

AT A MEETING OF THE MIDDLESEX COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS HELD
ON JUNE 15, 2022, IN THE BOARD ROOM OF THE HISTORIC COURTHOUSE,
SALUDA, VIRGINIA:

Present: Wayne H. Jessie, Sr., Jamaica District
Don R. Harris, Saluda District
John B. Koontz, Jr., Hartfield District
Reginald A. Williams, Sr., Harmony Village District
Lud H. Kimbrough, III, Pinetop District

Matthew L. Walker, County Administrator
Betty S. Muncy, Assistant County Administrator
Heather W. Lewis, County Attorney

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Kimbrough called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. for the purpose of conducting a work session to ratify the purchase of 1793 General Puller Highway and discussion on the HRSD/Sewer project.

RATIFY PURCHASE OF THE LATIMORE PROPERTY

Mrs. Lewis stated after review, a discrepancy was found in the minutes from the March 1st, Board of Supervisor's meeting. The minutes had the purchase price for the Latimore property listed as \$95,000; however, the actual purchase price of this property is \$99,000. Mrs. Lewis said they would like to close on the property and would need the Board to amend their motion made at the March 1st meeting to authorize the Chairman to sign all documents necessary for the purchase of tax map number 27-51, which is located at 1793 General Puller Highway for \$99,000, plus closing costs, which would include title, binder, insurance and survey.

A motion authorizing the Chairman to sign the necessary documents to close on the purchase of the Latimore property, Tax Map #27-51 for \$99,000,00 plus closing costs, was made by Supervisor Harris and seconded by Supervisor Jessie and carried by the following roll call: Supervisor Williams – Aye, Supervisor Koontz – Aye, Supervisor Harris – Aye, Supervisor Jessie – Aye and Chairman Kimbrough – Aye.

SEWER PROJECT DISCUSSION

Mr. Turner, Timmons representative, gave a brief background of the project leading up to this work session, stating the preliminary engineering report was submitted. He stated the criteria for connecting to the sewer system was customers must be served by a community water system, adding that the billing is based on metered water consumption. He recommended the sewer system be deployed in the same fashion as the water system; whereas, Deltaville would be the first phase with an estimated cost of \$13 million. Mr. Turner provided an application that he plans on submitting to DEQ and to the Virginia Clean Water Revolving Loan Fund, due July 1, 2022.

Mr. Turner presented a breakdown of the phases of the project and stated that there is potential for 520 customers with future expansion for an additional 133. He said the Deltaville phase flow rate comes in under HRSD's allowable rate. Mr. Turner proposed a low-pressure system in Deltaville be constructed with E one pumps and the flow would be conveyed to a new pump station located near where the water system booster pump station would be deployed behind the Deltaville Market. He added that the prior vacuum system that was originally proposed had more pump stations and costs associated with the deployment was much more than the \$13 million they have proposed.

Mr. Harris asked what the process would be if there was an influx of people than what is currently planned. Mr. Turner replied that an additional pump station would be required; however, the pipes currently being used could handle the additional capacity. He mentioned how it was previously discussed that down the road an additional pump station could be added but would be a County pump station. He added that the pump station for Deltaville would be designed, constructed and funded by Middlesex County and would be turned over to HRSD for ownership, operation and maintenance so any additional pump stations would be County owned and operated pump stations.

Mr. Walker mentioned the possibility of sharing the generator to save some money. He also said that there would be available space to be used for additional storage which will be valuable to the County with the current supply chain issues, this gives the County the ability to store materials.

Mr. Williams asked if the County puts in a pump station, does it get turned over to HRSD. Mr. Turner replied that HRSD policy is to own the terminal pump station and the force main that goes to their interceptor system and anything upstream from the pump station in the manhole would be County owned, operated and maintained; however, this would be something to discuss at the time.

Mr. Williams also asked what the revenue would be from the additional pump stations if they were required. Mr. Turner replied that the additional revenue would be associated with the new customer base and connection fees.

Mr. Turner explained the two components of the sewer bill, first is the collection and conveyance of the County system and there is conveyance and treatment. HRSD's rate schedule has two components, HRSD will collect the conveyance and treatment portion of the cost per 1000 gallons, so there is a percentage that would go to the County and a percentage that would go to HRSD.

Mr. Turner went on to give a brief overview of the design concept of the Deltaville pump station. Mrs. Lewis asked for confirmation that it would be aesthetically pleasing since it can be seen. Mr. Turner replied yes and added that they could adopt the same architectural effects of surrounding structures.

Mr. Jessie asked what the dimensions of the building would be, and Mr. Turner replied that it is a relatively small structure about 20' x 20' and will be used to house the electrical equipment and the VFDs and motor controllers.

Mr. Turner said the agreement between HRSD and the County states the County will construct and finance the construction of the pump station and a portion of the force main up to Parson's Lane and then HRSD will be responsible for extending the remainder of the force main, down to General Puller Highway to Hartfield and the homeowner will be responsible for the connection to the home and the grinder pump; the isolation valve normally will be the line of demarcation between County and property owner's responsibility.

Mr. Walker stated that in anticipation of concerns regarding affordability to connect to this system, there are two solutions in place, the first is having a non-mandatory connection policy and the other is assisting families with connection fees by establishing a connection grant program to help lower and moderate-income families pay the fees associated with connecting to the system. He went on to state that initially there was \$60,000.00 funding from the grant; however, the application was for \$800,000 just to be safe over a period of six years. He hopes that this will help the low-moderate income families pay the total fee and the moderate-income families, these families don't quite meet the low-income threshold, will have help with 50% of their fees. Mr. Walker stated that although this is very helpful, they have found that most people do not want the \$20-\$40 monthly bill and he added there is a possibility of a utility bill subsidy; however, this sets a bad precedent for the future.

Mr. Williams asked how they determine moderate income family and Mr. Walker replied they partnered with the Middlesex Department of Social Service and used the state chart.

Mr. Harris asked if they switched to mandatory hookups, could they mandate specific areas or would it have to cover the entire county. Mrs. Lewis replied that it could create a sewer district for a certain area and have their own specific rules. Mr. Walker agreed with Mrs. Lewis.

Mr. Kimbrough asked could mandatory hookups be for new construction only. Mr. Walker replied that he believes it is possible, but it would be an involved process. Mrs. Lewis added that to her understanding, it must be a district so it could have challenges but is possible.

Mr. Walker explained in more detail, the County decided where they wanted the water and sewer service areas adding that if someone lives outside of the service areas, there is not an option to connect to sewer. Mr. Walker stated if an area did not come forward and request to be part of the study, they were not included. Mr. Walker also stated that he would not recommend the Board wanting to serve more areas since it goes against the comprehensive plan which calls for preserving the rural character and keeping the vast majority of Middlesex rural and would involve more work and money. Mrs. Lewis reminded the Board that in the future if they decide on mandatory connection for new construction, there is a pump and haul ordinance which states you must connect once it is available.

Mr. Turner discussed the total cost estimated in the PER is at just below \$13 million and recommended that one application be submitted to DEQ to deploy all the sewer system in Deltaville phase 1.

Mr. Turner also discussed Topping, showing a layout of the system. He explained they will install a meter a Greys Point campground and the campground would be responsible for conveying all the flow from the campground to the County system. He added due to the elevation of the campground in comparison to the pump station, they have proposed to install 800 feet of gravity sewer.

Mr. Turner also discussed the placement of the water main and the decision to move it closer to Greys Point Rd, they did a 10-foot offset as per the Health Department's requirements. He said that he spoke to HRSD and learned that HRSD wanted a 10 foot easement on either side of the force main for future operation and maintenance. He does not believe this is practical along portions of the alignment without additional easements. Mr. Turner and Mr. Walker have been discussing changing the alignment from one side of the road to the other. This will need to be discussed with HRSD to see if it is a change they want to do now or do they want to start obtaining easements on the other side of the road.

Mrs. Lewis asked if this would put us in VDOT's right of way. Mr. Turner stated that there is about 60 feet between the edge of the pavement and the edge of the right away and then Dominion Power has an easement, so there is more real estate and fewer utilities than is on the west side of the road. Mrs. Lewis stated that the work would be with VDOT and not the property owners. Mr. Turner supported that statement adding that they would obtain a land permit from VDOT to use the VDOT right of way. Mr. Turner explained this is not an easement but a land use permit allowing the pipe to be installed within the VDOT right of way. Mr. Walker mentioned Saluda, where they worked with HRSD to locate some of the forced main and had to obtain an exception through the VDOT exception process. Mr. Walker added that there is more area to use on the east side of the road, even though originally, the plan was to utilize the west side of the street.

Mr. Koontz asked why this was not started on the other side to begin with. Mr. Turner added that is where the HRSD main is located and were trying to avoid approximately a half a million in trenchless crossings to get across Greys Point Road.

Mr. Turner also mentioned an encroachment agreement with Dominion Power. If VDOT is not available, this would be another option. He then spoke of a similar project where this was the alternative that they used.

Mr. Walker provided a summary for the Board. He stated they are leaning more towards the LPS system, these don't have to be dug as deep as the gravity sewer lines, adding this is easier to install and much easier in avoiding existing utilities.

Mr. Turner stated that the design is for a gravity system of about 600 feet due to the difference in elevation between Greys Point to the pump station being downhill. He added that since the gravity system was discussed at previous meetings, therefore he is pointing this out. He went on to discuss more in depth into the design of the system.

Mr. Walker added that this site was laid out in a way that even though it is close to the road, it is still buffered and out of view. He also mentioned that this will also accommodate a new road when needed for commercial purposes.

Mr. Williams asked if it was less expensive the deeper it is installed. Mr. Turner stated that would depend on several factors such as existing utilities, groundwater table and the type of soil you would deal with.

Mr. Williams asked what the cost obligation for the county would be. Mr. Turner replied that currently the County will pay for the gravity system, the meter vault from Greys Point campground and then from the connection point. From there all the way up to General Puller Highway will be HRSD's responsibility.

Mr. Turner added that the construction cost is \$2.5 million; however, if things move to the other side of the road, it will add approximately another half a million, for an approximate total of \$3 million for the Topping system deployment. He added that there is definitely a need with the 750 customers and the possible expansion of another 200.

Mr. Burford stated that HRSD is spending over \$30 million, and the long-term financial model states in approximately 35 years, the revenue that HRSD generates from the system in Middlesex County will pay for itself. If this was a private company, this wouldn't be viable.

Mr. Walker stated that the County has always been responsible for their portion of the collection system and what HRSD is responsible for is the interceptor main that would leave from the Urbanna treatment plant to just south of Dixie in Mathews County.

Mr. Turner went on to discuss Cooks Corner, Saluda and Hartfield and the concerns the County had with the gravity system costs for Cooks Corner being excessive and were possibly considering a LPS. He stated the estimated cost of implementing this would be \$1.5 million. Mr. Walker asked if this was including engineering and related costs. Mr. Turner stated that it includes engineering but does not include easements.

Mr. Turner continued his presentation for Cooks Corner, Saluda and Hartfield and stated that he spoke with HRSD and was reminded that the decisions and presentations for the County would fall under the planning and operations department. He said that the pump station and the force main at Cooks Corner is an integral part of the entire Middlesex County sewer system.

Mr. Walker stated HRSD needed costs to convert Cooks Corner over to an LPS type system is \$3.31 million, adding the \$1.526 and the \$265,000 for engineering for an estimated total of \$4.6 million.

Mr. Walker stated that he believes it is too late to move away from the system chosen for Cooks Corner but believes there is a beneficial cost savings for Saluda and Hartfield worth pivoting and going with the LPS. Mr. Walker's recommendation would be to continue with the gravity system at Cooks Corner and go with LPS for Saluda and Hartfield.

Mr. Burford stated that the accurate number for Cooks Corner is \$4.614369 so there should be no changes unless change orders are made during construction but there is also a 5% contingency to cover any unforeseen issues.

Mrs. Lewis asked, if before change orders go into effect, either the in-house engineer or Timmons engineer would be consulted, especially if there would be a substantial cost change. Mr. Burford said he would have to look to see what the agreement states for change orders but added that there is a process they go through for change orders and costs.

Mr. Burford stated that the LPS cost is approximately \$4.8-4.9 million and the gravity system is currently \$4.6 million.

A motion authorizing HRSD to move forward with the gravity system at Cooks Corner as previously planned and not exceeding \$4,614,369.00 was made by Supervisor Koontz and seconded by Supervisor Jessie and carried by the following roll call: Supervisor Koontz – Aye, Supervisor Harris – Aye, Supervisor Jessie – Aye, Supervisor Williams – Aye and Chairman Kimbrough – Aye.

Mr. Walker stated that if they want to engage Timmons to perform the workforce, a proposal on engineering costs would be needed. Mr. Walker recommends requesting the costs from Timmons and continuing the pause so no work continues on the gravity system.

Mr. Burford asked if this meant moving forward with the pump station design in Hartfield. Mr. Turner stated that was correct and added there was no discussion to pause. Mr. Burford stated if they decide on the LPS in Hartfield, the force main would need to be extended. Mr. Burford, Mr. Turner and Mr. Walker continued explaining the map and design break down for the project.

Mr. Koontz expressed his concern with having a contractor that is doing the work also being the one that is recommending doing the work. Mr. Koontz requested that Timmons explain the pros and cons of LPS or gravity and why should one be considered over the other. He does not feel he is receiving the answers to his questions.

Mr. Kimbrough said they are entertaining the idea of having Timmons engaging them to do a cost estimate for a LPS in Hartfield for a potential capital savings of more than one million dollars in order to warrant taking on the maintenance and operation obligations.

Mr. Walker stated that LPS is substantially less expensive than the deeper gravity; it is 17 feet for the deep gravity but only 3 feet for the LPS.

Mr. Koontz said that regardless of whether they go with gravity or LPS, he still needs to know what the engineering costs would be and wants to know if they are saving money by having the system reengineered or not.

Mr. Burford stated if they run a forced main down General Puller Highway it would be cleaner, and engineering and construction costs would be significantly lower. If a LPS is deployed in Hartfield, they would have to have a low pressure main on each side of the road and the design costs for the LPS would be between \$400,000-\$500,000. They do not have the hook up information to know how many people can hook up to the sewer system.

Mr. Walker recommended asking Mr. Turner to provide an estimate for engineering costs for the LPR system in Saluda and Hartfield and have it available at the July 12th meeting and have the gravity sewer lines in those two projects on pause.

Mr. Koontz asked if this hurts anything for the timing. He would like to wait until July 12th when they have the estimates back from Timmons. Mr. Burford stated that pausing the project made sense. Nothing has been finalized so this is a good time to pause.

Mr. Williams asked what Mr. Burford's recommendation would be and Mr. Burford stated for the gravity sewer system, it takes the responsibility from the property owner. He added that the gravity system is owned and operated by HRSD and revenue will not come back to the county. He stressed the amount of construction involved in the project and said the Board would be receiving calls from property owners.

Mr. Burford stated the class 3 estimate for a gravity system in Hartfield is \$3,931,142 minus 20% - plus 30% which could run from \$3,144,910 - \$5,110,480. The class 3 estimate for a gravity system in Saluda is \$1,014,530.20, minus 20% - plus 30% which could run from \$811,620 - \$1,318,890.

Mr. Kimbrough adjourned the meeting at 11:00 a.m.

Lud H. Kimbrough, III, Chairman
Board of Supervisors