

MINUTES –

## Hull WATER COMMITTEE

Tuesday, Nov. 28, 2017 at 5:30 p.m.

TOWN OF HULL MUNICIPAL BUILDING  
4550 Wojcik Memorial DR., Stevens Point, WI 54482



1) **Call to order:** The meeting of the **Hull Water Committee** was called to order on Tuesday, Nov. 28, 2017 at 5:30 p.m. by Chairperson John Holdridge at the Hull Municipal Building, 4550 Wojcik Memorial Drive, Stevens Point, WI 54482.

Present: Chair: John Holdridge, Committee Members: Dave Pederson, Bill DeVita, Karen Hannon, Ken Ramage, Rick Stautz, Madge Bishop, Matt Johnson, and Water Committee Secretary: Patty Amman.

Excused: Mike Bohlman

Others: Tim Zimmerman – Portage County Groundwater Advisory Committee representative, Jen McNelly – Water Resource Specialist for Portage County, Bill Omernick, Dave Wilz

2) **Approval of minutes of the Hull Water Committee meeting of Sept. 26, 2017.**

- John H. commented there was a good discussion with Joel Lemke recorded in the minutes about the history of City of Stevens Point water efforts and felt it was the best discussion he had seen.

- John asked Jen McNelly (in referring to page 6 of the minutes) about why Portage County is unique in that it has rural wellhead protection. Jen explained it means there is a wellhead protection area that extends outside of the City's municipal boundaries. This is rare since most cities have their wellhead protection extending only up to the edge of their municipal boundary. Only a handful of counties have something that extends beyond the municipal boundary. In this case, although it protects the City of Stevens Point's municipal wells and recharge area, it restricts certain land uses within the different wellhead protection zones to protect this area. Karen Hannon tried to use that fact in addressing her well issues. Jen said the Hannon's are within Zone B of the Wellhead Protection Area and agriculture within that zone must have a 'farm plan'. Apparently that isn't specifically defined, nor is it being enforced. That raised some questions for the County and they need to take a closer look at that. Karen said the County has been very helpful to them and although problems have been identified,

solutions are still lacking. Jen said it's a challenging situation where they are trying to find solutions, but don't have one at present.

- Enforcement of the Wellhead Protection Ordinance lies with the County in their Planning and Zoning Department and the Land Conservation Department. Jen said it is used more from a planning perspective, especially looking at new land uses, new developments, subdividing of lots and sale of lots. With new Hull subdivisions, there is a 2 acre minimum if they are on private septic systems. The 2 acre size helps provide adequate land to filter the private septic system.

- The DNR requires all municipal wells to have wellhead protection but how far that extends is variable.

- Rick Stautz shared that when he worked for the City of Shawano's water department, they had a difficult time working with properties in the surrounding townships that bordered the City. They had a wellhead protection zone but no enforcement.

- Karen said although they are located within the wellhead protection zone, that fact didn't help them any with their water situation.

- John said he felt we need something within Hull to protect our private wells.

*A motion was made by Rick Stautz to approve the 9-26-17 Hull Water Committee meeting minutes. Motion was seconded by Dave Pederson. Motion passed.*

### **3) Citizens wishing to address the Committee on non-agenda items may bring them up at this time. Citizens wishing to address agenda items can do so when the agenda item is under discussion.**

- Karen Hannon said Katrina Shankland has introduced 'Clean Water Legislation' which would be \$100,000 annually for the DNR to administer private well testing in a grant program which has bipartisan support. This would be to help people test their private wells. Jen McNelly said Katrina has been working on it awhile and felt it might pass within the next session.

- John H. had a discussion with Katrina last week regarding the hazardous traffic situation along Hwy. 10 E. near Badger Avenue. Katrina agreed it is bad and she lives just north of there.

### **4) Input – chairperson and committee members.**

- John said a copy of the Well #11 agreement between Hull and the City was recently sent out for the various signatures needed on the document. Once all have signed off on the document, it will be an official agreement. John expressed appreciation to those who attended the various public meetings held regarding the agreement and the good questions posed. A very civil discussion. This is a huge agreement. John would like the Town to get a good size map showing more specifically where the well guarantee area is.

- Tim Zimmerman asked if the new well agreement took into account water quality since some of the replacement wells had to go deeper and encountered things like more iron. John and Dave Wilz explained there was a lot of discussion about that topic with the City and between the lawyers and ultimately, the City would not agree to deal with quality issues since it would be difficult to enforce. John also explained in the agreement, a sand-point well that needs replacing (due to increased pumping of Well #11) would have 80% of the cost covered if being replaced with a drilled well. A drilled well that needs replacing would be covered 100% if replaced with a deeper drilled well.
- Matt Johnson pointed out that even with the Well #11 agreement, every Hull citizen would still have the option to pursue their own suit against the City if they lost water. The new agreement is available to Hull citizens who want to make use of it should their well fail in the future as a result of Well #11 pumping.
- Dave Wilz explained the 27 people who got a partial compensation for their failed wells did try to fight for the quality issue too, but to no avail. Their partial compensation, after legal expenses were taken out, ran around 30 some percent of the actual cost of replacement of their well.
- Discussion about the fact that quality to some means aesthetic issues while to others it may mean a health standard is in question.
- Discussion about how nitrate issues, which is a health issue, tends to get better when a well is put deeper. Karen Hannon pointed out that is not always the case and Bill DeVita said it depends upon the location. When Dave W. drilled a new, deeper well, his nitrates went from about 11 ppm down to 2 ppm.
- In this new agreement, if the City ends up putting in municipal water lines to Hull private homes to address failed wells (which is one possible option for the future), there is no annexation into the City required. Generally, right now, if anyone wants to have municipal water and sewer, they need to annex to the City first.
- As part of the agreement, 30 days after signing it, the City will pay Hull \$47,000 to help defray part of the hydrologist costs incurred by the Town.
- Dave Wilz pointed out there were 2 of the best water law lawyers in the state and maybe the Midwest who worked out this agreement between Hull and the City of Stevens Point. Dave also noted because of the agreement and the negotiations leading up to it, the pumping of Well #11 has remained stable and not increased. With this agreement, Hull has something set up for the future to help Hull citizens but Dave hopes no future Hull wells will fail and we never have to use the agreement.
- Tim Z. asked about how the process worked when Well #11 first went in and what was required in terms of testing. Bill DeVita explained the DNR minimum of a 72 hour pump test to determine draw down was required for testing of a new municipal well. But Bill said what happens in 72 hours can be different than what happens when a hi-cap or municipal well goes into production mode. It can take a minimum of 2 years to see what happens with the draw down in the recharge zone or zone of influence. John pointed out that George Kraft of the University said at the beginning that the 72 hour pump test would not be adequate or long enough to determine accurate results.

- John talked about a newspaper article referencing Stevens Point raising their municipal water rates potentially by 15%. There was also an article about Plover using a new treatment to help clean their water prior to it being discharged into the River.

## **5) Portage County Groundwater Questionnaire Summaries.**

- A copy of the County questionnaire had been sent to the Water Committee members as well as the Hull Board. There were 7 responding persons and the compiled information was listed 1-7 for each answered question. The compiled answers were shared in a printout with this group. Answers seemed similar between the different 7 respondents as people were probably thinking along the same lines.
- John thought the answer, “being proactive instead of reactive” to water issues was a good statement. Also a good idea of possibly disseminating water information by calling an annual meeting to inform all town citizens of current water issues.
- Jen said the responses were similar to other communities with the biggest differences being specific concerns about Well #11, more focus on septic systems and land uses in Hull’s urban area. Also more emphasis on monitoring wells.

*A motion was made by Dave Pederson to accept the report on the compiled answers to the County questionnaire. Motion was seconded by Ken Ramage. Motion passed.*

## **6) Update: Portage County Water Survey Program – Jen McNelly.**

- Jen recapped the general history of the County water survey program, how it began, proceeded and where it’s at now. County Executive, Patty Dreier, had a conversation in 2016 with the University about the need for water quality data covering the entire County sampled all at the same time. GCAC had identified this as a need and it was something the County wanted to pursue as Portage County had never done a comprehensive county-wide water quality sampling project of this scope. There was an initial \$25,000 grant approved within the 2017 County budget to conduct this program to establish comprehensive baseline water quality data for the County. This was a one-time grant allotment for this initial sampling project. It paid for staff time, water testing, sampling and data analysis.
- Jen shared 2 maps which showed the grid system used to determine locations to get the water samples throughout the County. It starts with a 4 square mile grid system across Portage County, separated down further into a 16 grid system within the 4 mile grid. From the University, assistance was obtained from George Kraft, Bill DeVita and Kevin Masarik to set up the program. A random sampling of wells that could be easily replicated in the future was developed making it as consistent as possible so when it is done again, it can be done exactly the same way to get as comparable a results as possible.

- Jen said there were 228, 4-mile grid spaces in the County but since a few of those grid spaces had no private wells, there ended up being 214 actual water samples taken from the randomly selected household wells within the grid system. The County randomly choose one of the 16 squares within each 4-mile grid square to obtain a residential well water sample.
- Sampling was done over this past summer (2017) between June and August with the County partnering with the Center for Watershed Science & Education and the WEAL ([Water and Environmental Analysis Laboratory](#)) staff by having their students collect the 214 samples to ensure consistency in the sampling process. This was rather time and labor intensive taking a little longer to do than anticipated. The WEAL lab analyzed the water samples. Right now there is further refined analysis going on. All the water testing has been done and they have the preliminary results. The County is still in partnership with UWSP to do more in-depth analysis looking at well construction data (depth of well, year constructed) in correlation with the water quality test results and looking at possible influences from surrounding land uses like forest, ag, or residential. If ag use, possibility sorting out by different types of ag use (vegetable production, dairy production, etc.). Also looking at how lot density may affect the results. Then they will break down data into individual municipalities so municipality will get their own results for their area. Jen is hoping to have this process done by January 2018. Starting in Feb. 2018, public presentations on the results will be done to GCAC and local areas within the County.
- Water tests were the basic homeowner package minus bacteria as bacteria testing requires more time sensitive sampling not really applicable to this study at this time.
- Although there was this one-time allocation of money for this initial establishing of baseline water quality data in the County, the County is trying to set aside \$5,000 per year in the County budget to build up the fund until there is enough collected to replicate this sampling study again in a few years (3 to 5 years). The County will be working on customizing the long-term strategy for obtaining, analyzing and making use of the water quality data in the County.
- Homeowners each received a copy of their own water test results. If anything showed up as a red-flag in their individual tests, additional suggestions were offered for options for added testing. No hi-cap wells were tested, only residential drinking water wells.
- Kevin Masarik has indicated there is well depth or well construction information available on about 50% of the private wells. Data for that was required since 1988 but many wells date to before 1988.
- Other counties have done similar test studies like Portage County. Recently, Chippewa County and Waupaca County have done test programs. Each county does the test program a little differently. Counties get together, then, and compare the different strategies for testing and compare successes and challenges.
- Karen Hannon said this was an impressive project. Jen agreed but said it was very worthwhile.

- John H. asked how the County staff overcame homeowner reluctance in sharing data. Jen told homeowners their data is protected and results will not be pinpointed back to their specific location. It will, instead, go back to the 4-square mile grid so you wouldn't know, within 4 miles, exactly where a sample was taken. This was to help protect individual homeowner data privacy. The County also informed homeowners that if they have this sampling done, there are no legal ramifications based on the results. Even if a homeowner ends up with less than desirable water quality, they would not be forced to do anything about it. Rather, the purpose is for homeowner information and for the County to understand the water quality within Portage County.
- John H. asked how many households were tested within the Town of Hull and Jen thought around 4 to 6 households.
- At this point, the County is still sorting out the final analysis and also starting to put aside the \$5,000 a year in their budget to eventually replicate this test once enough money is allocated. Jen said data will be kept at the County and also at the University.
- Tim Z. asked about contrasting data between non-community wells (churches, taverns, etc.) with the households wells tested in this project. Jen said perhaps they will eventually, in the future, overlay the two different sets of data to see if there are any comparisons to be made between the two sources. That is not part of this particular project at this time.
- Jen said the County is tentatively looking at dividing the County into 4 quadrants and doing a presentation of the test results in each of those 4 areas plus one more presentation centrally located. They may also be providing some free nitrate screenings at those presentations for anyone who didn't have their water sampled but would like to get a rough idea of what their household well water nitrate level might be.
- John H. said this program is crucial to the whole learning process in helping citizens learn about their well and septic systems. And also crucial to have feedback to the towns.
- Marge B. asked when the next water test project would be and Jen said it's somewhat based on when the County has enough money set aside to do the test again, and it is the County's intention to do the testing process again. With changes in County administration, the budget process will need to be reviewed each year but Jen will continue to fight for funding to be added to each year's budget so the testing process can be done again in another 3 to 5 years.
- John said he felt this was a major first-step by the County to get involved in this whole issue.
- Jen M. felt it was a big win for the County in doing this testing which helped to fill in data gaps for areas in the County that had never had a water test in the past.

*A motion was made by Bill DeVita to accept the report given by Jen McNelly on the County-wide water sample testing program. Motion was seconded by Karen Hannon. Motion passed.*

**7) Status of installation of two (2) new monitoring wells in Emerald Forest and Stroik subdivisions area.**

- Bill Omernick of the Hull Road Crew staff updated the committee on the current status of the installation process of the 2 new monitoring wells. Bill said they had just completed that day the installation of the second new monitoring well. Each of the new monitoring wells was at about 22 feet and they hit water at about 11 feet for each. Right now, there's about 12 feet of water in each one. This might vary a little after the water settles a bit.

- The locations for the 2 new monitoring wells was determined by the map (influenced by Pete Arntsen) and also, the well in Emerald Forest was put inside the 90 degree street corner because the utility company said the inside corner would be a lot easier. Each monitoring well is raised up about 1 foot with a padlocked top and a box over it for security.

- Bill DeVita said to determine the flow pattern of the water, eventually someone (perhaps Pete Arntsen) will survey the wells. To get the water elevation on the 3 monitoring wells in that area, they triangulate to determine water flow direction. Bill D. didn't think there would be much difference between the elevations of the 3 monitoring wells but even a few tenths of an inch difference will help determine the water flow direction. The third monitoring well to be used in this process will probably be the County's monitoring well just north of these subdivisions off Torun Road. Bill D. said if a 4<sup>th</sup> monitoring well is needed, the ones on Ann Marie Court the University put in could be used.

- John said Hull's next step will be to determine water flow direction.

- Bill Omernick explained there were some issues with pipe quality during installation. Once they switched from imported pipe materials to U.S. made pipe materials, the problem was solved. Jen M. said the County has had similar experiences and problems with imported pipe and switched to U.S. made which then worked out for them.

**8) Household water sample collection system from Emerald Forest and Stroik subdivision households.**

- A handout was shared that showed the different homeowners that John H. has contacted and discussed water testing with. There were currently 4 on the list John has made contact with and there are 2 more homeowners John will be attempting to reach.

- Once John gets all his contacts made, he will put together a letter to each indicating what Hull's expectations are and how Hull will handle confidentiality.

- For the first year, Hull will collect samples every quarter starting in mid-February 2018. Hull will have water test sample bottles here at the municipal building for

pickup. The homeowner would get a bottle, take the water sample by a certain date indicated by Hull, bring it back to the Hull building and Hull would get the sample to the WEAL lab for testing.

- After the first year, will do sampling every 15 months.
- John talked about discussions with Joel Lemke in collecting water samples from the City monitoring wells and that data will be shared with Hull. Hull will be working with Joel on those details.
- John would like to give the Hull Town Board an update on Hull's water monitoring well installations at the January 2018 Board meeting and also discuss who at Hull will be in charge of keeping the data obtained through the routine water testing.

*A motion was made by Karen Hannon to approve the report on the status of the installation process for the 2 new monitoring wells and also the suggested water sample collection process for Emerald Forest and Stroik subdivision (agenda items #7 & #8). Motion was seconded by Madge Bishop. Motion passed.*

**9) 2018 Meeting Calendar for Hull Water Committee.**

- The next Water Committee meeting would be January 23, 2018. There is no meeting in December (of 2017 and 2018). Meetings would be every second month with a total of 6 meetings for 2018 for the Hull Water Committee.

*A motion was made by Bill DeVita to approve the 2018 Hull Water Committee meeting calendar. Motion was seconded by Matt Johnson. Motion passed.*

**10) Next meeting date: Tuesday, January 23, 2018, 5:30 p.m.**

**11) Adjournment. Meeting adjourned at 6:35 p.m.**

Respectfully submitted,

Patty Amman  
Water Committee Secretary  
Town of Hull, Portage County