

Response to Questions Raised – May 15, 2018 Authority Meeting

Question: *For most of the past sewer projects a bond has been floated to help cover costs. Why are we being treated like second class citizens and being forced to accept the proposed grinder system?*

Response: Previous projects that included a borrowing such as the recent wastewater treatment plant upgrade were projects that served the entire service area. Because the project served the entire service area, it is reasonable to distribute the debt service among all of the users of the system. The Houck Manor sewer extension project does not serve the entire service area. As discussed previously, the Authority does not believe it is fair to burden the other users of the sewer system with added debt service and increased user fees to support a project from which they receive no direct benefit, particularly when the gravity alternative is not the most cost effective alternative. The Authority's position has been and continues to be that it is fiscally irresponsible to enter into another borrowing resulting in increased user fees for all of the users to finance an alternative that is not cost effective and where the Authority has sufficient funds to finance the most cost effective low pressure alternative without entering into an additional debt.

Question: *Since the Rec Building needs public water system and sewer system is running right by there, why is the Sewer Authority members and the Township Supervisors members so opposed to re-doing the survey and consider running water at the same time as sewer? Since the affected members are being forced to accept something that they do not want, why not throw in water which is something some of us do want.*

Response: The public water system serving West Hanover Township is owned and operated by PA American Water. Neither the Township Supervisors nor the Authority has any control over areas to be served by public water. A majority of the residents in Houck Manor showed no interest in a proposal by PA American Water to bring public water to the area several years ago. Consequently, PA American withdrew the proposal.

Assuming that the survey referred to in the first sentence is the re-evaluation of Houck Manor as a needs area, the Township Supervisors did authorize a preliminary examination of the properties in Houck Manor by the Township's Sewage Enforcement Officer. The purpose was to determine if the existing lots were of sufficient area to support on-lot systems meeting all of the current regulations for siting and constructing on-lot systems. According to their meeting with representatives of the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), DEP's first priority for sustainable on-lot systems is that they are of sufficient size to satisfy siting requirements with respect to isolation distances from wells, streams, and property lines and to support the construction of a replacement system. Even if repairs are made to an existing system to mitigate a known malfunction, if the repaired system still does not meet current regulations, it is not considered to be a sustainable solution. According to DEP, in order for Houck Manor to be removed as a needs area, it must be able to accommodate sustainable on-lot systems. If this initial priority cannot be satisfied, then DEP indicated that they would not allow the development to be removed as a needs area. The SEO's evaluation indicated that over 60% of the existing lots in Houck Manor did not meet current regulations and therefore would not be considered as being able to support sustainable systems. Therefore, there was no benefit in performing additional evaluations required for a Special Study to amend the 2006 Act 537 Facilities Plan.