

Work session
December 2, 2021
Future Water Survey
1919 Caton Farm Rd. - Richland School Gymnasium

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

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

Mayor Soliman welcomed the public and gave a brief statement.

Public Works Director Mark Siefert welcomed everyone to Richland School. He then 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.

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?

The posters on display match the handouts that were given to the residents as they came in. Strand & Associates has been working with the City of Crest Hill since 2014 on the possibility of drilling another well. The current wells are running more frequently than they should. The City of Joliet is running several aquafer levels below ours and are considering getting water from the City of Chicago (Lake Michigan) since their wells are starting to run extensively. Drilling of wells is being restricted in certain areas due to certain endangered species. Also, placing high-capacity wells near lower capacity wells can endanger the water quantity.

The City would need to either add 2 additional wells to the existing ones that we already have. There are currently 2 contaminates that are identified in the water. Pfas (which comes from products such as Teflon, and fire prevention materials) and Chlorides (secondary contamination) such as road salt. Five of the 8 wells have been detected with these contaminants. Lake Michigan water does not have Chloride in it, but there are small quantities of Pfas in the water. Several options would be that all of the water would go to one central location, be treated, then pumped out for consumption. We can build new wells or switch to Lake Michigan water. Each community will have 1 voting member on the Water Commission if they choose to join. The City of Joliet looked at several locations, such as the Illinois River, the Kankakee River, and Lake Michigan.

In 2020 Joliet narrowed down where to get water. In early 2021 they made a determination to go with Lake Michigan water.

Other communities that have considered partnering with Joliet, are Romeoville, Channahon, Shorewood, Minooka, Lemont, Homer Glen, Montgomery, Yorkville, Oswego, and Rockdale. If these communities join the Water Commission they would be buying water from the City of Joliet. The rate the City of Chicago charges would include the cost to extract it from the lake, treat it, pump it, and extend the lines to other communities. It will be on a 50-year term with a 50-year renewal. Increases can only include the cost to move the water, treat it or the 5% annual increase, whichever is less.

The trunk line could potentially come through Romeoville. If it doesn't then they will use the Bruce Rd Corridor Route to Caton Farm Road then on to Joliet.

In January 2020, the City of Joliet decided to pursue Lake Michigan water. In June of 2021 Crest Hill retained Strand & Associates to begin detailed water source studies. In the first part of 2022 a decision will need to be made in regard to joining the Water Commission. Between 2023-2030 the build out will begin. This is the point where we would investigate where the funding for the design and infrastructure would come from. Water rates will be comparable to surrounding Chicagoland communities. The City of Crest Hill will need to create ordinances for water conservation. The conservation of water will help keep the rates down. Part of the cost impact of Lake Michigan Water will require that lead and copper studies be done in detail. Corrosion inhibitors may need to be added to the water to prevent damage to the lines. We will need a 3.5-million-gallon storage tank for emergency use, a pumping station and 3.5 miles of internal water main improvements.

Projected water rates are:

2030 bi-monthly cost using our wells \$275-285 versus \$260-270 using Lake Michigan Water

2050 bi-monthly cost using our wells \$380-390 versus \$370-380 using Lake Michigan Water

Director Mark Siefert directed the residents to the various information stations. Each discussion would last 5-7 minutes.

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

Mike Schwab recalls seeing the water levels of Lake Michigan were down. How will this be addressed. Chris Ulm stated there was a drought. The water is replenished through Canada, it's a seasonal droppage of water levels. The locks and dams were sealed up. The Lake is currently at higher levels. Mr. Schwab asked if we have a contingency plan. All surrounding communities will be required to have water in reserves. Regarding City of Chicago and their politics what would stop them from changing the water rates. Director Siefert commented that a contract is entered into and will state the amount they can charge. This will be a 100-year contract and will be regulated. Mayor Soliman commented that the rates are binding, and the City of Chicago has been doing this over 100 years.

Bob Bannon said that you can't have service water and wells. This is due to the possibility of cross contamination. Chris Ulm commented that you are required to treat the water and make it better quality when it is pumped back into the lakes. Has the decision been made on the water, who will make it, and when will it be done? Mayor Soliman explained that a decision has not been made yet and we are still waiting for some additional information. The City Council will make the decision on January 17, 2022 as to whether we will join the Water Commission or not.

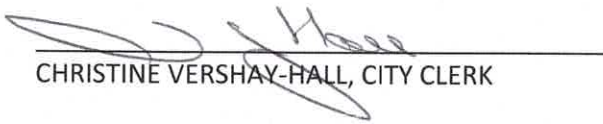
Mayor Soliman asked for comments from the City Council.

Aldersperson Oberlin explained that when this all started, she was 100% against the lake water and didn't want to give control away. What changed her mind was learning about Pfas. She also did research on her own, and she believes there is no limit for having Pfas. Alderman Cipiti thanked everyone for coming and wanted the public to be educated on the decision. Our existing water system has a lot of challenges with it. The City is taking the potential move to Lake Michigan water very seriously. Alderman Albert explained that we have some time before we have to make a final decision. He asked the residents to talk with their neighbors about the lake water and the decision that has to be made.

Mayor Soliman thanked everyone for attending and hopes everyone has more knowledge after this presentation.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:13 p.m.

Approved this 6th day of December, 2021
As presented ✓
As amended _____


CHRISTINE VERSHAY-HALL, CITY CLERK


RAYMOND R. SOLIMAN, MAYOR