



Committee Members:

- Randy Greeno, Ward 5 – Committee Chair
- Joshua Palmer, Ward 7
- Grant Russel, at-large

Staff:

- Tammy Kirkpatrick, Billing Supervisor
- Jason Phillips, Water Treatment & Distribution Superintendent
- Dave Beach, WPCC Superintendent
- Jeremy Kalb, City Engineer
- Rob Martin

Guests:

Matt Cordonnier
Lindsay Summit

Meeting Start Time: 5:00

Meeting End Time: 5:57

Agenda:

Call to Order

Roll Call

New Items

1. tap and permit fees for Bluebonnet/Bittersweet

Adjournment


Randy Greeno, Water & Sewer Committee Chair

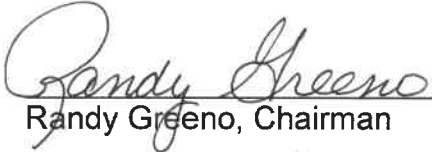
COMMITTEE REPORT

THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF FINDLAY, OHIO

The **WATER AND SEWER COMMITTEE** met on September 1, 2021 to discuss fee waivers for Bluebonnet Drive and Bittersweet Drive.

We recommend to wave tap fees for all current property owners within 5 years from the project completion.

Aye Nay


Randy Greeno, Chairman

LEGISLATION: _____

Aye Nay


Josh Palmer

DATED: September 1, 2021

Aye Nay


Grant Russel

COMMITTEE:
WATER & SEWER

Committee Members:

- Randy Greeno, Ward 5 – Committee Chair
- Joshua Palmer, Ward 7
- Grant Russel, at-large

Staff:

- Rob Martin, Safety Service Director
- Jeremy Kalb, City Engineer
- Jason Phillips, Water Treatment Superintendent
- Matt Cordonnier, Hancock Regional Planning

Meeting Start Time: 5:00 p.m.

Meeting End Time: 5:57 p.m.

Guests:

- Lindsay Summit, Hancock Public Health

Agenda:

Call to Order

Roll Call

New Items

1. Waiving of Sanitary Sewer Tap Fees for Residences of Bittersweet & Bluebonnet

- Confirmed that there are 41 households in total per Lindsay Summit
- Councilman Russel asked if Habitat for Humanity fees are waived, and it was confirmed that they are waived by a vote of Council
- Russel asked about the purpose of tap fee
 - Jason Phillips said tap fees cover our costs to install the tap
 - Jeremy Kalb said tap fees also include impact fees
 - The actual tap is completed by a contractor; the city inspects; inspection costs are minor
 - Tap fee for this area is approximately \$900
 - total costs being discussed is approximately \$36,900
- Russel explained that he has mixed feelings about waiving the fees
 - Has talked to numerous people who have septic systems, and none were aware of any requirements to report system status to the Health Department or the Ohio EPA
 - Has talked to numerous realtors who expressed mixed opinions about how septic systems are managed and what the requirements are with the Health Department
 - This leads him to conclude that most homeowners, through no fault of their own, are unaware of any reporting requirements and as a result, that Health Department records cannot be relied on up to determine if a homeowner is playing by the rules
 -
- Matt Cordonnier talked about the WPCLF – Septic Replacement Program
 - Intended to replace failing septic systems
 - HRPC manages the grant process on behalf of the Health Department
 - Has income requirements with less money for higher incomes

- grant pays for abandonment, hook-up costs and fees
- 50% of the grant for hook-up fees
- six residents in the Bittersweet / Bluebonnet area applied for the grant; five were approved; 4 @ 85%, 1 @ 50%
- a pamphlet explaining the program shared; it was included in the Health Department's letter to residents
- Cordonnier recommends it be included in all mailings to residents about this project
- Councilman Greeno agrees with Councilman Russel's sentiments
 - The City and Health Department did a poor job communicating to citizens; this must be improved upon before the next sewer extension is considered
 - He does not have a problem waiving the fees
- Councilman Palmer is on same page with Councilman Greeno
 - Favors waiving the fees
 - Emphasized the need to dramatically improve communications
- Russel asked how future sewer extension request will be different from this one with his concern that we will once again be waiving tap fees.
 - Cordonnier emphasized the need to give advanced notice as soon as a potential extension is under consideration
 - Rob Martin said that the township trustees should be involved in the conversations
 - Russel asked if we should only consider extension requests from Township Trustees vs. individuals.
 - Kalb asked countered that the requests might come from Health Department because they should have a good idea where septic systems are failing
 - Kalb wondered if we could treat these extensions in a similar manner as water line extension projects with rotary fees
 - Russel expressed doubts that such a plan would ever get any takers due to costs
 - Martin said that we need to consider this because we will certainly get sewer extension requests again in the future
- Phillips asked what the current process is for the Health Department when a citizen contacts them with a failing septic system?
 - Summit said that they look for how close the property is to existing sanitary sewers and if it is close, they try to pursue that option. In cases where they are not close to sanitary, then the Health Department works with the citizen to install new septic systems
- Phillips asked how a septic system is deemed to have failed?
 - Summit said that it depends upon type of system; there are many variables
 - For the systems in the Bittersweet / Bluebonnet area, that if the motors have failed the system would be deemed as to having failed. The Health Department would insist that the motor not be replaced and instead require that investment be made into tapping into the new sewer line.

- Summit said that typical septic system costs are \$12-15k; the Health Department recently had one at \$38k but many unique factors, include the type of system made this an outlier.
 - Septic systems must be abandoned after tapping to a sewer line. This requires an abandonment permit costing \$30, and the Health Department would then perform an inspection.
- Russel asked the Committee if a tap fee waiver should be provided to property owners that are awarded a grant?
 - The consensus was to waive fees for all property owners in the Bittersweet / Bluebonnet area, regardless grant status
- Russel asked the Committee if the tap fee waiver is for current property owners or if it would be transferable with a sale to new owner?
 - There was agreement that it is only for property owners at the time the project is considered complete.
 - The waiver is being offered because of the miscommunication with the project. Future property owners would not be recipients of that communications.
- Summit offered the Birchaven extension project as an example of an extension project
 - The Health Department evaluated which residents would be close enough to the extension to tap into it. They contacted those residents and inspected their septic systems, many of which were in poor shape. They had advanced notice of the extension and were able to make appropriate plans.
- Greeno asked for confirmation that multiple one-year extensions are available if the property owner provides proof of a properly functioning septic system?
 - Summit confirmed that this was the agreement made between the Board of Health and the Mayor
- Phillips mentioned that the EPA can force an extension of sewer lines; he knows this from personal experience at a previous employer.
- There was much conversation on the proper process for future extension requests
 - There is agreement that the Township Trustees should be informed and involved
- Motion:
 - Recommend that Council waive tap fees for all current property owners with a 5-year time limit on the waiver from the time of project completion
 - Motion Palmer; Second Greeno
 - Motion passed (3-0)

Adjournment

Randy Greeno

Randy Greeno, Water & Sewer Committee Chair