

02/21/12 Message

Water & Sewer Project

From Dan Flaig, Wright-Pierce on Fri., Feb. 17:

K & K is going through its equipment installation and check-out process this week and next week. The instrumentation contractor is completing check-out on the control panels, instruments, and VFDs. I instructed them to work out all the bugs and get everything checked and tested by the vendors prior to completing the field acceptance testing and training. The generator load bank test was scheduled to be completed Monday, Feb. 20. The generator technician will provide some initial transfer switch settings, but they should complete the final preference settings for the generator exercising schedule during the training session. The training and acceptance testing is tentatively scheduled for the week of March 6th. Wright-Pierce will reevaluate this schedule based on the status report received from K & K at the end of this week (Feb. 24). K & K will run one pump to fill the storage tank to complete the tank leak test and to flush and pressure test the water mains on Rte. 26. K & K will also submit all the O & M manuals prior to scheduling the site acceptance test and training.

There was a snafu with the licensed frequency application, and it may be at least two weeks before the permanent frequency is assigned for telemetry. They will see if a temporary frequency can be issued to allow the contractor to complete the telemetry testing between the booster pump station and tank.

Public Works Fuel Depot

Last week the Public Works Director, Fire Chief, and I met with two representatives from the MDEP to look at the design of the fuel depot and underground containment tank. We needed to know if the design was defective and if there is a recommended solution to the filling up of the tank with storm water runoff. We were very relieved to learn that the underground containment tank is not even needed for the type of double wall fuel tanks we have. The fuel tanks meet secondary containment requirements; therefore, DEP advised us to fill in the underground containment tank with sand or concrete and act as if it never existed. The MDEP reps said that we need a two alarm system and positive shut-off to bring the fueling station into compliance with regulations, however. We also need to run the vent pipe up through the canopy to make sure vapors are vented out. The town also needs to develop a spill plan, and the Fire Chief and Public Works Director will work on that. The MDEP will follow up with a letter in writing to explain their findings.

LP Gas

I have been looking into the town's association with its supplier of LP gas and found that different amounts are charged to the various municipal facilities that use LP gas. My investigation shows that the different charges are due to the fact that the town does not have a current contract with the supplier which guarantees a standard fixed rate for all town facilities. The town is charged the rate at the time of delivery. The town did have a contract with Amerigas at one time, but that contract expired without being renewed. The relationship continued, however.

My question to the Board of Selectmen is this – Do you want me to continue with the current situation, enter into a new contract with the current provider, or put the product and service out to sealed bid? Because of the way purchases are made for fuel, sealed bid is not required by town policy for this type of product; however, it makes sense to try to get the best price via sealed bid.

The Town Attorney has reviewed a proposed “Propane Supply Agreement & Equipment Lease Non-Residential” from Amerigas, and she advises that the Board of Selectmen may sign an agreement that exceeds one year only if the agreement includes a provision that says funding is subject to annual Town Meeting appropriation of funds, or in the alternative, says it is a one-year contract that automatically renews unless one party gives notice to the other of termination. She advises that in this case, it would be better to include the annual appropriation clause. It might make sense for us to bid LP gas with the City of Lewiston or AVCOG when next they put fuel out to bid; and in the meantime, continue with our current arrangement with Amerigas.

Western Maine Managers' Meeting

At last week's meeting of the Western Maine Managers, we heard presentations from public works employees and managers associated with the towns of Jay, Livermore Falls, and Wilton. The three towns have a joint agreement for shared

highway department services, and it appears to be working very well for the three towns. I think a similar opportunity exists for Poland and at least the Town of Mechanic Falls; and with a similar agreement in place coupled with comprehensive record-keeping of the services provided (as these three towns do), I think it could work very well and save the towns a significant amount of money.

Rapid Renewal for Motor Vehicle Re-registrations

I am constantly amazed by the line-up of citizens at the front counter, many wanting to register their motor vehicles. I am also interested that the Town of Poland does not currently offer the on-line motor vehicle re-registration service called, Rapid Renewal. The service is offered on-line using data-sharing software available from the state called InforME and allows citizens to renew their registrations and pay their excise tax with a credit card or bank account withdrawal online. When citizens re-register their vehicles on line, the town does lose the small agent fee, but it still receives the excise tax. This is another public service that increases access to municipal services and helps make life easier for busy residents. It also helps alleviate heavy traffic in the town office. Please let me know what you think of offering this service to Poland residents, as I highly recommend it. It has been available for several years now.

Electricity Contract for Library

During our budget process we discovered that the library building was paying the “standard offer” cost for electricity generation through CMP. The rest of the municipal buildings are covered by an agreement with Constellation NewEnergy at a lower rate than the standard offer. We went ahead and asked to include the library to the town’s association with Constellation NewEnergy, and in the future the library will be included in the contract that covers all town buildings.

AVCOG Executive Committee Meeting

Last week I attended the first meeting of the Executive Committee since the Town of Poland became a member of AVCOG again. The meeting was very informative, and even though I am not a member of the Executive Committee, the information I learned about AVCOG’s efforts was extremely valuable. With AVCOG, the Towns will be involved in a new process to develop the CEDS – Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy by submitting projects that may qualify for federal EDA funding; learn about Mobilize Maine and the collaborative, regional process to develop strategic priorities for environmental and economic sustainability; work with AVCOG’s transportation planners on projects to submit for the MDOT’s two-year budget; and participate in the regional household hazardous waste program; among other things. I intend to go to a legislative public hearing about rail transportation improvements for Western Maine this Friday.

The AVCOG annual General Assembly meeting will be held Wednesday, April 11th at the Hilton Garden Inn in Auburn from 4:00 p.m. through the dinner hour of 6:00 to celebrate 50 years of regional cooperation and collaboration. Maine Humorist, Gary Crocker, will be present for entertainment after the dinner hour. More information will follow.

MMWAC Executive Committee Meeting

Today I attended a meeting of the MMWAC Executive Committee to hear about what they’re working on first-hand. Poland’s representative, Dave Corcoran, is currently away on vacation, so he did not attend today. The waste-to-energy plant is seeing reduced waste coming to the facility due to the slow economy, but it continues to run efficiently and at a very reasonable price to its original members nonetheless.