

Water Department Review
May 4, 2011

At the Village Board's Workshop Meeting on February 1, 2011 the water department and the Superintendent of Public Works, were instructed to review the Water Committee's report that was submitted to the Village Board in December 2010 and offer comments to be sent back to the Village Board in 90 days.

When working on the task of evaluating the recommendations of the Water Committee, our main concerns were our responsibilities to our customers, and an eye on the future. The water department has evaluated each of the options, and is continuing to get input on some of the needed information. Our chief responsibility is to provide safe drinking water to our customers. All source options presented meet all current water quality standards. A safe supply is a minimum standard, where each system meets this minimum requirement; it is imperative for us to provide water to our customers from the safest source.

There are more than just financial details to consider when determining the future of our village water and we are hesitant to make a decision that could be more costly to our taxpayers in the long run. If a decision were to be made based solely on financial needs, then the recommendation would be to continue running the water department unchanged which would not satisfy the expressed desire of our customers.

Our research has led us to determine that switching to another system would not reduce infrastructure cost as we would expect the costs to be borne by our customers from another supplier. In addition, current water department debt would remain a liability to our customers.

In reviewing the survey results and the five options given by the committee, we determined while most residents who responded are satisfied with the customer service and response time of our water department staff, many water department customers would like softer water. Which leaves us with the most viable option of softening our water at the source.

To that end, we have consulted with Derek Anderson of MRB Group for engineering of an RO System, and Chuck Bastian with BPD, Inc. (a municipal finance firm) who were able to offer their professional recommendations as there are many facets and costs involved with this option.

Mr. Anderson met on site at the Wellfield to discuss using existing structures to house filtration and reverse osmosis equipment instead of erecting a new building as the previous report suggested. It was determined we could remodel what we already have to keep costs down. He also offered suggestions for wastewater and the costs involved to run the equipment on a daily basis.

Pall Corporation in Cortland, New York, Siewart Corporation here in Rochester, and Layne Christiansen in Massachusetts all offer a line of water treatment systems that use hollow-fiber microfiltration, ultra-filtration, membrane or media based technology to reduce iron and soften the water.

Mr. Bastian gave detailed information regarding the bond process and how a municipality should begin and complete the process. We also received a proposal from him to work on financing options and implications. We expect to be able to present final estimated cost soon, as we are awaiting information that would help determine the funding options available to us.

We continue to look at the “big picture” when determining the future of our village water supply while focusing on our customers’ needs. With our first priority being providing safe quality drinking water to residents, at this time it we feel it is in the best interest of our water customers and our village to explore more in depth the possibility of reverse osmosis. We feel this course of action would offer residents the best of both worlds; softer water and safe drinking water from a quality source.