

MINUTES OF THE SBRSA JOINT OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE MEETING #117

LOCATION: Conference Room, River Road Plant, Princeton, NJ

DATE: April 11, 2011

The following Committee members were in attendance:

Mr. Goldfarb, Princeton Borough
Mr. Sippelle, Princeton Borough
Mr. Blair, Princeton Township
Mr. Avins, South Brunswick Township
Mr. Nieman, South Brunswick Township

SBRSA Staff: Mr. Kantorek, Executive Director, Ms. Pchola, Manager of Engineering and Ms. Carlino, Administrative Assistant

1. Approval of Minutes for the February 7, 2011 Meeting

The minutes from the February 7, 2011 meeting were approved as presented on a motion by Mr. Blair, seconded by Mr. Goldfarb and passed by a vote of 4 to 0. Mr. Nieman abstained.

2. Schedule Remaining Meetings for 2011

The Committee agreed that the schedule for the remaining meetings for 2011 is as follows:

June 13, 2011
October 3, 2011

3. Executive Director's Report

Treatment Plant Performance

Mr. Kantorek reported on three incidents that occurred at the River Road Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) beginning on April 8 to April 11.

On Friday April 8 calibration of the carbon monoxide (CO) and oxygen analyzers to the RTO could not be accomplished due to a leak in the calibration line. Mr. Kantorek explained that daily calibration of the analyzers is necessary to ensure proper monitoring of carbon monoxide (CO) and oxygen levels. The analyzers are calibrated to known concentrations of calibration gases. Subsequently, SBRSA reverted to the afterburners, which ran for a good portion of the weekend. However, heavy slag build up occurred in the incinerator and incineration was stopped. Staff cooled down the incinerator on Monday morning in order to remove the slag.

The incinerator was then cleaned out; the leak in the RTO calibration line was repaired; and the RTO went back on-line.

On Monday, at approximately 3:30 pm, a breaker in the Authority's main sub panel (which supplies power to parts of the Operations Building) tripped. Staff attempted to fix the breaker, however it appeared that there was a ground fault which staff was not able to locate. AC Scott Electrical was called in to determine the cause for the failure of the breaker and to repair it. Mr. Kantorek indicated that because of the tripped breaker, the incinerator currently was not in operation. Mr. Kantorek explained that if there any were any noticeable odors it was due to sludge smoldering in the incinerator.

Mr. Sippelle asked if this incident would lead to a fine/penalty. Mr. Kantorek responded that there would be no fines/penalties assessed for this incident. Sludge feed to the incinerator was stopped. Mr. Blair asked what material is the piping for the calibration system. Mr. Kantorek believes that the piping material is a type of plastic tubing and it appears that the leak was just from normal wear of the operation.

At the February 7 Oversight Committee meeting, SBRSA's Title V Permit fines/penalties were discussed at length. At that meeting, the Committee requested that staff obtain information regarding air permit fines of other Authorities of similar size as SBRSA. Mr. Kantorek provided the Committee with a summary of all Authorities in New Jersey with sewage sludge incinerators and their assessed fines/penalties. Mr. Kantorek indicated that Ms. Pchola was able to obtain the information through the NJDEP's database. It was noted that all the Title V violations of non-compliance are self reported.

Mr. Sippelle asked what the difference is between "assessed penalty" and "received amount". Mr. Kantorek explained that the received amount is what has been paid to date from October 1998 to the present (NJDEP database only has information starting in 1998). Mr. Kantorek indicated that the received amount listed for SBRSA is correct. However, the assessed amount is not. According to the NJDEP, the total assessed penalty for SBRSA is \$252,350. That figure includes the \$172,000 for the last five (5) years plus the \$80,950 that SBRSA paid for fines/penalties from the prior seven (7) year-period. The \$80,950 had been assessed at approximately \$200,000. Mr. Kantorek explained that for the items notated "some issues still pending" Authorities may still owe money to the State. Ms. Pchola added that there may also be issues outstanding that the NJDEP has not yet assessed a penalty.

A lengthy discussion followed. Mr. Goldfarb questioned why SBRSA has fines/penalties and Atlantic County Municipal Utility Authority (ACMUA) has none. Ms. Pchola indicated that it depends on what deviations/violations were reported and terms the ACMUA were able to negotiate with the NJDEP. Mr. Sippelle asked how SBRSA compares in size to Parsippany Troy Hills or Bayshore RSA, etc. Mr. Kantorek indicated that SBRSA is a middle sized Authority. Somerset Raritan Valley Sewerage Authority is slightly larger however, SBRSA accepts sludge from approximately thirty (30) customers and therefore, SBRSA is closer to a large plant for incinerating sludge. Most of the facilities listed on the summary sheet do not accept outside customer sludge and are incinerating only their sludge.

Mr. Kantorek reiterated that the \$252,350 in assessed penalties is comprised of the \$80,950 that has already been paid and the approximately \$172,000 in new assessed penalties. Mr. Kantorek noted that the Authority is near the end of negotiations with the DEP and the \$172,000 has been negotiated down to approximately \$46,000.

Mr. Sippelle asked what proportion of the sludge is from the outside sludge business in relationship to SBRSA's total sludge. Mr. Kantorek reported that approximately two-thirds of the sludge that is incinerated is the result of the outside sludge business. Mr. Kantorek explained that the outside sludge business enables SBRSA to operate the incinerators efficiently.

Mr. Sippelle then asked why River Road was built with two incinerators. Mr. Kantorek explained that the plant was originally designed as a 10 mgd plant with provisions in the future for a mirror image of the plant and an ultimate capacity of 20 mgd. The River Road facility was built at a time when both the federal and state governments were awarding construction grants which paid 90% of the construction costs. Each incinerator has a capacity equivalent to 20 mgd. Many wastewater treatment facilities are designed to incorporate redundant facilities. The second incinerator is a redundant/backup unit.

Without the outside sludge, it would not be cost effective to burn just SBRSA's sludge. Mr. Avins explained that it takes approximately two days to bring the incinerator up to the proper temperature and another two days to slowly bring the incinerator temperature down for shut down. Therefore, if you only burn for two days it would still take one week of fuel to operate the incinerator. It was at this point that SBRSA decided to accept outside sludge for incineration to keep the incinerator running for longer periods of time to eliminate the need for weekly shut downs. As a result, Mr. Kantorek noted that the outside sludge business has offset charges to the participants by approximately \$20 to \$30 million (net profit).

Mr. Sippelle asked if the outside sludge contributes to the odor problems. Mr. Kantorek responded that having a larger quantity of sludge on-site does provide more of an opportunity for more odors. Odors are most noticeable where the influent wastewater enters at the head of the plant and the sludge that is produced as a result of the treatment process. However, the Authority has invested millions of dollars in odor control projects. Mr. Kantorek indicated that odors generated through the incinerators are minimal. Mr. Blair, who lives just a short distance from the Authority, noted that odors from the incinerator "improved greatly" after the Authority installed the afterburners. Mr. Kantorek indicated that gases from the incineration process go through the RTO or afterburners and are heated to 1500°F to essentially destroy any odor causing compounds. A discussion regarding CO and hydrocarbons followed.

Mr. Avins asked the status of the new EPA regulations regarding mercury. Mr. Kantorek explained that the EPA promulgated the new regulations. As result of the comments submitted by SBRSA, other publicly operated wastewater incinerators, and National Association of Clean Water Authorities (NACWA), changes were made to the regulations. Mr. Kantorek explained that the limits for mercury changed by a less stringent factor of 14. SBRSA would marginally meet the standard. Mr. Kantorek indicated that mercury levels have been decreasing over the past ten years due to NJDEP mercury restrictions for dentists. However, there is still concern that if the "less stringent" limits for mercury remain, environmental groups may file lawsuits. A

discussion regarding mercury and metals from sludge received from the outside sludge business followed.

Odor Issues

Mr. Kantorek distributed the "Total Yearly Citizen Odor Reports 1995-2010" graph to the Committee members. Mr. Kantorek noted that year to date the Authority has received one odor complaint on March 4, 2011 from a resident of Montgomery Woods.

Mr. Kantorek indicated that this complaint is the result of turning off the odor control system (hypochlorite system) due to the cold temperatures and possible freezing. Mr. Kantorek then explained how the system freezes. Mr. Kantorek noted that the resident described the odor as moderate. SBRSA investigated the area where the complaint came in but no odors were detected.

4. Headworks Project

Ms. Pchola reported that the pre-construction meeting was held on March 2. Tomar Construction was on site and has started to mobilize and set up their construction trailer. Tomar has submitted a preliminary project schedule, schedule of values and is in the process of starting to submit shop drawings. Ms. Pchola indicated that Tomar will be on site the week of April 11 to dig test pits to locate some existing underground facilities.

5. New Business

None.

6. Adjournment

As there was no further business to come before the Committee, the meeting was adjourned at 8:13 p.m. on a motion by Mr. Blair, seconded by Mr. Goldfarb, and passed by unanimous vote.

Respectfully submitted,

John V. Kantorek
Secretary

Written and recorded by
Patricia Carlino
April 13, 2011