

Sewer District Update

On July 26, 2014 over 100 taxpayers of the Woodridge Lake Sewer District (WLS D) attended a Special Meeting of the Board of the WLS D. The purpose was to hear a presentation by its Finance Committee on the estimated costs of replacing the WLS D's 40 year-old sewer treatment plant. The presentation included estimates of the monthly costs to individual taxpayers. Two options are presently being considered: construction of a new plant adjacent to the existing sewer plant; or, construction of a pipeline and pumping stations to transport our wastewater to Torrington for treatment. Included in the presentation were estimates of the monthly costs of the project to upgrade our pumping stations and to reduce water infiltrating or inflowing into the system.

The slides used in the July 26th PowerPoint presentation are posted on the WLS D's website (www.wlsd-goshen.org) under the tab Community Meetings. Also under the tab Community Meetings, you can enter your name or lot number and you can see the monthly potential tax impact for each of these projects on your property. This potential tax impact is based on the estimates and assumptions of the July 26th meeting.

The Board of the WLS D has not yet selected a methodology for allocating the costs of the above projects among the taxpayers.

On April 10, 2014 the staff of the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) wrote to the WLS D Board stating they could not accept the proposed Facilities Plan submitted by the WLS D last summer. This would have been to replace the existing sewer treatment plant with a new on-site plant. We believe that our proposed Facilities Plan would meet all of DEEP's environmental requirements. However, since receiving DEEP's letter, members of the WLS D Board, its engineering consultants, Woodard & Curran (W&C), and our environmental lawyers have been meeting with DEEP to determine what upgrades to our proposal would be required by DEEP for them to accept the on-site proposal.

As of mid-August, the discussions with DEEP are ongoing. We now know that DEEP will require upgrades to the proposed new plant so that it would produce "drinking water quality" wastewater after-treatment, as well as upgrades to our after-treatment wastewater disposal fields. These requirements have raised

W&C's estimated cost of the new plant from \$11.4million to \$15.8 million. In addition, DEEP wants additional testing of the capacity of our disposal fields to assure that there will be no "breakout" of wastewater after it is discharged into the disposal fields.

In the past, the cost of the Torrington option was estimated by W&C at \$20.5 million. Since the difference between the on-site and Torrington options has narrowed as a result of DEEP's new on-site plant requirement, the Board has decided to take steps to refine the estimate of the Torrington option. The Planning Committee has been working with W&C in reviewing additional routes to develop a more cost-effective option. All the cost variables are being reviewed for each route including pipe length, road refurbishment costs, pump station requirements, upgrades required in the Torrington collection system and excavation costs. One of the biggest "unknowns" of the Torrington option, is the amount of rock that will be encountered on the route of the proposed pipeline to Torrington. A plan to test for rock along each route has been developed and will be considered by the Board.

On a more positive note, in late July, DEEP published its Clean Water Act funding list for fiscal year 2015. The WLS D was included in this official announcement at a \$14 million dollar loan and a 25% grant for our projects. The Board is exploring whether the United States Department of Agriculture-Rural Development's grant of up to 45% of our projects costs, might be combined in whole, or in part with the DEEP grant.

Finally, it is important to go on record that all members of the WLS D Board, its Finance Committee and Planning Committee are volunteers and have no business or financial interest in the WLS D's construction projects, other than as property owners and taxpayers of the WLS D.