and not completed by the Tea Party. Mr. Sipes stated that if the project was not completed tomorrow they would wait until after the festival to fix it. He said that blacktopping would be done the same day, as was required by State Highway.

Mr. Sipes stated that he provided the Council with the utilities pay scales of the surrounding Counties. Mayor Bailey stated that there were two (2) employees who passed their certification exams. Mr. Sipes stated that this gave those employees their license to operate the wastewater plant.

Mr. Sipes stated that the State of Maryland required anyone employed in or participating in the operation and maintenance of a water or wastewater treatment facility to hold a certification for that facility. He said that Chestertown was a Class 3 facility and every one of the operators is supposed to be certified.

Mr. Stetson asked if the employees were Operators I, II, or III, or were there different grades. Mr. Sipes stated that he would like to create the classifications because right now they did not exist. Mr. Sipes stated that currently the Utilities Department had laborers or utility workers. He said that he would like to create Operator I, Operator II, and Operator III classifications.

Mr. Sipes said that if either a water or a wastewater licensing was received it would give that employee an Operator I classification. If that employee received both water and wastewater licensing they would be an Operator II. He said that when the employee had their certification he would like to be able to give them a pay increase of \$2,000.00 per year. Mr. Sipes stated that the pay scales provided showed that this was a modest increase in comparison to other areas.

Mayor Bailey stated that there should be an incentive to get the operators licenses. Mr. Bristoll agreed.

Mr. Anthony asked how much of the budget this increase reflected. Mr. Sipes stated that it reflected 1½% of the Utilities Department salaries.

Mr. Anthony stated that with the sophisticated system in place creating a team with longstanding experience of that system was important.

Mrs. Mumford-Pautz moved to approve the \$2,000.00 increase for receiving an Operator I license and a \$2,000.00 increase for an Operator I to Operator II license, was seconded by Mr. Bristoll and carried unanimously.

Mr. Stetson asked if the Town received a response from the State regarding the extra testing required for the wastewater treatment plant. Mr. Sipes stated that a letter was sent and the State replied by asking for additional information. Mr. Sipes stated that it seemed as though Mr. Luchman was unaware of some of the online testing equipment in place that did the testing the State was asking for.


Mr. Sipes stated that instead of testing everything everyday there was a schedule of testing. He said that if something was found which was out of the ordinary testing would be increased automatically.

Mr. Anthony stated that Chestertown should not have to spend more money because they had a better system, noting that at this point, it seemed to be a disincentive. Mayor Bailey agreed, stating that Chestertown had one of the best systems on the Eastern Shore but had to pay "through the teeth" for it. Mr. Sipes stated that there were unavoidable costs associated with the operation of the plant, citing the \$75,000.00 chemical bill this year alone.

Mr. Sipes stated that when he asked about the frequency of testing he was told that COMAR gave the State the authority to test without a reason. Mayor Bailey stated that MML would be interested in this process.

There being no further business, **Mrs. Mumford-Pautz moved for payment of the bills. The motion was seconded by Mr. Bristoll and carried unanimously.**

Mr. Bristoll moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:55 p.m., was seconded by Mrs. Mumford-Pautz and carried unanimously.

Submitted by: 
Jennifer Mulligan
Stenographer

Approved by:
Margo G. Bailey
Mayor