Response to Information Request by Chair Sollman

Chair Sollman, Vice Chair Brock Smith, and Committee members,

Thank you for giving us a hearing concerning the help we need to upgrade our facilities to serve the smaller cities of Western Oregon.

At the end of the hearing on the 12th, chair Sollman requested that I put together some information about the cost of upgrading the smaller cities to the point they could handle the septic waste, portable toilet waste, food manufacturing waste, and grease trap waste for their general areas. Putting together that information by Friday at 3 PM has been difficult. However, I was able to gather some information from one city that had done a study in the past and some information from an engineer who has designed and built many municipal systems. I Have included information from both.

I will address the information given by the City of Oakland. Also, I have included a recent cost of two different Septage receiving stations recently installed at two small cities in Oregon. Then, added the components that would be needed to complete the system. These are things I'm very familiar with. I used figures from the cheaper of the two installations.

Oakland cites the study that they did concerning the installation of a screw press and drying beds that would handle their current flow. In their notes, they cite that a screw press and drying bed would be about $3,600,000.00. I think those are reasonable figures. But that is only the start when discussing a system to replace Heard Farm's services. The system they spoke of was limited to their current flow. If you're going to replace Heard Farms, you will have to install a septic receiving station where the trucks can unload. Then, you will have to find some way of screening all unwanted grit and plastics. Then, you must have a mechanism to measure the gallons to bill for it. Then, there would need to be an upgrade to the facility to handle the increase in organic matter from heavy waste like septage, Portable toilet waste, grease trap waste, RV parks, rest areas, food manufacturing waste, etc. Otherwise, you will not be able to meet your discharge standards into the waters of the state.

ONCE AGAIN, I REMIND EVERYONE THAT HEARD FARMS BENEFICIALLY REUSES BIOSOLIDS AND RECYCLED WATER WITHOUT DISCHARGING INTO WATERS OF THE STATE. If you went through the expense of upgrading these City wastewater treatment plants, they would put in the dewatering equipment to make Bio Solids, but 98% of the liquid would still end up in the river. Moving on, you would have to have the Trucking and biosolids application equipment that you need for land application on the farms, front-end loaders, and dump trucks to transport from the plant out to the fields and reload into the application equipment. You must also acquire enough property to do this or talk to some ranchers or farmers about allowing you to discharge onto their property. I can tell you from experience that it is not always easy, and it is very easy to

get crossways with a landowner and lose your application ground right when needed. The only safe way to do that is to own the property, which can be very expensive.

Cost breakdown:

The screw press and drying beds: $3,600,000.00

Septic receiving station: $1,050,000.00

(This is a cost of a septic receiving station recently installed at the City of Boardman)

Upgrade to the main facility: $3,00,000.00

Truck and land application equipment, front-end loaders etc.: $250,000.00

Property Cost for Land to apply to: $1,000,000.00

Chemicals [polymer]. $10,000.00

Total upgrade cost: $8,900,000.00

Labor, equipment, and overhead to run the program:

Unloading attendant cost per year: $15,000.00

Additional labor and maintenance to run screw press: $20,000.00

Labor to run a land application program: $50,000.00

Fuel and maintenance: $10,000.00

Insurance for equipment: $ 5,000.00

Costs of lab testing: $3,000.00

Total per year to run Biosolids program. $103,000.00

Also, you have to have trained personnel to run the program. There is an overabundance of regulations, such as testing of heavy metal and nutrient levels, and regulations having to do with field application, such as setbacks from a neighboring property, ditches, wells, and public roads. You have to be very careful not to overload the ground with nutrients. Someone needs to monitor the application by testing the biosolids and converting the lab results over to materials applied so that the groundwater is protected. The long and the short of it is if you don't have a very qualified person to monitor everything and who is capable of reporting to DEQ, you can end up in serious trouble.

In conclusion, when considering the costs, risks, and hassles of running the program, you can see why using Heard Farms is an easy choice for smaller communities. If you interviewed the operators from these cities, you would find they want nothing to do with the running of a land application program.

Submitted by,

Richard Heard

President of Heard Farms Inc.

From the City of Oakland:

The City of Oakland is a small historic town incorporated in 1878 providing services to approximately 450 homes and 950 people located in Douglas County, Oregon.

In addition to our citizens, we provide support services to the Oakland Rural Fire District, Oakland Unified School District, Douglas Fire Protection Agency and an additional 2500 residences in the surrounding area. The City of Oakland has become the primary resource for water, sewer and emergency services equipment in Northeast Douglas County.

The City's water system waste basin is directly connected to the sanitary sewer via the collections system in keeping with State of Oregon DEQ and OHA regulations. Since the Archie Creek Fire the increase in unprocessed waste water and sludge must be handled by our sewer plant. This situation compounds our need to dispose of double the amount of sludge since before the fire.

Heard Farms has been the primary sludge hauling contractor for the City of Oakland for over 20 years. The cost of sludge hauling to a licensed DEQ facility is a fraction of the cost to purchase additional equipment and land to complete the essential processing of sludge.

To complete the sludge process the City would need funding for engineered plans, the acquisition land for facilities and equipment to process the sludge to Class A level, the only level accepted by a landfill.

The cost of a screw press and drying bed or an alternative reed bed, to replace Heard Farms service, would cost approximately $3,600,000 to implement. The payment on a $3,600,000 loan would be approximately $180,000 per year, based on a 4% interest rate.

State and Federal regulations along with rising costs have resulted in Oakland having some of the highest water and sewer rates in the County. A typical Oakland utility customer currently pays a combined water/sewer rate of $150.77 per month per household. $3,600,000 over the expected 20-year life of the system divided by our approximate 425 utility customers could cost an additional $35.29 per month per home. This would bring the standard monthly payment to $186.12 for a single family dwelling within the city limits. The increase could have a critical impact on our largely retired community. It is difficult to absorb such a large increase on a fixed income.

Heard Farms is the only viable solution in existence that meets the three requirements of the City which are: to comply with State and Federal regulations, to accommodate the waste sludge within an existing operational budget and to provide a solution that operators can manage.

We urge the passage of SB 956 because it will fundamentally benefit Oakland as well as 20 or more small cities struggling to maintain facilities and provide utility service with affordable cost to their citizens.

HEADWORKS SCREEN AND SEPTAGE RECEIVING STATION

Project Status
In Construction

Project ID
WW 2.0

Project Type
Wastewater

Description

Project Description:
Construct a new headworks and septage receiving station.

Project Justification:
The City's lagoon system operates without a headworks screen allowing garbage to accumulate in the lagoon system. The project will involve installation of a new headworks screen to help remove garbage from wastewater influent and the installation of a septage receiving station to accept hauled waste.

Files & Resources

Links

RFP - Headworks Screen Procurement

Timeline
2023-24 to 2024-25 Fiscal Years

Budget
Proposed Budget: $1,050,000

- $50,000 Wastewater Fund 2023-24 Fiscal Year
- $1,000,000 Wastewater Fund 2024-25 Fiscal Year

Adopted 2024 CIP

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