

**SUMMIT TOWNSHIP SEWER AUTHORITY
INFORMATIONAL MEETING
CONNECTION ASSISTANCE PROJECT
MARCH 15, 2022**

An informational meeting of the Summit Township Sewer Authority (STSA) was called to order at 6:00 p.m. by Chairman Chris Fette at the Summit Township Municipal Building, 1230 Townhall Road West, Erie, Pennsylvania. CALL TO ORDER

Present: Chris Fette, Chairman; Laban Marsh, Secretary; Michael Andrus, Ass't Secretary; Mark Welka, Treasurer; William C. Steff, P.E., Manager; Solicitor George Joseph, The Quinn Law Firm; Chad Yurismic, P.E., Greenman-Pedersen; Christopher Hodge, Ass't Project Manager and Amy McCaslin, Recording Secretary. Attendees: 22 interested persons. ROLL CALL

Chairman Fette welcomed the residents in attendance and expressed his thanks to the Summit Township Supervisors for allowing the Authority to use the meeting room. Chairman Fette introduced the Board Members and the professional staff. He explained that the purpose of the meeting was to provide an overview of the project and address any questions or concerns. Chairman Fette asked that everyone attending the meeting to please sign the attendance sheet. Chairman Fette then introduced Chad Yurismic, the Authority's consulting engineer from Greenman-Pedersen, Inc. INTRODUCTIONS
BY CHAIRMAN
FETTE

Engineer Yurismic began his presentation with an administrative overview of the Sewer Authority's Board. Engineer Yurismic described the Sewer Authority's grant of authority from the Summit Township Supervisors to manage sanitary sewer in Summit Township. Engineer Yurismic explained that the meeting is informational, and the Board will not deliberate or make any decisions at this meeting.

Engineer Yurismic presented the Connection Assistance Project:

Project Scope

In 2020, the Commonwealth Financing Authority under the Pennsylvania Small Water and Sewer Program (PA DCED) awarded the STSA \$343,710 for the Connection Assistance Project. The Connection Assistance Project will use grant money to assist homeowners by lowering the connection cost for the thirty-four properties scattered throughout the Township. The Authority bundled these homes into a single project to apply for the grant. The grant will expire June 30, 2023. PROJECT SCOPE

Engineer Yurismic used a graphic to explain the terminology that will be used throughout the rest of the presentation: the sewer lateral is the private sanitary sewer line from the home to the property line; the sewer connection stub (stub) is the public portion of the sanitary sewer line that will run from the property line to the public sanitary sewer main. As with all projects, each homeowner is responsible for paying for a portion of the project and for making the connection from the home to the stub via a lateral. Over half of the properties can be served by gravity laterals, the remainder will require individual grinder pumps.

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Financial Assistance

The grant from the PA DCED will reduce the project costs for each residence by approximately \$10,000 per connection. In addition, the Pennsylvania Housing Financing Agency has a program called PennVest to help qualified homeowners connect an existing home for the first time to public sewer at very low interest rates, for up to twenty years. The Authority has made PennVest fliers available to all attendees.

FINANCIAL
ASSISTANCE

Need for Project and Community Benefits

In 1972, the Supervisors passed an ordinance mandating that any occupied building within 150 feet of sewer to connect. Then in 2011, the Supervisors passed an ordinance to match modern environmental regulations, and now require any occupied dwelling within 300 feet of sewer to connect. Occupied properties beyond 300 feet must either connect or provide proof that the on-lot disposal system is functioning properly every five years. With the advances in mapping technology, in 2014 the Authority identified thirty-four homes that are required to connect under the Township Ordinance. The Authority has not taken any enforcement action to date. Because the Authority understands how expensive it would be for some residents to connect, the Authority has sought grants multiple times to make a stub available at the property line and reduce the overall cost of connection for residents. The Authority was finally successful in winning the grant for the Connection Assistance Project.

NEED FOR
PROJECT AND
COMMUNITY
BENEFITS

Sanitary sewer service usually increases the value of a property by 20%-30%. Not only does sewer increase the property value, but sewer homes are historically easier to sell. Once it is known that an on-lot disposal system is malfunctioning, the house will likely become harder to sell. Engineer Yurisc pointed out that the known failure rate of on-lot disposal systems in Summit Township is known to be high due to the marginal soils. The cost to replace a failed system could be \$25,000-\$30,000 for construction alone. If an enforcement action is taken by the Erie County Health Department or the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection, those costs could increase significantly.

Engineer Yurisc emphasized that the greatest benefit to connecting now is that the grant award from the PA DCED will reduce the connection costs for residents by approximately \$10,000 per household. The grant expires in June 2023 and will not be available for connections after that date.

Lateral Locations

The Authority mailed preliminary exhibits to each property owner with a letter from the STSA. The exhibit indicates where the lateral will be located. The exhibits are also labelled with a preliminary determination of whether the residence can be served by gravity or if a grinder pump will be required. The Authority will accommodate homeowners who would prefer their lateral stub to be installed in a different location on the property. To keep the project on schedule for the grant, all relocation requests must be received by the Authority by April 15, 2022.

LATERAL
LOCATIONS

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Project Schedule

Input from homeowners will be due by April 15, 2022. The Authority will solicit bids for the project by the end of June 2022. The contract for the project will be awarded at the July 2022 Regular Business Meeting. Construction will run from Fall 2022 to Spring 2023. The grant will close out on June 30, 2023. Homeowners can expect to receive a notice to connect in July 2023. All homes will be expected to be connected by the end of June 2024.

PROJECT
SCHEDULE

Process Overview

The Authority will obtain all PennDOT and Township roadway permits. The Authority will assist residents who need stream crossing permits. The Authority will bid out and administer connection to the main line and construction up to the property line. Property owners will be responsible for hiring a contractor to finish the sewer lateral from the property line to connect the home on the private side. The Authority will provide more information about the location of the stub with the connection notices. Property owners will be responsible for installing grinder pumps, if necessary. Property owners will be responsible to connect their homes to the lateral stub by June 30, 2024.

PROCESS
OVERVIEW

Costs to Property Owner

Project costs to extend a sewer connection stub from the public sanitary sewer main to the property line is estimated to be \$15,000 per residence. The grant will reduce the amount assessed to homeowners by approximately \$10,000 each. Each homeowner will be assessed approximately \$5,000 for project costs. In addition, each homeowner will have to pay a capacity fee to the Authority of approximately \$1,200 to \$2,200; the capacity fee will vary based on the location of each home. The homeowner will also be responsible for the inspection fee to the Authority of \$325. In addition, each homeowner will pay for a private contractor of their choice for the construction of the sewer lateral connection from the property line to the home. This cost will be different for each homeowner because it is based on a variety of factors. Homeowners are encouraged to obtain quotes from more than one contractor to make sure they are getting a reasonable price. For residents who aren't sure who to call, the Authority has provided a list of contractors that have done business with the Authority in the past.

COSTS TO
PROPERTY
OWNER

Engineer Yurisc concluded his presentation and invited the attendees to ask questions.

Public Comments and Questions

A resident asked for clarification about the circumstances that might require a home to install a grinder pump. The Engineer explained that the depth of the main, the depth of the sewer service as it exits the home, and proximity to a lift station are all factors.

PUBLIC
COMMENTS
AND
QUESTIONS

A resident asked about PA One Call flags on his property. Engineer Yurisc responded that they are not related to this project.

A resident asked a question about restoration. Manager Steff responded that restoration on the public side will be included in the STSA contract.

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A resident asked about how to dispose of old septic tanks. Manager Steff responded that residents should have them professionally vacuumed out, crush the bottom of the tank, and fill the tank with gravel.

PUBLIC
COMMENTS
AND
QUESTIONS

A resident asked if homes could connect prior to the issuance of connection notices. Manager Steff responded that the Authority would work with residents who want to connect prior to connection notices.

A resident asked how long the trenches will be open during construction. Engineer Yurisc responded that the trenches should only be open for a day or two.

A resident expressed concern about the cost of project. Manager Steff responded that the Authority has some flexibility in hardship cases and the resident should come in for a private meeting about possible options.

A resident asked for clarification about interpreting the exhibits provided by the Authority.

Chairman Fette thanked Engineer Yurisc for making the presentation. Chairman Fette invited residents to contact Manager Steff to discuss concerns specific to their property.

ADJOURNMENT

Chairman Fette adjourned the meeting at 6:36 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by,

Amy McCaslin
Recording Secretary