

KANKAKEE RIVER METROPOLITAN AGENCY
MINUTES
February 27, 2025 – 9:00 A.M
1600 W Brookmont Blvd.

In attendance:

Board of Directors:

Mayor Christopher Curtis, City of Kankakee
Mayor Paul Schore, Village of Bourbonnais
Financial Director Robert Romo, Village of Bradley
Alderman Danita Swanson, City of Kankakee
Steven Hunter, Representative, City of Kankakee
Alderman David Crawford, City of Kankakee

Administration:

Dave Tyson, KRMA Executive Director
Karen Benson, Smith, Koelling, Dykstra & Ohm, P.C

Attorney:

Neal Smith, Robbins Schwartz

KRMA Staff:

Bryan Kennedy, Assistant Superintendent
Richard Tyson, Operation Manager

Other:

Dan Small, Engineer, Strand Associates
Tara Latz, Financial Director, Village of Bourbonnais
Zachary Newton, Superintendent of ESU, City of Kankakee
Ryan McGinnis, Lab Operation Manager, City of Kankakee
Terry Memenga, Director of Public Works, Village of Bourbonnais
Elizabeth Kubal, City Manager, City of Kankakee

Chairman, Mayor Curtis called the meeting to order.

I. **Roll Call**

Roll Call was taken. All Board members were present, except for Mayor Brian Stump and Director Larry Osenga absent. Alternate Alderman David Crawford, City of Kankakee, sitting in for Director Larry Osenga for deciding vote.

II. **Public Comment**

Dir Hunter made comments, in terms of the KRMA Board, stating, hopefully we can continue to be the best service delivery system in this county. We evolve and learn what to do in terms of how you receive customer services for your people. Our facility is operating pretty good. He stated a lot of the stuff in social medial is not accurate and would hope that them as board members will stick together. He also spoke on how the Management team at KRMA has also been available to answer question and/or need information or explanation about a fact or problem we have at KRMA.

III. **Approval of Board Minutes January 23, 2025 – Regular Board Meeting**

Motion to approve January 23, 2025, Regular Board Meeting minutes was made by: Dir Romo and seconded by Vice Chairman Schore. All board members were present, and Alternate David Crawford voted in favor of, Dir Osenga and Dir Brian Stump absent. Motion Carried.

IV. **Reports**

A. **Operations & Maintenance Report**

Monthly Report

Bryan Kennedy, Assistant Superintendent, presented the MOR. Bryan stated KRMA had no violations of the NPDES Permit. Even with some equipment failures and challenges with sludge slow settling rates, our process compliance was still achieved with timely in house corrected maintenance of equipment and timely process change decisions with the laboratory data from the City of Kankakee Lab. Also, TSS continues to be high, however it has decreased out of the red zone via the TSS gauge and were still able to maintain compliance. Bryan acknowledged Robert Forsman for obtaining his Class 3 Wastewater Certification. Dir Romo had a couple of comments. Stating, he been tracking the numbers of TSS, BOD, and NH3 and our numbers have decreased, due to CSL pretreating and KRMA stop taking waste from one of the landfills. I know when we talked about this initial expansion it was based upon waste, projections, and PFAS Regulations. He also gave the board of list of questions he would like answered regarding the PFAS regulations, the identity the primary source, treatment, cost associated with upgrading the plant to manage and how will it be allocated, proposed timeline for expansion project and how does it align with PFAS regulation, how will PFAS levels be monitored in both influent and effluent and how will it be reported, and has KRMA had recent communication with the IEPA regarding discharge standards for PFAS. Also, will KRMA engage with member communities throughout the process to ensure transparency and collaborative decision-making? Dir Hunter addressed the Chairman and Dan Small with Strand Associated with the question regarding KRMA expansion? Chairman replied that these questions may be addressed under New Business during Dan Small's presentation if not we can revisit. Dan stated PFAS is not specific in the presentation, however, there has been discussions although it is not the primary driver, it is a future regulatory outlook. However, there is no prescribed regulation. Noone will tell you if it is going to be on the effluent. The focus is on the biosolids side and that is uncertain, however, the next permit will have some PFAS monitoring and requirements. PFAS is extremely expensive with sampling, therefore, no one is doing it proactively, however, there is some setup in line, so we are in a better position when things do come to surface. There was more discussion regarding PFAS. Bryan added PFAS has been in discussion with Dan as to, how can we upgrade and not back ourselves into a corner to where we can not accommodate some of these restrictions and regulations that might come up, due to regulations not being known yet. Ryan McGinnis, Operation Manager for City of Kankakee Lab, add IEPA has not fully defined PFAS. PFAS is a list of multiple chemicals that is not good.

B. **Executive Director Report**

1. **Water, Gas & Electric Use/Cost**

Exec. Dir. Dave Tyson presented yearly utility usage. Everything is within budget.

2. **Hauled In Waste Summary**

Exec. Dir. Tyson said hauled in waste is decent this month, however it has been up and down. Chairman Curtis asked about Mary Lee Gilster contribution to hauled in waste. RJ replied they are billed eight and half cents. Exec Dir Tyson stated, and they bring in 150,000 to 200,000 gallons. Karen stated they were about 100,000 annually last year.

3. **Operations Report**

Exec Dir Dave Tyson informed the board, the new trucks are up front for them to see. The Operators are pleased, and the trucks are working out well. He added, we have some repair that needs to be done on our generator, however, we are analyzing, if we want to repair the generator, get a different generator to run other parts of the plant, or replace it with a new generator. Exec Dir Tyson informed the board that Al Gonzales, from IEPA, visited the site. He had questions about several issues he found. We did receive a violation notice, however we addressed most of his issues, therefore we are in good shape, except for the CMOM Reports. We are still missing Aroma Park and Chebanse.

C. **Financial Report**

1. **Reports**

Karen presented the financial statements. Net position: strong cash balance. Long term liabilities section, we are three years out on the bond and the principal is decreasing. Statement of Revenue and Expenses: Hauled in waste is over budget which is helpful for the bottom line and cash balance. For Expenses: the are inline. Professional fees are a capital expenditure and will be classed as capital asset. Fiscal year to date we are still on track.

2. **Flows Graphs**

Karen informed the board that the flow is off compared to the estimate budgeted number of flows. She states City of Kankakee is over the estimated budget of flow and Village of Bourbonnais and Bradley is underestimate of budget flow.

D. **Communications**

Exec Dir Tyson stated, just the violation notice that we received that was discussed earlier.

V. **Old Business**

A. **Update on Engineering for Phase 1, Phase 2, Phase 3**

Exec Dir Tyson informed the board that VI A. under New Business will tie into Dan Small presentation and what we asked Strand to do. Chairman Curtis stated, the board has unanimously agreed that Phase 1 for capital improvement for existing structure is needed and our plan was to pay for it with cash on hand and Senator Duckworth grant without having to borrow any money and we also authorized Phase 2 and 3 engineering. Some concerns with the changes that are happening in the political climate, and if we are not able to get the grant from Senator Duckworth in May, and we go through our cash on hand, how do we pay for Phase 1 construction. Therefore, Vice Chairman Schore and I made the decision to pause Phase 2 and 3 engineering until we have a better understanding if Senator Duckworth grant will be available to us. Chairman Curtis asked is Phase 1 complete? Dan stated, Phase 1 has been submitted to IEPA for review for construction permit and is being reviewed by KRMA to address other odds and ends. Therefore, Phase 1 will be ready to advertise in May. Dan Small presented his PowerPoint presentation on Phase 2, and 3 update on what make sense to pause and/or not to pause. Vice Chairman Schore had some concerns regarding the low flows coming into to the plant and asked are we taking a capturing all the information we need based on what flows really are coming into the plant? Dan replied he did not include flows, because flows drop and pick up due to the weather, however, the baseline is increasing the design loadings. Chairman Curtis stress concerned about the new restrictions regarding ammonia and will KRMA be able to handle it, are we at our capacity level or do we still have more room capacity to treat potential lower limits? Dan replied that third aeration train was installed to accommodate those ammonia limits. He stated the effluent concentration are expected to drop for a couple of different seasons, because of the seasonal limits. However, that is why the need for the 4th aeration train was for the ammonia. You will be pushing the limit, especially during the springtime season when you get the large flushes. Dir Romo stress concerns regarding ammonia and the amount of ammonia hauled in waste brings in. Dan stated if we eliminated all hauled in waste entirely, with it being such a small percentage of the overall it was not moving the needle, you will still need the 4th aeration train. Dir Romo asked is Phase 2 eight percent replacement and 20 percent growth. Also stated we are going to have to do Phase 2, because that is replacing current equipment. Dan replied Phase 2 is hundred percent replacement. Dir Romo requested to financial projection regarding Phase 2 and there was more discussion regarding the how-to possible fund Phase 2. Dir Romo stated we concentrate on Phase 2, which is replacing equipment 20 years old, which would help us with our capacity levels and put Phase 3 on the back burner. Chairman Curtis asked Dan to discuss the soil borings being done. Dan replied, the soil borings need to be done on the North end of the plant.

1. **Projections of Phase 1, Phase 2, and Phase 3 impacts on the rates for the members municipalities**

None

B. **CMOM Reports**

Previously discussed

VI. **New Business**

A. **Discussion for Phase 1 Budget and Cost Analysis**

Chairman Curtis stated if Senator Duckworth grant comes in, we feel good about how to pay for Phase 1, however if it does not Karen is going to discuss what it means to us in our communities. Karen discussed the financial regarding Phase 1 if we do not get Senator Duckworth grant. Chairman Curtis asked Karen, can with get Phase 1 done, if we do not get Senator Duckworth grant. Karen replied, we can, however, we will not have a lot in reserves if anything goes wrong. Dir Romo reiterated we need a plan to replace equipment, therefore, we need to budget some engineering for capital replacement equipment. There was more discussion requiring keeping some craftsman going regarding cost of engineering. Karen also discussed the financial regarding Phase 1, 2, and 3 as a whole. There was ideas and concerns regarding the financials for Phase 1, 2, and 3 as a whole. Karen suggested a short-term plan within the 3-5 years of getting Phase 1 paid for and funded and also getting the design paid for and funded for Phase 2, and 3 so there is a shovel ready option. Then we can look for additional funding.

B. **Ratify the pause on Phase 2 and 3 Engineering expenditures**

Chairman Curtis stated there is a \$45,000 cost for soil borings that needs to happen very quickly due to the temperature, should we continue? Also, do we move forward with Strand Associates while waiting over the next 90 days and we continue to discuss moving forward with Phase 2 and 3 for \$50,000 a month totaling roughly

\$200,000. Motion to Ratify the pause on Phase 2 and 3 Engineering expenditures but allowing for the soil boring and allow some preliminary work, instead of shutting the project out was made by Dir Hunter and seconded by Vice Chairman Schore. All board members were present, and Alternate David Crawford voted in favor of, Dir Osenga and Dir Brian Stump absent. Motion Carried.

C. Discuss and Approve KRMA's Employees Life Insurance

Exec Dir Tyson informed board that per the Union Contract, KRMA is to cover life insurance equal to the amount of money to their salary of what they pay. Pekin is capped at \$90,000 and was not willing to raising to rate. However, some of the Union employees make over \$90,000 capped, therefore, to stay in compliance with the Union contract, I had our insurance agent test the market to see where we could go. Hartford Life Insurance will give us a cap of \$150,000, which will cover all of our Union employees right now. The total increase to KRMA will be approximately \$68 dollars for year, with a three-year contract. Tawonda will be our contact person for KRMA. Motion to accept Hartford proposal was made by Dir Hunter and seconded by Vice Chairman Schore. All board members were present, and Alternate David Crawford voted in favor of, Dir Osenga and Dir Brian Stump absent. Motion Carried.

D. Discussion regarding Synagro Contract

Exec Dir Tyson informed the board he sent Synagro a five-day letter putting them on notice we are going to stop their contract. However, they stepped up and been working diligently hard since. We also reached out to New Era Spreading and they are willing to step in if we do need their help. There was more discussion regarding the Synagro process.

VII. Executive Session

Personnel & Probable or Imminent Litigation

None

VIII. Next Meeting

Next Regular Board Meeting- **Thursday, March 27, 2025 (9:00 A.M. at KRMA Board Room)**

Chairman Curtis stated we have a duty as seven board members to put facts out. He stated he have a problem regarding what he is hearing in the community. It is saying that we voted for 120% rate increase in wastewater treatment over the next five years. We never voted for such, that is a fact. On January 12, 2024, there was a 5:2 vote, to revise the IEPA plan splitting the improvements in the one Phase into two phases. It was not to do the work. That was to allocate, allocation to be able to borrow money from the IEPA. Also, on January 25, 2024, the vote was to do engineering for phase 1, where was a 6:0 vote, not construction and it was a 5:1 vote to do phase 2, and 3 engineering, again we did not authorize the construction. Nor did we borrow any money. There two comments that is out there are inaccurate, and we have a duty to talk about it and put out the facts.

Motion to Adjourn was made by: Dir Swanson and seconded by Dir Crawford. Motion Carried.