TOWN HALL MEETING

MAY 23, 2017

1830 HRS

Lucas Welch opened the Town Hall Meeting at 1830 hrs.

Present: Lucas Welch, Celine Whitaker, Jesse Corona, Heather Hunger. Mr. Doyle was not present.

Lucas asked the those attending to keep questions to raise their hands, keeping questions to the point and try to limit comments/questions to three minutes so everyone has a chance to participate. Please keep side bar conversations to a minimum so everyone can hear.

Lucas introduced Lois East, from the USDA. Lois explained the role of USDA in Wastewater systems. USDA acts as a funding agency like a bank offering loans to communities, 33 years amortized, first two years interest only.

Question: Found the USDA program online but it shows the program ends June 30, 2017? Lois explained this refers to the interest rate expiring on this date.

Lois continued to explain how USDA provides financing to the village, residents finance the village, village pays USDA thru special assessment Bonds/Property Tax.

Question: What is someone cannot afford hook up. Lois stated this is up to Village Board how to handle.

Discussed Grants/Loans. How much grant money is based on median household income. Your user rate will be based on that household income. The goal is 2% of household income with loan dollars after infuse with grant money. Lois stated that based on current budget, not to expect grant dollars.

Question: Recent election increased school taxes by 20%. Lois explained this does not affect the bank (USDA), affects the Village Board. The Board will have the opportunity to take this into consideration.

Lois continued to explain that the Village would run the sewer operations. Engineers will create a preliminary plan, recommend a solution that is cost effective in the long run, USDA reviews, Village makes final decision. All residents of the community must participate in the system as a requirement for USDA loan money.

Bob Gilbert, engineer, stated there are grants available to help pay for the preliminary report. The report will contain three options and price for each. Grant can cover up to 80%, grant capped at $50,000. Costs usually run between $30-70,000.

Eight years ago, a plan was developed with four options, however, changes in what is allowed has eliminated one of those options. Pump to Jefferson City, black box treatment, sand (out), unintelligible.

Question: How do Grants/Loans help citizens with the cost of project. It is up to the Village how to collect back dollars.

Question: We already have very poor water pressure. The sewer has no connection to water. Will have no impact on water pressure. Also, explained that storm water systems are different. They have outlets to streams while wastewater systems go to treatment.

Discussed Jamestown is starting a system, 100+ customers. Russellville is currently in design, treatment only. Many local towns are using black box. Jamestown/Russellville using MBBR systems, Moving Bed Biological Reactor. Prairie Home went with irrigation; Derek is the operator for them.

Comment was made if EPA continues to drop acceptable ammonia levels, would require a modification to systems.

Lagoon not an option for Centertown. Elston currently pipes wastewater to Jefferson City, monthly fee, expensive.

Engineer report will cover initial cost, long time cost. May have to purchase land.

Question: If we tap into Jefferson City, can someone tap into us? Unknown

St Martins owns their pipe.

Question: Are bond issues voted on. Yes

To get engineers report: Submit application, get grant money, advertise, 2-3 months to get engineer. Towards end of year.

Bob stated that in 2009 his firm had completed their survey and had developed four options, had a public meeting and then the process was stopped. If his engineer firm is selected, will update the information. Next meeting would be about hard “no’s”. Found old diagrams/information. It was stopped before it became a formal report.

Note was made that the Wastewater System cost could increase during the loan period if DNR changes regulations.

If grant application is accepted, maximum is $12,500.00

Questions were asked concerning cost for those with wells, whether septics would be dug up or remain in ground, gravity lines.

Questions about appearance of wastewater system. It would involve manhole, most below ground, and pump stations, on pad of concrete, mostly invisible. If there was power outage, would need generators. Borrow from neighboring communities; California, Missouri Rural Water Assn.

Cost is based on water usage. Possible method, most communities take a three-month period, average the use, determines monthly cost for the year.

Chairman Welch asked the public present if he had community support to apply for grant. Response was a definitive yes.

Public Hearing closed at 1940 hrs.