



## **November 28, 2023 – Superintendent’s Report**

### **ADMIN UPDATE:**

The Utilities are seeking approval of Change Order No. 11 from American Structurepoint to decrease the 2022 Sewer and Manhole Rehabilitation Project by \$72,114.35. After reviewing the final quantities for the project, the total amounts came in under the amounts that were in the contract.

The Utilities are seeking approval of Amendment No. 1 from Wessler Engineering to increase the GIS Consulting Services by \$43,400.00 for additional work to add additional water and sewer assets captured in the field into the GIS database. The GIS database is a key component of both our water and sanitary sewer Asset Management Plans. We recommend approval of this amendment.

The Utilities are seeking approval of Task Order No. 3 from Wessler Engineering for Sanitary Standards Updates not to exceed \$22,100.00. This is to update the current Construction Standards and Standard Details for sewer installations City of Lawrence, last revised in 2010.

The Utilities are seeking approval of Task Order No. 17 from Wessler Engineering for Water Standards Updates not to exceed \$21,300.00. This is to update the Construction Standards and the Standard Details for water installations in the City of Lawrence, last revised in 2010.

The Utilities are seeking approval of Task Order No. 18 from Wessler Engineering for Asset Management Plan Update and Water Valuation not to exceed \$51,000.00. The Water Master Plan (aka Water Asset Management Plan) was created in 2016 and is due for an update given the tremendous amount of work that has been completed since then. All of this work will have increased the value of the city’s water utility assets, and an update of the water valuation is needed.

The Utility is seeking approval of Amendment 3 to Task Order 5 with ASI in the amount of \$31,500 to cover the additional costs to update the sewer hydraulic model. We recommend approval of this Amendment.

The Utility is also in the process of rolling out our new on-line bill pay platform, which is a project that was needed in order to address the issues we experienced with the previous upgrade that did not achieve the desired result. After much hard work by our Controller Tyler Douthit and his staff, our Business Office Manager Cathy Retmier and her staff, we believe this upgrade to our on-line bill pay features will provide the level of service our customers deserve. Information about the upgrade and timeline for implementation can be found on the utility page of the city’s website here: <http://lupaymentupdate.com/home-en/#timeline>.

The Sewer Utility received approval from the EPA to extend the deadline for submittal of the Sanitary Sewer Corrective Action Plan to February 2, 2024. ASI is working on the additional modeling work that EPA requested, and which gave rise to the time extension request.

After 38 years of employment here in the city, I have decided to retire effective January 1, 2024. It has been a pleasure working with Mayor Collier and this Board for the past eight years as Superintendent and I take a lot of pride in what has been accomplished in improving the water and sanitary sewer utilities. We have brought the water utility back from the precipice of financial failure, and then began our long-overdue program of capital improvements, which continues to this day. I must also thank the Council for their votes to increase rates back in 2017 for water and again in 2022 for sewer, which was needed in order to get all this work accomplished. All three of our water treatment plants have been renovated, two of them extensively (Richardt and Fort Harrison), a new state of the art SCADA system was installed linking all of our water assets for better control and monitoring as well as improved management efficiency; our elevated storage tanks have been renovated, the Oaklandon tank both inside and out, and the 52<sup>nd</sup> Street tank underwent an interior recoating and completion of the safety and

structural improvements that could not be completed in 2014 due to lack of funding; there have been numerous well improvements including the addition of stand-by generators in the Fort and Indian Lake wellfields so that all three of our water treatment plants and well sources can produce water in the event of a power outage affecting any one, or all of them; approximately 40,000 linear feet of new water mains has been installed, most all of it in the older parts of the city. To date, we have replaced roughly 7,500 water meters, upgrading them to the latest technology, as part of our ongoing meter replacement program.

On the sewer side, while we were unable to get the rates adjusted on the timeline we desired due to the pandemic, we did accomplish that in 2022. While the sewer financial condition is slowly improving, there are still plenty of challenges ahead for the sewer utility. There have been improvements regardless, namely the completion of the Lift Station 19 renovation project, the Elmhurst Basin Sewer main Rehab Project and most recently, the completion of the 2022 Sewer Main and Manhole Rehab Project, funded with a SWIF grant from the IFA along with a matching amount from the city's ARPA funds. We have also started the Fort Harrison Sanitary Sewer Capacity Improvements Project, which is about halfway completed at this writing. But we also received a new EPA order in 2021, which will have to be top priority in 2024 and beyond with respect to compliance with the order.

But overall, I am confident and pleased to report that both utilities are in much better condition than they were when I started as Superintendent. None of this would have been possible without the great team of people at Lawrence Utilities, who continue to work diligently, professionally and effectively each and every day to operate these utilities. There are certainly still some challenges to meet, but there are always challenges to meet in any utility operation as it is such a dynamic business where things can turn on a dime. It is my hope that the new administration recognizes the importance of continuity in the utility operations and the value of the staff who work there. Thanks to the solid team at LU, the Mayor, Controllers Fenwick and Douthit, and this Board and Councilors who supported our rate increases, I have accomplished my primary goal of leaving the utility operations in much better shape than they were in back in 2016 and I look forward to retirement with great satisfaction.

Thank You!  
Scott

#### **Operational Data:**

##### **Sanitary Sewer System**

- Performing routine maintenance and upkeep on lift stations and grinder pump stations.
- Performing routine maintenance on the gravity sanitary sewer collection system.
- Working with engineers and contractors as necessary on all Lawrence Utilities Capital projects.

##### **Water Distribution Underground Operations**

- Performing routine inspections, emergency shut outs for repairs, valve exercising, valve box repairs, and fire hydrant testing/inspections.
- Performing routine water line repairs, service line repairs, fire hydrant repairs/replacements, vehicle repairs, and maintaining street and sidewalk cuts until final restorations can be made.
- Working with engineers and contractors as necessary on all Lawrence Utilities Capital projects.
- Performing testing and inspections as necessary for private projects in the city.

##### **Water Plant/Well activity**

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

**BILLING ADJUSTMENTS: None**