



January 28, 2020 – Superintendent’s Report

ADMIN UPDATE:

We are seeking approval of DRF #84 this evening for Glenroy Construction, for work on our wellfield improvements project. We recommend approval of this pay app #8.

We recently received an inquiry from a customer who asked if there was an “opt out” provision for customers who do not wish to have the new Orion cellular meters installed. The reason stated was one of sensitivity to radio frequency (RF) waves emitted by the transmitters on the meters. After researching this issue, it is the Utility management’s position that these devices pose no more threat than a cell phone, which is essentially what they are. These types of RF waves are known as non-ionizing, meaning that they are on the complete opposite end of the spectrum from the more harmful ionizing-type waves, commonly known as gamma or x-rays. The impact of the water meter cellular transmitters is really no different than the normal cell phone, w-fi router or computer. Most meters are located outside in meter pits, further reducing exposure to these RF waves. Unfortunately, there is a lot of misinformation out there concerning these types of meters, also known as “smart meters” and we have spoken with our vendor in addition to our own research and we are confident that these meters do not pose any type of health threat. However, we do not wish to downplay the concerns of our customers either. In that vein, we will be happy to convert inside meters to outside meter pit installations if the customer so chooses. That is a program we have been pursuing for some time anyway in order to eliminate the inconvenience associated with access to meters located inside homes. The scheduling of these meter relocations would of course be driven by our Utility managers. We do not recommend having an “opt out” program with respect to our metering program.

We are proceeding well on the Franklin Road water main project and do not anticipate going beyond the timeline the contractor stated, provided the weather holds and we don’t find any additional buried “surprises” like we did at 46th & Franklin.

We would like to welcome our new Director of Engineering, Sri Venugopalan to the staff! He has hit the ground running as the saying goes and we are getting him involved in planning and strategizing, as well as assisting us in managing projects. His main areas of focus will be Stormwater and Roads, but will also be providing engineering oversight and project management services on our water and sanitary sewer projects. We anticipate that his involvement will greatly enhance our operations and help us improve up our oversight and management of our capital projects.

We would also like to remind our customers that there is an awful lot of capital improvements projects underway. There are now, and will be in the future, impacts on roads such as lane restrictions and road closures. Our recommendation is for people to avoid these areas whenever possible. The areas with the activity include Franklin Road from 47th to 45th. 47th Street from Richardt to Franklin Road. Payton Avenue from 47th to 48th. And coming soon, water main work in the Brookhaven area. The contractors will be providing advance notice of road closures/restrictions as well as marking detour routes. It is best to try and plan alternative routes to avoid these areas for safety and traffic flow reasons.

The contractor will also soon be starting work on the new storm sewer improvements in Richardt Street from 47th to 48th and thence east along 48th to just east of Longworth Drive. This work will be starting in the spring

and will probably take us right into September/October. It includes storm water work as well as a new sewer main installation along 48th Street east of Richardt. There will be lane restrictions and sometimes full closures on this project as well. Prior to the main part of the construction activity, the contractor will be out performing investigative “potholing” to locate existing utility lines as well as removing certain trees that are in conflict with the project.

Again, our recommendation is to avoid these areas as much as possible. More information from the contractor will be forthcoming as we near the start.

I also need to apologize for a typo in the January Lawrence Lift, in which I mentioned that the Statement Fee will be initiated in July of 2021, instead of July 2020, as was intended. The second Phase of the Statement Fee will start in July of 2021. The Statement Fee will start at \$1.00/month in July 2020 and rise to \$2/month in July of 2021.

We have recently completed work on separating services in the old Standish Estates development, which was not completed back when the city first took over the water services on Fort Harrison. The work went smoothly and we encountered no major difficulties, but the yard restoration work will have to wait until the spring. There are about 14 more to complete, and we will tackle them as arrangements can be made with the existing property owners.

Operational Data:

SANITARY SEWER SYSTEM

- Performing routine maintenance and upkeep on lift stations and grinder pump stations.

LOCATES/LEAK LOCATING/VALVE TURNING/HYDRANT MAINTENANCE/INSPECTIONS

- Performing routine inspections, emergency shut outs for repairs, valve exercising, valve box repairs, and fire hydrant testing/inspections.

WATER DISTRIBUTION

- Performing routine water line repairs, service line repairs, fire hydrant replacements, vehicle repairs, and maintaining street and sidewalk cuts until final restorations can be made.

WATER PLANT/WELL ACTIVITY

- Performing routine maintenance and daily routines to make sure water treatment plants are operating properly.

BUSINESS OFFICE/SERVICE DEPARTMENT

December Totals

- 14905 Active accounts.
- 1545 Work orders completed.

BILLING ADJUSTMENTS:

7842 E. 46th St. – customer is requesting an adjustment in the sewer portion of the bill for the amount of \$278.58 due to a service line leak. We recommend approval.

8140 Hazen Way – customer is requesting an adjustment in the sewer portion of the bill in the amount of \$1034.57 due to a slab leak. We recommend approval.