CITY OF EMMONS PUBLIC MEETING

Date:	January 20, 2026
Time:	6:00 pm

CALL TO ORDER:

Meeting was called to order by the Mayor, Dave Bosma at 6:00 pm

ATTENDANCE:

Council Members: Paul Lair, Jerome Wuerflein, Eleanor Bauman, Neal Honsey

City Clerk: Lorry Zasada, ISG: Bryan Petzel, Residents signed in upon arrival

PURPOSE:

To inform residents of Drinking Water estimated improvements and project alternatives, estimated costs, funding sources and financing options with potential future impact to utility rates.

Bryan Petzel Presentation. Key Points: Current facility issues with existing systems

Water Supply

- **One well installed in 1965**

  1100 feet deep, produced 24,350 gpd on average over the last 3 years; has had some repairs within the last 5 years

Water Treatment

- **Treatment added to system in 2005**

  Single pressure filter to remove iron and manganese, chemical dosing, no upgrades since it has been installed, Filter media typically lasts 10-15 years, overdue for replacement

Water Storage

- **50,000-gallon tank**

  Over 100 years old, recoated 20 years ago, no mixing system

Water Distribution

- **Mostly cast-iron mains installed in the 1960s.**

  Mostly 4-inch and 6-inch pipes, 4-inch pipes do not meet current standards

Wastewater Treatment

- **Class C mechanical facility**

  Bar screens, Walker-style treatment, ultraviolet (UV) disinfection; continuous discharge to an unnamed creek that flows to Lime Creek; constructed in 1965 and rehabilitated in 1996; operating 203% design flow capacity over the last 5 years

- **Stipulation agreement with the MPCA**

  Stemming from 44 violations of discharge regulations in a 24-month period; Agreement requires the City to provide a plan to eliminate violations and improve treatment quality

PROJECT ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED:

Drinking Water Supply - Existing well is 60 years old and past its service life, City has only one well, lacking redundancy

- **Alternative 1:** Do nothing, does not address age of existing well; does not address lack of redundancy
- **Alternative 2**: Drill a second well, includes inspection and minor repairs to existing well, provides redundancy, estimated cost = $1,200,000;

- **Alternative 3: Drill two new wells,** Addresses age of existing well, provides redundancy, estimated cost = $1,800,000

Drinking Water Treatment - Existing system is operating well and providing necessary treatment, System lacks redundancy with only one filter

- **Alternative 1**: Do nothing, does not address lack of redundancy
- **Alternative 2:** Add a second filter, provides redundancy, new vessel would be installed in parallel with existing to allow for maintenance without treatment interruption, replace existing filter media, update chemical feed system and controls, addition of a backup generator, Estimated cost = $1,114,000

Drinking Water Storage - Existing tower is over 100 years old

- **Alternative 1**: Do nothing (Future rehabilitation), does not address non-compliance with current access and safety regulations, does not address needed recoating of tank interior and exterior, future rehabilitation of the existing tower would be required, Estimated cost = $608,000
- **Alternative 2:** Replace the water tower, new 50,000-gallon water tower, existing capacity is adequate for the City's anticipated future demands, Estimated cost = $2,000,000

Drinking Water Distribution - Existing system is 60+ years old

- **Alternative 1:** Do nothing, does not address undersized 4-inch mains, does not provide additional looping
- **Alternative 2:** Replacement, replace cast iron piping and 4-inch mains, add looping to eliminate five dead end mains, add second Highway 69 crossing to add redundancy to the system, replacement of individual services to the right-of-way, two-phases: West and east of Hwy 69, Estimated Cost: $5,200,000

Wastewater Collection

- **Alternative 1:** Do nothing, does not address defects or I/I
- **Alternative 2**: Lining, potentially feasible as a stand-alone option, but replacement is preferable in conjunction with watermain replacement
- **Alternative 3:** Replacement, replace mains with PVC, precast manholes, replacement of individual services to the right-of-way, two-phases: west and east of Hwy 69, Estimated Cost: $4,700,000

Wastewater Treatment

- **Alternative 1**: Do nothing, not allowed per the MPCA stipulation agreement, existing facility is operating above its hydraulic capacity
- **Alternative 2:** Rehabilitate existing facility, does not provide additional hydraulic capacity
- **Alternative 3:** Construct new stabilization pond system, proven method for small and medium sized cities, controlled discharge. Discharge in spring and fall. Includes new lift station and force main, Estimated Cost: $7,500,000
- **Alternative 4:** Construct new mechanical system, use a combination of physical, biological, and chemical processes, labor intensive, requires higher level of operator certification, higher electrical costs and chemical demands, Estimated Cost: $9,700,000
- **Alternative 5**: Regionalization, connecting to the sanitary sewer system of a nearby Cities Albert Lea, MN or Lake Mills, IA - require construction of preliminary treatment, equalization basin, lift station(s) and force main, Estimated Cost: $11,800,000 for Albert Lea, $7,600,000 Lake Mills = construction only. Does not include probable connection fees

.

PROJECT RECOMMENDATIONS:

Drinking Water System

- **Supply** – Construct two new supply wells
- **Treatment** – Rehabilitate existing water treatment plant and add second filter
- **Storage –** Construct new 50,000-gallon water tower
- **Distribution** – Replace all original cast iron and 4-inch watermain, add looping to dead end streets, replace services to the right-of-way. Approximately 16,600 lineal feet of watermain

Wastewater System

- **Collection** - Replace all VCP mains, replace services to the right-of-way, approximately 13,400 lineal feet
- **Treatment** - Construct new three-cell wastewater pond system, construct new lift station and force main

FUNDING OPTIONS:

Bond Issuance, Special assessments, State Revolving Loan funds, Grants, USDA Rural Development

- Drinking Water Revolving Fund (low interest) for Water System improvements
- Collection system and treatment will be through USDA RD and grant

PROJECT SCHEDULE:

Dependent on project funding

- **Drinking Water System**
    - Supply, Treatment, and Storage
        - In fundable range on the 2026 DWRF Intended Use Plan (IUP)
        - March 31, 2026 – Submit plans to Minnesota Department of Health
        - March – June 2026 – Bidding
        - June 2026 – Close on DWRF funding package
        - Fall 2026 – Begin Construction
        - Fall 2029 – Final Completion
    - Distribution
        - Schedule will depend on funding for wastewater collection system since it they will be constructed simultaneously
- **Wastewater System**
    - USDA will be the lead funding agency
    - Treatment
        - January 2026 – Will learn if project is selected to apply for funding in 2026
        - If selected, project will be submitted in May for national consideration
        - If selected at the national level
            - Fall 2026 bidding
            - 2027 construction
        - If not selected in 2026
            - Will remain in line until funding is available
- **Collection System**
        - Schedule will be dependent upon funding for wastewater treatment
            - Collection system replacement will be performed as subsequent phases
            - If treatment approved for 2027 construction, collection system construction could begin as early as 2028

Utility Rates

- **Summary**

  Total Estimated Project Cost for all Recommended Improvements = $22,350,000
    - **USDA Funding**
        - Rate increase of $38.56/month ($462.68/year), Total Rate = $118.56/month ($1422.68/year), 48% increase
    - **DWRF Funding for Water Improvements and USDA for Wastewater Improvements**
        - Rate increase of $33.49/month ($401.92/year), Total Rate = $113.49/month ($1361.92/year), 42% increase

QUESTIONS FROM RESIDENTS ADDRESSED

1. Why do we need a new tower if there is nothing functionally wrong with the one we have? Age and condition of old tower, some safety issues and funding is available now
2. How long is the loan for? 30 – 39 years depending on funding source
3. How many households are behind on the utility bills? 2-3 accounts past due over 60 days
4. What kind of warranty is on the construction project? 2 years
5. What will happen to the existing tower? Are demolition costs included in the estimate? Yes
6. Why would the project be done in phases? Based on funding availability and competitive bidding
7. Would the street repairs be included in the project? Yes
8. How much would it cost to pump sewage to Albert Lea? Would there be a cost to do so? $11.8MM to construct piping and pumping to Albert Lea, most likely there would be additional costs.
9. If these costs are all estimated, could the actual price be higher? Possibly, depending on timing and bids obtained.

Action Item: Resolution Adopting the Facilities Plan – RES2026-02

Motion made by Wuerflein to adopt the resolution, seconded by Lair, motion carried with all Ayes 5/0

ADJOURNMENT – motion made by Lair to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Wuerflein, motion carried 5/0. Meeting adjourned at 7:05 p.m.

Submitted by:

Lorry Zasada
Clerk/Treasurer