

Sewer Ordinance Committee - Summary Meeting Notes

Approved by Committee: December 4, 2023

Date: Monday, November 6, 2023

Time: 5:30 - 8:30 PM (dinner served)

Location: Stevenson City Hall

Desired Objectives/Summary Notes

Welcome / Housekeeping

Members approved the following: Charter, Group Agreements, Summary Notes

The group was surveyed in meeting 1 about Success Indicators for this Committee.

Discussion - See page 4 for the group's individual responses. An attempt to synthesize the input is represented below. There was no consensus on #1 due to a lack of ability to define "equitable/exorbitant."

1. Infrastructure Improvement and Expansion: Success ensures equitable sharing of financial impacts that do not burden residents with exorbitant costs when transitioning from septic to sewer and extending sewer lines while supporting small private development.

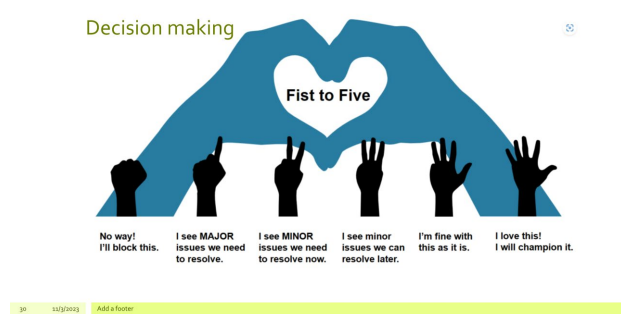
2. Informed Decision-Making: Success means that the committee sufficiently understands the scope of the issue and various financing solutions, builds trust in the decision-making process, and recommends middle-ground positions that are determined legal.

3. Inclusivity and Community Perspectives: Success entails considering all perspectives on the impacts of potential changes to the sewer ordinance and refraining from making decisions that benefit single perspectives or individuals. Success is improving trust by ensuring the committee understands the process, is supported to generate ideas to address sewer issues, and people feel heard and their time is valued. without consensus

Dinner Discussion:

Member sat at the table that represented their level of agreement with the following statement and discussed the various perspectives:

Assuming an equitable funding structure that does not burden residents with exorbitant costs or hinder small private development, I think sewer mainlines should be extended to City Limits by 2040, and a plan should be developed and implemented to maximize the number of parcels connected to the City Sewer System.



Full Scope of Waste Water Clarifiers/Sewer Effort - Continued Education and Presentation

Step 1: Understand the components and details of the Waste Water Clarifier/Sewer effort
Step 2: Education on all known financing options with staff's assessment. Power Point Attached.

Q&A/Clarification: aim to deepen our understanding but aren't becoming as expert as City staff today. Brainstorm and propose unidentified financing options for consideration and/or analysis by the Committee.

Generated Ideas:

Assess rates/fees for those on septic - Rick Jessel

Ready to serve line triggers

Cummulative Reserve Fund
*approximately 140 on septic

Waive SDC's for those on septic as an incentive to connect

Rates increase

Exercise:

Step 3: Given 3 real-life scenarios, gather small groups to help determine "equitable" financing solutions.

[COS: M2 Swr Cmte Exercise - Google Docs](#)

- Ratepayer should pay for most
 - Some openness to having developers or owners of vacant land pay for something
 - Think about 300 ft as a trigger
 - South Bend - 150 ft to property line for new development
- Aggressive city led projects to extend are preferred
 - Penalties for "ready to serve" should be considered
 - Use carrots to convert people
- Maximize pursuit of grant funding
- Minimize cost of design and construction to the extent possible

- Developers (of vacant land) pays for all
 - No zone/location as trigger
 - Even single homes?
- Existing homeowners on septic system
 - Low income should be subsidized **as much as possible**
 - Waive SDCs
 - Grants - CDBG, HEALing scars, USDA
 - Direct Legislature Request
 - Failure should pay for some (50/50?)
 - If system is operational, ratepayers should pay for all

Consider establishing a debt cap for each Development agreement:

1. someone is outside of 300 ft and you allow them to pay for a SDC once it's time to connect.
2. Offer to waive SDC for people who have functioning septic and a new sewer line to hook up within a XXX period of time.

We've identified our action items and know what our next steps are.

- Take input from the exercise and advance concepts for the next version of the ordinance and the City's financing policy for the group to discuss in meeting
- Shawn to help define septic failure for a small vs large lot
- Goal for meeting 3 is to review, discuss and aim for consensus on a proposal or set of recommendations to inform the next iteration of a sewer ordinance for City Council. Meeting is December 16th. A public hearing is undetermined at this date.

Convened 8:35

Attendance

Staff: City Administrator Leana Kinley, Public Works Director Carolyn Sourek, Community Development Director Ben Shumaker

Facilitator: Tracy Gratto

Committee:

Name	Signature	Name	Signature
Adam Miller	x	Mark Peterson	x
Brian McKenzie	x	Michael Johnson	x
Chuck Oldfield	absent	Rick Jessel	x
Dave Cox	x	Rick May	x
Gail Collins	x	Scott Anderson	x

Jeff Breckel	x	Shawn Van Pelt	x
Jenny Taylor	x	Wes Houston	x
Karen Rutledge	x		

Responses for: “In one sentence, please identify what success looks like at the end of the committee process.”

- This committee should finalize a recommendation to council for a fair and financially sound move from septic to sewer for all while the city extends lines, without halting small private development.
- Full scope of the problem is understood, trust in the decision-making process is built, and middle-ground positions are recommended.
- Have all perspectives about the impacts of possible changes to the sewer ordinance.
- I wish to better understand community member challenges and to identify opportunities to further advance our community sewer system with minimal impact (financial and otherwise) to all residents.
- For council and staff to find a reasonable method of advancing the city’s infrastructures without burdening private landowners with the exorbitant costs involved and/or devaluing their property.
- Better understanding by the community about how the process works, come up with ideas to address the city sewer issue.
- People felt heard and that the process/their time was worth it.
- agreement among most (hopefully all) members on a plan to move forward with sewer/septic that is fair and equitable to all members of our community, financial impacts shared equally by all citizens.
- An equitable path forward to a new/revised sewer ordinance with more sewer connections.
- To achieve the goal of the committee.
- Everyone shares the sewer experience, no one is hurt financially to the point of major expenses. Rick Jessel
- Statement of the problem, list of possible actions.
- To find a solution for extending w/s infrastructure without pricing out the local community. Brian
- I’d hope we have made quantifiable progress toward mitigating obstacles in completing needed infrastructure projects.
- City’s sewer policy provides for the logical and effective extension and provision of sewer services in a manner that does not place an unfair or inequitable financial burden on residents.
- Have the public trust in everything we do and be open to us.
- The city to ‘own’ on past decisions to move the city in the right direction.
- Make a decision based on the current residents they represent, not self-serving or ideological/network.