

Rensselaer County Water and Sewer Authority
2021 Annual Report

March 2022

Robert Pasinella, Jr., Chairman
John Fetscher, Vice Chairman
Kenneth M. Harting, Treasurer
John Mooney

Linda von der Heide, Chief Executive Officer
William Film, Chief Financial Officer
Donna Murray, Secretary
Philip H. Dixon, Authority Counsel
Henry V. LaBarba, P.E., Authority Consulting Engineer

Overview

On June 26, 2008, the Rensselaer County Water and Sewer Authority (RCWSA) closed on an \$8,005,000 Water Service Bond Issue and a \$6,555,000 Sewer Service Bond Issue to fund sewer projects in the Town of East Greenbush and water projects in the Joint Water District, consisting of East Greenbush and the City of Rensselaer. By mid-2018, all the sewer projects were completed. In March of 2015, the City of Rensselaer refinanced \$3,495,000, the City's share of the Water Service Bond Issue, using bond proceeds from the New York State Environmental Facilities Corporation (EFC). The remainder of the Water Service bonds (\$3,930,000) were redeemed in December of 2017 by the Town of East Greenbush using EFC proceeds with the assistance of RCWSA. Similarly, in September of 2018 the Town of East Greenbush, working with RCWSA and the New York State EFC, redeemed the \$6,555,000 in Sewer Bonds using \$5.28 million in EFC bond proceeds and the remaining bond balances the Authority maintained on their behalf. This brought the successful relationship between the RCWSA and the Town of East Greenbush to an end.

The Authority also owns the Pheasant Run sewer system, a fifteen unit system in the Town of Schodack. The Authority collects \$950.00 per year per unit for its maintenance expenses. Due to the age of the system, there were a significant number of pump replacements and electrical system repairs performed in the last three years, as most of the pumps are over 20 years old. This work depleted the existing reserves for Pheasant Run. The Pheasant Run account does not receive any County, Town or State direct support and is totally funded by the 15 serviced homes. In 2020, expenditures on service and maintenance of this system approximately equaled the annual fees collected from homeowners. The 2020 beginning balance was \$30,875 and the year-end balance was \$29,118. In October, the Authority voted to increase the sewer fee to \$950 beginning in 2021. In 2021, most if not all pumps had been replaced and the cost of repairs decreased. The amount of sewer fees collected for 2021 was \$14,250 and system costs totaled \$9,354. The Authority will continue to pursue a more permanent operation and financing arrangement for this small system.

The Authority is also working with the Town of North Greenbush to finalize agreements for maintenance of the sewer line that the Authority owns along Valley View Road and the collection of hook-up fees for recent residential developments using the system. Our efforts were not successful in 2021 and we are hopeful that the Administration in the Town of North Greenbush will finalize the agreements, in accordance with the regulations of the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC).

The Authority had also starting working with the Town of East Greenbush on a 112-unit subdivision that plans to use the HANYS sewer pumping station. This development unfortunately will be using the Town's sewer line at Grandview Avenue and not using the Authority's pumping station.

Finally, in the fall of 2018, the Authority was asked by the Rensselaer County Executive's Office to participate in applying for a \$1.5 million State Legislative grant to extend an existing sewer line in the Town of Schodack along Maple Hill Road up to NY Route 9. The Authority was successful in extending the life of the grant to December 31, 2021 and in getting the funding sub-allocated to DEC for processing. A consultant was selected for the design of the sewer line.

Rensselaer County Water and Sewer Authority
Mission Statement

It is the mission of the Rensselaer County Water and Sewer Authority to foster public health and well-being and to promote economic development through the financing, management and operation of public water and sewer utilities for Rensselaer County and its local governments. In doing so, the Authority shall strive to provide such services in a cost-efficient manner.

Authority Measurement Report in Accordance with Section 2824 – a of the PAL

Management's focus in 2021 was to continue its efforts to collect sewer fees it was owed by various entities. The Authority worked with Rensselaer County on a \$1.5 million New York State Legislative grant to extend the existing sewer line along Maple Hill Road in the Town of Schodack out to State Route 9. Management had began working with the Town of East Greenbush on a development that will now not use the HANYS pumping station.

Management Report on Internal Controls

Management's focus in 2021 was to continue its efforts to collect sewer fees it was owed by various entities. The Authority also took the lead on applying for a \$1.5 million New York State Legislative grant to extend the existing sewer line along Maple Hill Road in the Town of Schodack out to State Route 9. The Authority raised the sewer rates for Pheasant Run to \$950 for 2021 due to the annual costs of the past few years of operating that system.

Board Members
(one vacancy)

Robert Pasinella, Jr., Chairman - Mr. Pasinella is the Director of the Rensselaer County Office of Economic Development and Planning, as well as the Executive Director of the Rensselaer County Industrial Development Agency.

Kenneth M. Harting, Treasurer – Mr. Harting is the former supervisor of the Town of East Greenbush's water system for the Department of Public Works and is the operator of a number of small private water systems in Rensselaer County.

John Mooney – Mr. Mooney is a licensed real estate broker with Howard Hanna and a past President of the Rensselaer City School District Board of Education.

John Fetscher – Mr. Fetscher is the former Secretary of the Water and Sewer Authority and a retired staff member of the Rensselaer County Office of Economic Development and Planning.