



NORTHERN MORAIN WASTEWATER RECLAMATION DISTRICT

113 Timber Trail, Island Lake, Illinois 60042

SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES

March 19, 2020

Video Zoom Meeting: <https://zoom.us/j/5208665980>

Present by video through Zoom: Trustees: Ken Michaels, John Ragland, Timothy Brunn
District Manager: Mohammed Haque; District Clerk: Deborah Martin
Others: Superintendent Luke Markko

Present by audio through Zoom: Trustee Dena Battaglia, EIT/Staff Engineer Joe Lapastora

President Michaels called the meeting to order at 7:32 p.m. and stated that this Special Meeting was being held by video in order to keep to the Social Distancing mandate due to the COVID-19 pandemic. He stated this special meeting was called to discuss the District's readiness in light of the COVID-19 pandemic.

1. CALL TO ORDER:

Roll Call: Timothy Brunn – Absent for Roll Call, but joined in later
John Ragland - Present
Dena Battaglia - Present
Lydia Ryberg – Absent
Ken Michaels – Present

2. CORONAVIRUS CONCERNS AND LATEST STATE OF AFFAIRS

District Manager Haque reported to the Board that he and Superintendent Markko had met earlier when news of this virus first started becoming public and had put into motion a plan to stagger Operations staff. Manager Haque had also taken steps to start replacing older tower pc's with laptops and had worked with Bit Speed, our IT company, along with Joe Lapastora to upgrade these laptops allowing for remote work. Manager Haque told the Board that he had the Lobby closed to the public last week and the drive up closed to the public this week. He had staff test out the "work from home" process with staff able to take calls and use the billing and accounting software remotely from home. He stated that District Clerk Debi Martin and Assistant Clerk Madalina Roscan were working a few days from home; EIT Joe Lapastora was completely working remotely from home and Superintendent Markko had just set himself up today to work from home. Manager Haque explained that the idea was to have only himself at the Administrative office with one other staff member so that critical staff can distance themselves from one another so no one will get sick. The same is being done by staggering the Operations staff. Superintendent Markko reported to the Board that staff have been stocking up on supplies and chemicals and that the bald tires were replaced on the front-loader. Mr. Markko also told the Board that he had contacted our sludge hauler concerning the sludge available; he stated that there are IEPA limitations concerning the amount of sludge that a hauler can take, but felt it was more about the wet weather. He stated that we do have more drying beds available. District Manager Haque informed the Board that he and Superintendent Markko were working to also get the SCADA program up and running quickly in the event that the treatment plant needed to be run remotely or due to being short-staffed. He is also monitoring if the IEPA will loosen any regulatory requirements for wastewater treatment facilities during this time period. He reminded the Board that the Governor has issued an Executive order and that FOIA/OMA guidelines during this COVID-19 pandemic are included. He stated that having a contingency plan for the Administrative office was really being influenced by outside forces – if USPS shuts down, then the office will be extremely limited in functioning. He stated that if utilities go down, the District will be scrambling. Although the District does have generators, he explained they require diesel fuel. He added that all fuels were topped off this week. In the event of an Essential Service Order, Manager Haque felt that the District would go to Operational Staff only. He reminded the Board that in the event there are banking issues, he had included in the Board packets a screen shot of current bank balances with Chase and Blackhawk Bank. Manager Haque shared that he felt that these



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are unprecedented times and that there really isn't a game plan for this kind of situation. He stated that although the District does have a Continuity of Operations Plan, it did not give provisions for this kind of situation. *(At this time, Trustee Brunn joined the Zoom video meeting.)* Manager Haque shared that he felt that the District is way ahead of some of its counterparts, and that we have been proactive and have been able to take the right steps and are able to adapt to this historic moment in our history. Manager Haque asked the Board if they felt there was anything that he and the staff had missed, and if they had any concerns about the plans he has been putting into place. President Michaels expressed his gratitude that Manager Haque had the foresight to prepare the District and that he felt the District was very far ahead of other businesses and entities in dealing with remote work capabilities. Trustee Battaglia agreed and felt that having a staggered staff was an excellent choice. Trustee Ragland asked if Manager Haque has been in touch with other village and sanitary districts. Superintendent Markko explained that he had. Manager Haque stated that he will contact McHenry County Sheriff's Department to let them know that the District is considered an essential operation.

3. NEW BUSINESS:

(At this time, District Manager Haque asked that the Board discuss Agenda item #C first)

c. Approval of Ordinance Authorizing Emergency Powers and Procedures in Response to COVID-19

President Michaels asked Trustee Battaglia if she felt she needed time to read the document, because she has been ill and may have not had a chance to see her email earlier. The Board waited for her to read over the document.

Motion by Mr. Ragland to approve an Ordinance authorizing Emergency Powers and Procedures in response to COVID-19

2nd by Mrs. Battaglia

4 ayes 0 nays 1 absent

MOTION CARRIED

Roll Call Vote: Dena Battaglia - Aye
Timothy Brunn - Aye
John Ragland - Aye
Lydia Ryberg - Absent
Ken Michaels - Aye

b. Approval of Waiver of Late Fees and Postponement of District Disconnection Procedures

President Michaels shared with the Board that he had a discussion with Village of Island Lake Treasurer, Ed McGinty, who made mention of the large amount of red tags that the District asked the Village to hang to Island Lake residents who were delinquent in paying their sewer bills and had received Water Shut Off Notices. President Michaels stated that he spoke with District Clerk Debi Martin and District Manager Haque and found that there really weren't that many more than usual. Mr. McGinty had asked that considering the outbreak of COVID-19, that the District not ask the Village to shut anyone's water off for nonpayment of sewer bills. President Michaels stated that he did ask that the Village hang the red tags, and shared that the District would not ask the Village to shut off anyone's water. Manager Haque responded that the District would not shut off water or attempt to disconnect anyone from sanitary sewer. He stated that this was just an unsafe and unhealthy act during this pandemic. After discussion on whether to extend deferring of delinquency actions for more than 30 days, the Board took the following action:

Motion by Mr. Brunn to approve a Resolution authorizing the District Manager to make exceptions to the District Ordinances in response to the COVID-19 pandemic

2nd by Mrs. Battaglia

4 ayes 0 nays 1 absent

MOTION CARRIED

Roll Call Vote: Dena Battaglia - Aye
Timothy Brunn - Aye
John Ragland - Aye
Lydia Ryberg - Absent
Ken Michaels - Aye



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a. Declaration of State of Emergency for the COVID-19 Pandemic

District Manager recommended that the Board formally declare a State of Emergency for the COVID-19 pandemic authorizing him to make day-to-day decisions, to the benefit of the public, to ensure that the District's sewer system and treatment plant endure through this pandemic and operate to the best of it's ability and continue to provide services for the villages of Island Lake, Lakemoor and Port Barrington.

Motion by Mr. Brunn to have Northern Moraine Wastewater Reclamation District declare a State of Emergency due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

2nd by Mrs. Battaglia

4 ayes 0 nays 1 absent

MOTION CARRIED

Roll Call Vote: Dena Battaglia - Aye
Timothy Brunn - Aye
John Ragland - Aye
Lydia Ryberg - Absent
Ken Michaels - Aye

At this point District Clerk Debi Martin stated that she wanted to express to the Board her awe in District Manager Haque's leadership. She stated that he has kept ahead of this pandemic, conferring with other professionals and saw the need to prepare the District for this pandemic. She thanked Manager Haque for his leadership during this time of uncertainty.

4. OTHER BUSINESS - none

5. ADJOURN

Motion by President Michaels to adjourn at 8:06 p.m.

2nd Mrs. Battaglia

4 ayes 0 nays 1 absent

MOTION CARRIED



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AGENDA
SPECIAL MEETING

7:30 P.M. – March 19, 2020

Zoom Meeting: <https://zoom.us/j/5208665980>

- 1. CALL TO ORDER & ROLL CALL**
- 2. CORONAVIRUS CONCERNS AND LATEST STATE OF AFFAIRS**
- 3. NEW BUSINESS**
 - a. Approve Declaration of State of Emergency
 - b. Approve Waiver of Late Fees and Postponement of District Disconnection Procedures
 - c. Approve Ordinance Authorizing Emergency Powers and Procedures in Response to COVID-19
- 4. OTHER BUSINESS**
- 5. ADJOURN**

Posted to www.nmwrld.org - March 17, 2020