

1 **Rockford Town Council Public Hearing Regular Meeting**
2 **April 15, 2026, 7pm**
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4 NOTE TO PERSONS REVIEWING THIS DOCUMENT: THIS IS NOT A VERBATIM TRANSCRIPT. WHILE
5 AN ATTEMPT HAS BEEN MADE TO DOCUMENT PERTINENT POINTS, THESE MINUTES CONTAIN
6 ONLY A SUMMARY OF THE DISCUSSION AND VOTING.
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9 Mayor Roecks called the meeting to order at 6pm, stating that the purpose of the meeting was to take
10 public input on potential sewer rate increases.
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12 Roll call took place. Those present were Mayor Carrie Roecks, and Councilmembers Clint Stevenson, Tim
13 Fricke, Walt Whitman and Kevin Willms. Public Works' Dave Thompson was also in attendance.
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15 **Mr. Fricke made a motion to excuse Micki Harnois from the meeting. Mr. Whitman seconded the**
16 **motion. Motion carried.**
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18 Sam Mineer, JUB Engineers, spoke to the public and council about the General Sewer Study that is
19 almost complete, and the purpose of the upcoming Design Project for the sewer system. Portions of the
20 town's system are still the original infrastructure that was installed in 1960. There are areas in town that
21 are failing due to age. The failing areas have cracks and roots in the pipe, and the brick-lined manholes
22 are allowing groundwater to enter the system, otherwise known as Inflow and Infiltration (I&I). To keep
23 the wastewater treatment facility (WWTF) under capacity, and to alleviate wear and tear on the facility,
24 this I&I must be addressed. There was discussion about how to fix the failing lines/manholes, including
25 replacement, realignment and liners.

26 The town has already completed a Sewer Study, using a grant/loan package from the Department of
27 Ecology. This package is \$210,000 forgivable loan and \$210,000 loan. The second step is to complete a
28 design for the areas with the most I&I. DOE has agreed to another grant/loan package for \$400,000
29 forgivable loan and \$400,000 loan. There is an opportunity to request additional funds for construction,
30 projected to be an additional \$7,800,000. The town knows that a design step has to be completed in
31 order to be prepared to address six areas. With the Planning Step and the Design Step, the town will
32 have a loan of \$610,000. To pay back that loan in 20 years, sewer rates will need to increase at a
33 minimum of \$13.50/month. To add a construction loan, the sewer rate would have to increase an
34 additional amount.

35 Mr. Mineer provided Council and the public with different options for funding/repayment. The first
36 option would pay off the Planning and Design loans in 20 years with a \$13.50 increase in sewer fees. The
37 second option would increase sewer fees by \$20. The additional amount would help pay the loans in 6
38 and 9 years, then would generate around \$60,000 per year for capital (sewer) projects. The third option
39 shown was to increase the sewer rate by \$20, then \$5/year increase up to \$60. This option would pay
40 off the loans in 6 and 9 years and allow for a \$7.8M construction loan to be paid off in 20 years.
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42 PUBLIC COMMENT

- 43 - Resident Michael Pray stated that the problematic sewer system areas should be corrected
44 permanently, even if more expensive. No temporary fixes.

- 45 - Councilmember Walt Whitman mentioned that the town will be working with residents to
46 see who has sump pumps that are plumbed directly into the sewer system. This will also help
47 alleviate additional groundwater being treated at the WWTF.
48 - Resident Jay Madison suggested that residents pump their sump pumps into flower beds or
49 into the ditch lines.
50 - Resident Eric Girdner asked if there will be phases of construction. He also asked what will
51 happen if/when DOE says no more discharging into the creek. Mr. Thompson said that we
52 are exploring other options to keep the ponds at the WWTF under capacity.
53 - Resident Tara Grass said that a \$20 increase in sewer rates is doable, but a \$60 increase is
54 not.

55 There was other discussion among the residents, councilmembers and staff.

56 The council members will continue to discuss options. Mayor Roecks encouraged the public to comment
57 or ask staff or any council member any questions. Council will decide on rate increases by June.

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59 **Mr. Willms made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Whitman seconded the motion. Motion carried.**

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61 Meeting was adjourned at 7:07pm.

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82 Heidi Johnson, Clerk/Treasurer

Carrie Roecks, Mayor