

Muscatine County Board of Supervisors
Monday, May 8, 2024

The Muscatine County Board of Supervisors and Muscatine County Conservation Board met in a joint session at 6:00 P.M. with Board of Supervisors: Chick, Kirchner, Mather, Sauer and Sorensen and Muscatine County Conservation Board: Mike Schulte, Karen Hartman, Mark Petersen, Sherry Seright present. Chairperson Sorensen presiding.

On a motion by Chick, second by Sauer, the agenda was approved as presented. Ayes: All.

County Conservation Director Katie Hammond presented the goals of the meeting which included: 1.) Bring everyone up to speed on the proposed Deep Lake Campground Project; 2.) Look at the cost comparison for the Muscatine Power and Water (MPW) proposed water main and private sewer service routes vs. a well; 3.) Gain direction from the Board of Supervisors for the project. Hammond stated the purpose of the meeting is to discuss plans and estimated costs of various components of the Deep Lakes Park Campground Project. Hammond stating there is not a proposed official action being presented or requested for the project at this time.

Adrian Holmes of Bolton & Menk of Cedar Rapids presented the proposed service of schedule for the project and the proposed water main and private sewer service route map. Holmes reviewed the proposed campground sanitary sewer lift station area and stated the route that would connect it to the existing city sanitary sewer force main. Holmes stated County Conservation would own and maintain the sanitary sewer lift station and the size of the station will handle future cabins which are noted on the map. Sorensen stated concerns with long term maintenance and liability to maintain a station and asked if the city will have requirements for maintenance. Holmes stated the city has no interest in the proposed lift station. Holmes stated the station plans are for a submersible pump. Holmes reviewed the proposed water main route on Stewart Road. Holmes stated the proposed sewer service route is on Pettibone Avenue, as it is a slightly shorter route, and the water line is proposed for the west side of Stewart Road. The routes allow for separation of the water and sewer services. Holmes stated there is a problematic drop off and guardrail on the east side of Stewart Road. Mark Petersen asked for clarification on the type of submersible pump. Holmes stated pump would slide down a rail with a hoist at the top.

Holmes presented two Opinions of Probable Costs for the sewer force main from Deep Lakes Park North to Pettibone to City: 1.) Estimate which includes an access road to the lift station at \$974,500.00; 2.) Estimate with no access road to the lift station at \$851,050.00.

Sorensen asked County Engineer Bryan Horesowsky what are the secondary road plans for Stewart Road. Horesowsky stated the road is scheduled for letting in the spring of 2025.

County Conservation Director Katie Hammond reviewed a map showing a proposed route for MPW to install electricity to the campground. MPW has stated the county's responsibility would be to trench in conduits from a pole to one transformer; provide two-inch grey schedule 40 electrical conduit; and purchase/install fiberglass transformer base at a cost of \$395.00. MPW

would run overhead electricity to the pole by the road; provide special two-inch orange conduit for internet and pull lines and attach to the transformer.

Holmes presented an Opinion of Probably Costs for a water main extension to Deep Lakes Park along Stewart Road at \$1,244,930.00. Holmes reviewed the map showing the proposed 12-inch PVC water main (per fire code specifications) which will connect to an existing MPW water main at the north end of Stewart Road. MPW will own the water main and charge a service rate. Holmes stated the other option is a well. The two Opinions of Probable Costs for a well in Deep Lakes Supply Campground: 1.) Well project at \$76,550.00; 2.) Well and building with a pressure tank at \$505,950.00.

Sorensen and Planning and Zoning Director Eric Furnas stated their concerns with per-and polyfluoralkyl substances (PFAS) which is becoming a major issue with a public water supply, high cost for testing, conservation department staffing and operational costs associated with it.

Holmes reviewed that MPW is questioning what happens if a water main break occurs since there is no agreement with the county and the right-of-way is in an easement with private property owners. Sorensen asked what do the easements cost. Holmes stated there is no estimate of cost at this time. Hammond stated County Attorney Jim Barry is reviewing if the water main could go into the county's roadway easement without having to have an easement on top of an easement.

Sorensen stated this project is an asset to Muscatine County however the cost is always a concern and a public well is problematic.

Hammond presented a report of potential revenue and expenses for the campground with 50 spaces. Hammond proposal showed the campground reservations filled at 100, 120 and 180 nights with full hook up sites at \$30 per night and electricity only sites at \$25 per night. Hammond stated this is just a projection for the conservation board of the revenue and does not include all the extra economics that could benefit the county and businesses. Hammond stated Saulsbury Bridge Recreation Area campground recently raised the per night to \$25 per night with no push back from campers. Hammond stated the proposed project at Deep Lakes would be the only campground with full hook up in the area and on-line reservations is being proposed. Hammond stated the water project is holding up the project as an agreement will need to be reached with MPW. Hammond stated the combined cost of the water and sewer project is projected to be \$2.2 million.

Discussion was held with the Board regarding the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) awarded project contract of \$1.6 million has a requirement to have signed project contracts by December 31, 2024 and the ARPA project completed by December 31, 2026. Administrative Services Director questioned if the cost of the campground is known. Holmes stated a rough estimate of the cost of the campground is an additional \$2 million which includes the pads, trails, restrooms, roads, playground, electric, sewer and water lines to each camp site.

Sauer stated he doesn't think everyone understands the economic impact of the campground to the county and the community. Sherry Seright stated Muscatine County Conservation Foundation is

looking into a commitment of possible funding. Hammond stated the Foundation will be meeting to discuss possible fundraising.

Discussion was held with the Board recommending that the County Conservation Board determine the funding short fall for the Deep Lakes campground water and sewer project and present it to the Board of Supervisors for review. Chick stated he is in favor of the project but voiced his concerns with the use of additional tax payer dollars. Chick asked if the project could be done over time in order to not commit to the additional shortfall of \$700,000 at this time or all at once. Sauer stated he believes the project will generate money to the community and the discussion is hung up on the expenses instead of the revenue. Seright stated she doesn't think the expectation is that more tax dollars need to be levied but the possible shortfall could come from dollars set aside for other projects or excess fund balances. Chick stated the funding will come from tax dollars even if is set aside funding. Chick stated he is interested in looking into other funding options. Karen Hartman stated her concerns of the timeline and if the project isn't started soon it won't happen. Discussion was held on the current Deep Lakes cabins and the revenue they have generated, with revenue per year at approximately \$50,000.

Furnas and Mather stated their concerns that there is no partnering with MPW on the project or long term planning with taking proposed municipal service into a heavy industrial district. Mather stated there is potential for cost sharing with MPW and future development. Sorensen suggested the Boards reach out to their personal contacts and make this project happen with working together.

Furnas stated the Muscatine County Comprehensive Plan update consensus has been an emphasis on more outdoor recreational opportunities to improve public health.

Curt Weiss (former County Conservation Director) stated the Board of Supervisors approved and hired an additional full-time staff position with the intent the campground would be constructed. Weiss stated its possible additional seasonal staff will be required.

Hammond asked if any board members would be interested in meeting with MPW to review the project. Sorensen and Mather agreed to look into scheduling a meeting. The Board consensus was to have the Conservation Board request additional funding to the Board of Supervisors to be taken under consideration and look further into easement costs and issues.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:23 P.M.

ATTEST:

Tibe Vander Linden
County Auditor

Jeff Sorensen, Chairperson
Board of Supervisors

Katie Hammond
Conservation Director