

Sewer Committee Meeting  
Historic Salem Courthouse  
November 10, 2020

## Notes

### Attendees:

Herb Perkins, Chair  
Tina Fleming, Member  
Kay Tomasi, Member  
Ted Wilson, Member  
Sue Clary  
Mizzi???  
Susi Thomas  
Kyle West  
Jared West  
Brenda Levey

Mary Beth Bianconi (Delaware Engineering), Presenter  
Peter Martin (Delaware Engineering)

The meeting began at 7:10 PM

Sue Clary provided details of a drive taken with Mary Beth Bianconi and Peter Martin to view various locations around Salem; particularly east out CR 153 where major flooding had occurred several years ago.

Ms. Bianconi presented a background on Delaware Engineering and on both herself and Peter Martin. Mary Beth continued with a briefing on flooding and related issues such as changes in precipitation patterns, the pre and post development changes in regional geomorphology, and how these elements impact the area relative to local investment and development.

Mary Beth continued with examples of how similar issues affect Salem with regards to septic vs. sewer; and revisited the need for sewer system and waste water treatment. She explained the expenses involved in the sewer project and that there would be costs to the community users; but that there would also be returns that outweigh expenses incurred. These returns include improved environmental quality, enhanced local fisheries, no more failing septic systems, and the ability to invest in the business community.

Ms. Bianconi then outlined the next series of actions to be taken, beginning with a durable, affordable, sustainable and stable engineering design, and then securing funding from Federal, State, and local sources. These sources provide outright grants and low and zero interest loans over varying periods of time. She pointed out that Salem is very close to qualifying for low interest loans.

Mary Beth continued by demonstrating the need for an income survey as the qualifying tool, and that US Census data includes the entire Town of Salem and therefore can't be used. She explained that the data collected in the survey, which will be conducted by RCAP Solutions at no charge, is 100% protected because it will be a blind survey. The data processors have no idea whose data (meaning income) they are processing. The surveys will be numbered but the recipients identities will be protected.

The target is to achieve a 90% response rate from the income survey. Typically a mail-in survey has a 30% return rate. Therefore it becomes very important to make the community aware and somewhat informed of the project prior to mailing the survey.

There was significant discussion regarding various methods of public information and involvement. These methods included flyer, 3-fold brochure, Facebook, YouTube, etc. It was decided to explore a combination of means - door hangers, a 3-fold brochure, and social media.

A question came from an attendee regarding ownership of the loan. It was determined from Mary Beth that the Town would indeed own the loan, and some discussion ensued about this, with the reminder that only those residents of the sewer district would pay for it and not the Townspeople. Mary Beth continued by pointing out that if the district did in fact default on a loan, there really is no collateral to seize.

Additionally, funding issues were discussed again, with the emphasis on sustainable technology to keep O & M costs as low as possible over the long haul, and to allow for staffing issues.

It was decided to pursue an aggressive schedule: door hangers by Thanksgiving, a brochure to follow soon thereafter, and the survey out in December, with a possible second mailing after that (depending on responses).

Ted Wilson, Kay Tomasi, Brenda Levey, and Sue Clary volunteered to develop a brochure. Susi Thomas, Jared West, and Tina Fleming volunteered to place the door hangers.

The meeting adjourned at 8:20 PM.