

Work session
December 1, 2021
Future Water Survey
21325 Carillon Lakes Dr. - Carillon Lakes Clubhouse

Roll call indicated the following present: Mayor Ray Soliman, City Treasurer Glen Conklin, City Clerk Christine Vershay-Hall, Alderman John Vershay, Alderman Darrell Jefferson, Alderperson Tina Oberlin, Alderman Mark Cipiti, Alderman Joe Kubal.

Also present were: Management Consultant Steve Gulden, Public Works Director Mark Siefert, City Engineer Ron Wiedeman, Assistant Public Works Director Blaine Kline, Administrative Assistant Ada Martino, Attorney Michael Bentschi. Also present were Chris Ulm, Corrina Mauss from Strand & Associates.

Alderman Joe Kubal opened the meeting by introducing the Mayor and the City Council,.

Mayor Soliman welcomed the public and gave a brief speech. He thanked everyone for coming.

Public Works Director Mark Siefert thanked everyone for coming out tonight. He stated that it was nice to see the number of residents who were concerned about the water supply now and for the future. Director Siefert introduced Chris Ulm from Strand & Associates. He explained how the information stations are set up and that the residents can go to them in groups of 4 with discussions lasting 5 to 7 minutes.

The informational stations were set up as follows:

- 1st Station – Current Source vs Alternative Sources
- 2nd Station – What is involved with switching Water Sources
- 3rd Station – How does this affect me?
- 4th Station – How does this effect my water bill?

Since 2014 the City has been researching another location for an additional well. The current wells are running for extended periods of times, which are too long. By 2024 an additional well will needed unless we go with alternative source of water.

The City of Joliet is spearheading the project to seek an alternative source of water. Crest Hill was approached to join a Commission to investigate an alternative source of water.

Crest Hill is currently not running out of water and our current water is safe. The North-East section of Crest Hill is off limits for new well drilling due to the area near the canal having a large population of the Emerald Dragon Fly.

Also, you cannot put a high capacity well near a shallow well since this will pull the water away from the shallow wells. Water quantity is not the problem. It's trying to find a location to drill an additional well. Trace amounts of Pfas have been discovered and the IEPA is looking into the shallow wells within municipalities. By 2024 limits will be set by the USEPA. Chlorides have also found their way into the shallow wells. If the City switches to Lake Michigan water, the City of Chicago will spread the cost of treating the Pfas between 5.2 million people.

The first option is to bring all the water to one central location, treat the water and then send the water out for distribution. The 2nd option is to build 2 additional treatment facilities in the City or switch over to Lake Michigan Water. It is a much more costly to treat the water with Pfas than it would be to switch and go with the Water Commission and use Lake Michigan water.

Crest Hill will not have complete control of the water supply and bulk rate purchase rates. The City of Chicago will have control to set the rate for the water. Other potential sources of water discussed were the Illinois River, the Kankakee River, and Lake Michigan. Other communities investigating new water sources are Romeoville, Channahon, Shorewood, Minooka, Lemont, Homer Glen, Montgomery, Yorkville, Oswego, and Rockdale. They are all considering the switch to becoming a customer of Joliet as part of a Water Commission. The more communities that join in, the lower the rates would be. Crest Hill would also have a vote if we became a part of the Water Commission. The water trunk line will come through Crest Hill whether we join or not as it makes its way to the City of Joliet.

In January of 2020 Joliet decided to pursue Lake Michigan Water. By the end of January all communities around Joliet will need to decide if they want to join the Water Commission. Water feed rates, firefighting ability and water pressure will remain consistent. Additional water storage is required in case of planned outages and would need to be 2x the daily usage. If this goes through the City will need to create an ordinance for water conservation. Crest Hills portion would include the construction of new lines to the trunk system, storage tanks and transmission mains. The rates currently do not show any grants or low interest loans.

The Mayor then asked for comments and questions from those who were in attendance.

James asked if each house would need to have their pipes replaced. Chris Ulm stated the pipes would not have to be replaced, a chemical will be added to the water so it will not hurt the pipes. Director Siefert commented that he believes the pipes in Carillon Lakes are made from copper.

Jeff asked if the rate increases will happen immediately. Director Mark Siefert commented that we will cover all the projected rates for the next 10-20 years. We will be regulated on the amount of water that we take. Chris Ulm stated that we will keep our wells functional in case an emergency occurs. Crest Hill needs 4 million gallons of water per day. The City of Chicago currently uses orthophosphate in their water already. Sampling will need to be done to the current wells each month.

Aldersperson Tina Oberlin –commented that there is no currently acceptable level of Pfas established yet.

Gary asked who is the Regional Water Commission, and is the Commission currently set up that every entity that is participating will name a person to the Commission. Will the State need to approve a rate increase. The City of Chicago will be set the rate increase with a max of 5%

Susan asked what is the deep tunnel that this was built for the overflow of sewer. Chris Ulm stated he shouldn't have called this project deep tunnel since that pertains to sewer water and does not involve us.

James asked if water softeners would still be needed. They would not.

Ed asked if we will be using the existing water tanks we currently have. Chris Ulm stated that we will still be utilizing them.

Maryjane asked if the construction of the pipeline is being done now that will bring the water to Joliet and how long will it take. Chris Ulm commented that no lines have been started as a design needs to be done, along with bidding. The Water Commission would like to have the line constructed between 2024-2029.

Sandy stated that Homer Glen uses city water and for a family of 3 the bill is over \$200.00 per month. Chris Ulm stated that they are currently obtaining their water from American Water.

Bonnie asked about the water rates. Will the increase in the sewer rate be done by Crest Hill. This is something that we will be discussing at a later date.

Jack explained he had Lake Michigan water in his previous location and would like to know what Lockport is doing. Director Mark Siefert commented that Lockport has not yet participated.

Scott asked if this cost would go up gradually. Director Siefert stated that this is currently just an estimate per cubic foot. We will be increasing it slowly for the next 9 years to get up to the beginning cost when and if we switch over.

A resident asked why do we need to pick up the cost. Chris Ulm commented right now we don't know the final cost at this time. Mayor Soliman stated if we join the Commission, we will have a better chance on getting funding to offset the cost.

Karen questioned the additional costs on the water bill, garbage, etc. Director Siefert commented that we are not sure what the garbage rate will be until we renegotiate the new contract with that company. The sewer rate is pretty close to what it might be.

Terry asked if we would get charged more from Joliet. Director Siefert commented that the City of Chicago will be setting the rates.

Bonnie asked if the rates are already set. Director Siefert commented that the cost to get the pipe to Crest Hill is set but will be split between all the cities.

Greg commented that the loss ratio is 25 %. What is it in Crest Hill. Director Siefert explained that we are between 7-12% depending on the season.

Mike asked if the monthly water usage increases, will the taxes go up. The rates for water system is separate from the taxes. Mayor Soliman commented that he feels the value of property will increase.

Gerald asked what type of financing are we going to be using. Director Siefert explained that we are looking at various forms of funding.

Jack hoped that everyone realizes that we have access to a great source of water and thanked everyone for looking into this.

Ray talked about the water leaks that are occurring. He explained about the leaks he experienced that were with the flappers in the toilets. There is a way to check for quiet leaks and that is by putting dye into the tank.

Rich explained that as far as the flapper valves, he received information from the city about it.

A resident asked what is the next move. Director Siefert commented that as soon as the City makes a decision we will be get the information out to the residents.

Jack Meyer said that he would use caution on the passage of the infrastructure bill that was just passed.

Chris Ulm stated that the aquafer, and the water level is currently staying consistent.

Ken asked when will the rate increase start. Chris Ulm the rates will increase slowly over a period of time.

Judy was happy that Lake Michigan water is coming, as she does not like the current water supply.

Mayor Soliman asked if the Council would like to make any comments.

Aldersperson Oberlin explained that we are taking this water issue very seriously. Since she educated herself, she feels this is the best way to go.

Alderman Cipiti thanked everyone for attending.

Alderman Kubal explained that he has talked to a lot of people, and this will make your property value better. He is in favor of switching to Lake Michigan

Alderman Jefferson thanked everyone for coming out. He grew up on Lake Michigan water and believes this is a great deal for the city and the future generation.

Alderman Vershay explained that we was not excited at first about the water switch, but after hearing about the potential problems, feels we have to leave the future generation in a better position.

Mayor Soliman commented that staff will be available at the stations to answer any further questions.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:26 p.m.

Approved this 6th day of December, 2021

As presented ✓

As amended _____


CHRISTINE VERSHAY HALL, CITY CLERK


RAYMOND R. SOLIMAN, MAYOR