

Potential Contract Management By



of



Facilities Site Visit

Dr. Craig Woolard Ph.D., P.E.

Outline of Presentation



- **Background**
- **Preliminary Assessment**
- **Findings of Assessment**
- **Potential Advantages / Benefits**
- **Conclusion**
- **Recommendations/Next Step**
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Background



- **April/May 2018:** Mayor Nickels initiated discussions on potential merger of WWTF with MPU at WWTF Board and MPU Commission meetings. There was a consensus of governing bodies to pursue this further.
- **Pros:** Potential efficiencies; rate based revenues; same environmental regulatory agencies; shared contractual services.
- **Cons/Concerns:** Collection system management; pay scales; oversight of WWTF funds, etc.
- **May 2018:** Council approved conducting a high level due diligence and report back prior to developing any legal agreements.
- **June 2018:** Extensive site analysis by Dr. Craig Woolard
- **Summer 2018:** Several meetings between City, MPU, and WWTF
- **September 2018:** MPU Commission and WWTF Board recommended to Council to consider a contract agreement

Preliminary Assessment



Dr. Craig Woolard Ph.D., P.E.

Background:

- **October 2018:** **Head Civil Engineering Department
Montana State University, Bozeman, MT**
- **August 2012-May 2018:** **Director of Public Works
Bozeman, MT**
- **June 2006-2012:** **General Manager
Anchorage Water & Wastewater Utility, Alaska**
- **August 1994-2006:** **Professor-Civil Engineering
University of Alaska, Anchorage**
- **PhD (1989-1993):** **University of Notre Dame
Indiana**
- **B.S. (1985-1989):** **Montana State University
Bozeman, MT**



Preliminary Assessment



Site Visit to WWTF June 25th & 26th 2018



Purpose:

To provide an independent assessment of the Manitowoc Wastewater Facility and evaluate the potential for integration with Manitowoc Public Utilities

Met with:

- **Mike Jaeger** (*WWTF Superintendent*)
- **Pete Dombrowski** (*Assistant Superintendent*)
- **Steve Corbeille** (*Finance Director*)

Preliminary Assessment



June 25th

Met with Pete Dombrowski for tour of WWTF to check the condition of the buildings, pumps, equipment, and tank structures along with the cleanliness of the facility. – (Overall facilities condition assessment)

June 26th

Met with Mike Jaeger to discuss findings from WWTF tour and discuss operations, treatment, collection system, staffing, management, and finances.

Met with Steve Corbeille, (City) to discuss the budget and overall financial condition of facility.

Observations of Assessment - Staffing



- Superintendent
- Asst. Superintendent
- Electrician
- Electro-Mechanic
- Mechanic
- Operators (7)
- Chemist/Pretreatment Coordinator
- Asst. Chemist/Safety Coordinator
- Administrative Assistant

Total: 15 employees

24/7/365 coverage

Observations of Assessment



- A well-run operation. The facility was clean, organized and well maintained.
- WWTF leadership had a clear pride in their facility and their work and that attitude is part of the culture of the facility.
- All of the equipment and processes observed were functional and well maintained.
- The WWTF easily meets discharge limits most of the year, with the exception around Feb/Mar when the cold weather from winter and lack of nutrient supply from the canning operation (Lakeside Foods) and biology suffers on the attached growth media.
- The WWTF discharge permit was renewed in April 2018 and is in effect until April 2023. No concerns were observed meeting discharge requirements with the existing facility unless major changes in the customer base and loads occur.
- Scheduled Maintenance and Jobs/Tasks are managed by maintenance program to assure proper attention to all equipment and structures.
- Digested sludge is hauled under contract with Clean Harbors for land application on surrounding farmland.

Observations of Assessment - Upgrades



- The facility is completing a major electrical and primary clarifier upgrade during his visit. The upgrades had been selected to improve reliability and performance based on the Operational Needs Review (ONR) that was completed ahead of the upgrade. Additional capital upgrades will be needed in the future to improve facility hydraulics, condition, and treatment performance when new discharge permits dictate.
- Upgrades to the SCADA system in near future will provide better facility integration and remote alarming and monitoring to help operations staff improve performance and effectively use automation to balance staffing levels.

Issues to Address



- **Documentation:** Clarify in writing the relationship between the maintenance of the collection system (currently DPW) and the WWTF. This relationship appears to be working. But, continued and appropriate maintenance of the collection system has a direct impact on the WWTF operation and capital needs.
- **Define revenue requirements:** A five-year capital improvement program should be developed. A cursory review of the wastewater utility finances indicated a financially healthy utility with revenues to support operations. A well defined capital improvements will avoid future rate shocks.

Potential Advantages / Benefits



- Efficiency
 - Shared engineering; maintenance; and electrical staff
 - Overlapping job skills sets with MPU
 - More efficient utilization of skilled staff (that are hard to recruit and retain)
 - Improved capital planning
 - Address long term needs systematically
 - Upgrade automation and improve staffing efficiency
- Culture
 - Administrative & Management functions
 - Utility focused processes improve efficiency (not part of general government)
 - Purchasing, contracting, etc.
 - Utility governance
 - Governing board focused only on utilities...improved decision making
 - Consistency in approach to public utilities

CONCLUSION



I found the Manitowoc WWTF to be a well-run facility with a dedicated professional staff. My experience with joint utilities suggests that efficiencies in the operations through sharing of specialized trades and through improved governance and administration could be realized should the WWTF operation be integrated with MPU.

~Dr Craig Woolard Ph.D., P. E. (7/15/18)



Recommendations & Next Steps



- WWTF Board and MPU Commission has reviewed the findings of Dr. Woolard in August and September.
- WWTF Board and MPU Commission are recommending to City Council to initiate integration of the WWTF with MPU Commission.
- Pursue integration in two steps to ensure potential benefits/synergies are achieved. The first step being a contractual agreement of operations; maintenance and capital improvements plan with MPU for three to five years.
- Upgrade the existing SCADA system to automate the wastewater treatment plant.
- Approve to develop an agreement between City; and MPU that clearly defines roles, reporting and responsibilities including off-ramp if synergies are not attained after second year of agreement.

Recommendations & Next Steps



- Eliminate WWTF Board
 - All decisions would be made by MPU Commission
- Hiring/Firing/Discipline under MPU Control
- Rate structure/contracts approved by MPU Commission
- Day-to-Day operations by MPU
 - Superintendent would report to MPU General Manager
- Finances would stay with City
- Pay/Benefits would stay with City
- Lift Stations would stay with City



Questions / Discussion