

## UTILITIES COMMITTEE MINUTES

OF AUGUST 17, 2020

Municipal Council of the City of Vermilion  
Municipal Complex, 685 Decatur Street, Vermilion, Ohio 44089

**In Attendance:** **Vermilion City Council:** *Steve Herron, President of Council; Monica Stark, Council at Large; Emily Skahen, Ward One; Frank Loucka, Ward Two; Steve Hologacs, Ward Three; Barb Brady, Ward Four; Brian Holmes, Ward Five; Gwen Fisher, Certified Municipal Clerk*

**Administration:** *Jim Forthofer, Mayor; Amy Hendricks, Finance Director; Chris Howard, City Engineer; Tony Valerius, Service Director*

**Call to Order:** Frank Loucka, Chairman, RESOLVED THAT this Utilities Committee comprised of the committee of the whole does now come to order.

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### **TOPIC ONE: Flow Meter Report**

C. Howard provided Council with a Report of Observations for the flow meters that were installed at Edgewater at the Woodside intersection, Ferndale at the Liberty intersection, Woodside at the Liberty intersection, Hazelwood at the Liberty intersection, Niagara Road at the manhole south of Edgewater Drive in the intersection, Elberta Drive at the Edgewater Drive intersection, Erie Road at the Edgewater Drive intersection, and Morton Road at the Edgewater Drive intersection. The data collection at these sanitary sewer manholes was collected from November 25, 2019 through March 30, 2020. He referred Council to page three of the report which summarizes the peak flows of all streets. He said during this timeframe, the greatest rainfall event was .88". When the city did the previous VOL flow metering, they had rain events that were close to 1.75" in a 24-hour period. This is greatly reduced during this time. He said the report gives the city an idea of where they are seeing some peak flows at different intersections. He said Council is welcome to review the report and ask him more questions and they can discuss it further at the next committee meeting.

### **TOPIC TWO:Sanitary Sewer Lateral Inspections Report**

C. Howard explained the City hired Great Lakes Pipeline Services to perform a Sanitary Sewer Mainline and Lateral CCTV Inspection for the following streets: Rowland Road, Aldrich Road, Cummings Road, and Overlook Road. Based on their evaluation of the camera work, there are concerns with the laterals as a lot of them have separations and root balls. Some are within the right of way and some are not. He noted areas where there are problems with the mainline; some areas on Rowland and Aldrich they are concerned with. One of the big concerns has always been the YMCA and there are three sanitary laterals that go to this property and there is an existing manhole. They did not camera this because they could not get into it. There is one that goes under the parking lot (the northern most lateral) that seemed to have a lot of water in it, but they could only go 100' into it, so this may require further evaluation. B. Brady said that during the time the flow

meters were in, the YMCA was closed, so if they saw flow during that time it was storm water. C. Howard said he does not know what is in there. B. Brady asked if they could put flow meters into these three manholes somehow to see if there is anything unusual. C. Howard said they could but there may be other ways to determine this as opposed to putting in a flow meter. He said there is two lateral connections but there is one that ties into the sanitary manhole. E. Skahen asked if any of these roads have a history of any problems that have been reported. B. Brady said all of them are major and it has been noted. C. Howard said a lot of the manholes should be replaced or made watertight because some do have holes in the lids. B. Brady said they may blow off from the pressure and it must go somewhere. S. Holovacs said the pressure will find the weakest area and flow to it; is this a basement or something to that nature. This is the scary part.

F. Loucka said the laterals need to be fixed. C. Howard said council needs to decide on whether they should start repairing laterals and if they should do all of them, but they need to figure out how to fund this as it's a costly venture. He said how does the city pay for the portion of that right of way because the ordinance says the city is responsible up to the right of way and the owner is responsible beyond that.

S. Holovacs said they have the answers and now they need to fix it, so Council needs to decide how to do this. B. Brady said on these streets they have major problems with the water, so she would ask that Council take a look at the three laterals coming out of the YMCA they couldn't identify and the one that has the constant flow. She thought this could be a starting point because they do not have money to do them all.

M. Stark asked the city engineer as being a professional what he would suggest the city should do. C. Howard said ten plus years all mainlines were relined in VOL and there are a couple sections that need further investigation. There may be a couple areas in the mainline that may be suspect. It looks like there might be some potential joint separations. He thinks it is the laterals. It is from the mainline to the house and when you have root balls and joint separations, you are inviting storm water to get in. It happens with time and a lot of these homes are 50 to 60 years old and you are going to have problems. M. Stark asked what a rough estimate would be for these repairs. C. Howard said he would need to get back to council on this. M. Stark asked if there was anyway to help the homeowners by letting them pay for this on their water bill. C. Howard said the only other way to do this is by assessment, but they have already gone through this once. S. Holovacs said the city also has to come up with the money to pay for it and to set up the assessments, so the city still has to come up with the money, so they need estimates on a cost.

Homer Taft of 3972 Edgewater said it is obvious beyond any question that stormwater is being put into the sanitary sewer. No stormwater is supposed to go into the sanitary sewer. Some of this may be from laterals and ditches, but much of it is from foundation drains and gutters that are illegally connected he suspects. The solution in the first instance with the laterals...it seems to him that they repair or replace the laterals as required and at the property line you put in a cleanout.

Anybody could look at any time during a storm if there is too much water suddenly coming out. It would not be on private property but on city property. He said they have sewage coming out of the manholes. They have people at least on Edgewater who cannot use their toilets or take a shower during a bad storm because the sewers are blocked, and it is gurgling back their way! There are many of them who have basements or crawl spaces who are having intrusion of sewage into their homes. This is an urgent problem. He referred to the laterals at the YMCA and asked if they were observed from Aldrich or Rowland. C. Howard said the lateral launch goes down the mainline and then goes up into the lateral for each house. H. Taft thought the city engineer had said they found laterals that went to manholes. C. Howard said no and explained that at the YMCA it had three laterals to the facility into the mainline. There was one 6" lateral that went into the main hole that was not televised but there were two other laterals that went into the direction of the building that were televised. H. Taft asked if this was on Aldrich and C. Howard said correct.

H. Taft said a long time ago there was conversation about enforcement of the existing requirements and inspecting and making sure that obvious intrusions of gutters going into the ground, which means they are going into the sanitary sewer because there is no storm sewer – were being inspected and corrected – how much of this has been done and is the city aggressively going after everybody who is putting storm water into sanitary sewers. T. Valerius said he will check with the building department but there was a program that they started a couple years ago to eliminate downspouts. He will check to see how many were pulled out of the sanitary sewer and put onto the ground or into a proper drainage to the ditch. F. Loucka asked T. Valerius to follow up on this.

B. Brady asked if they found open laterals on Rowland. C. Howard said if they found any capped laterals, they noted it in the report.

M. Stark asked the city engineer how he would suggest they proceed forward. C. Howard said he could put together a construction cost estimate for each street and then Council can decide on how they want to proceed. He will look at what the cost would be from the right of way to an assumed length on a house and give a ballpark cost on these four streets. M. Stark asked the administration to proceed with providing cost estimates.

F. Loucka adjourned the meeting upon no further discussion.

The next meeting is scheduled for September 21, 2020 at 7:00 p.m.

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