

TOWN OF CONSTANTIA  
**MINUTES – SPECIAL MEETING - TOWN BOARD – June 26, 2023**  
9:00 am Constantia Town Hall

Present: Frank Tomaino – Town Supervisor  
Ronald Chapman, Richard Colesante, John Metzger, Thomas Moran – Council Members  
Clare Haynes – Town Clerk  
Warren Bader – Town Attorney  
Laureen Tackman – Mayor, Village of Cleveland  
Shawn House – DPW Superintendent  
Eric Pond, Dustin Clark and David Powers – Barton & Loguidice (B&L)  
Paul Baxter – Tug Hill Commission

**CALL TO ORDER:**

At 9:00 am Mr. Tomaino called the town board meeting to order with the pledge of allegiance. The reason for this meeting is to discuss funding issues with the sewer district.

**BOARD INITIATIVES AND COMMENT:**

Mr. Tomaino opened the meeting reading the following statement into the minutes:

*Mr. Tomaino is speaking for the entire town board: recently we have received from Barton & Loguidice Addendum #3 for the Map, Plan and Report dated May 2019. The request is for the town board to pass a resolution to increase the sewer project cost from \$39M to \$63M. Naturally this has triggered a need for B&L to answer some questions before the Town Board can react to this request.*

*As Town Supervisor it is my responsibility, as well as the town board, to look out for and protect the interest of the users in the sewer district. There are significant concerns about the affordability of the users in the District. The town board has agreed that we need answers for realistic costs to build and operate this project. There are lower income families in the district that could be hurt by these higher costs.*

*Speaking for myself, I will not support a project that could jeopardize someone losing their home or having to move because of the town board not doing their due diligence to the people being affected by the increase in costs.*

Mr. Capozza and Mr. Mura both residents in the Town and in the sewer district, have prior knowledge of installation and operating a sewer district. Mr. Capozza and Mr. Mura initiated the conversation that highlighted some issues with funding and with operation and maintenance (O&M). Many of the concerns are with the O&M charge that was in the original Map, Plan and Report. This charge does not seem to be in line with what will need to be done. The O&M charge is part of the edu charge, although the total district for installation is increasing, the O&M charges have not been increased. This is a concern for the board, if other prices are increasing then this must be increasing too, which will directly affect the residents in their edu charge.

Mr. Pond responded that B&L will step back and review the O&M data to get better numbers. The best way to do this will be to work with the Village to use their current O&M figures. Mr. House told the board the cost of the O&M charge for the Village has gone up 66% from last year.

Mr. Mura has voiced his opinion in the past about paying for a district that is not available, it sounds like it will be December/January until the board hears back on the \$18M shortfall. Mr. Tomaino agrees, the district has already spent \$2.2M he does not want to continue to add to the debt. Mr. Chapman is concerned that if we don't get the funding the district will be at a standstill for another year. Mr. Pond does understand the concerns and that the district can't go forward without all the funding in place, he still believes it is a good project that will get the funding needed. Currently, the project drawings are at 60% completion. Mr. Pond has noticed recently that projects that are shovel ready seem to be pushed up in the rankings.

Ms. Tackman asked when a decision will be made if the district will not be moving forward. After this next funding announcement should tell the story.

Mr. Tomaino and the board members tasked B&L to answer the following questions for the July 10<sup>th</sup> 9am meeting:

- No further engineering work should be completed except for the following:
  - Continue to pursue grant funding and provide summary updates.
  - Provide a detailed estimate for collection system operation and maintenance costs.
  - Provide an estimate of wastewater treatment plant operation and maintenance costs.
  - Provide a revised district unit cost estimate which includes project, operation and maintenance costs for the collection system and costs for wastewater treatment.
  - Provide a summary of the potential financial and legal risks to the district.

B&L should be able to provide a cost estimate for engineering services to be provided for the above-listed items.

**ADJOURN:**

At 10:22 am Mr. Chapman made the motion to adjourn the town board meeting, seconded by Mr. Metzger.  
Carried: Moran – Yes Chapman – Yes Colesante – Yes Metzger – Yes Tomaino – Yes