

AMADOR CITY

MINUTES OF SPECIAL MEETING OF THE CITY COUNCIL

TUESDAY, September 22, 2015, 7:00 p.m.

Discussion and possible action on all items

- 1. CALL TO ORDER**
- 2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**
- 3. ROLL CALL – Brown, Vasquez, Knox, Marks, Swift present**

APPROVAL OF AGENDA – Brown moved, 2nd by Vasquez to approve agenda. Approved unanimously

4. PUBLIC HEARINGS:

- A. Resolution #544 Finding an Emergency Exists in the Sewer Pond to wit: A Sewer Spill and Leak and Failure of an Electrical Panel Which Requires Immediate Action in Order to Prevent or Mitigate the Loss or Impairment of Life, Health, Property or an Essential Public Service**

Grant Reynolds of Weatherby, Reynolds and Fritson discussed the leak and resulting spill into the creek and how it was discovered. He also discussed the immediate steps he and Terry Coulter took to lessen the impact on the creek. A copy of his report to the city is attached and made a part of these minutes. After making the necessary reports to the Regional Water Quality Control Board, the city was ordered to complete remedial action by October 30, 2015. Property owners Maggie and Jack Hamilton spoke and agreed to the construction of a temporary holding tank on their property.

Vasquez moved with a second by Knox to declare an emergency based on substantial evidence set forth at this meeting that the emergency will not permit a delay resulting from a competitive solicitation for bids, and that the action is necessary to respond to the emergency. Approved unanimously.

Vasquez moved with a second by Knox to adopt Resolution #544 with the understanding that there is a 10% contingency in the cost estimation of approximately \$200,000.00. Approved unanimously.

Vasquez moved, with a second by Swift to adjourn the meeting.

JUL 31 2015

July 28, 2015

Ms. Mary Boyd
California Regional Water Quality Control Board
Central Valley Region
11020 Sun Center Drive #200
Rancho Cordova, CA 95670-6114

RE: CITY OF AMADOR CITY – NOTICE OF SEWAGE SPILL
MRP ORDER NO. R5-2002-0224, AMADOR COUNTY

Ms. Boyd:

Following are the facts related to the sewage spill event experienced in the City of Amador City:

1. At approximately 10:20 a.m. on July 13, 2015 Weatherby-Reynolds-Fritson Engineering and Design's (WRFED) office was contacted by Terry Coulter, the City's Wastewater Chief Operator, who informed this engineer, Grant Reynolds of WRFED, that he believed there was a problem with the City's Aeration Pond. Terry stated that he had not pumped sewage to the City of Sutter Creek since June 29, 2015. Terry stated that he had pumped sludge on June 30, 2015 and the level of the aeration pond had risen from July 1, 2015 through July 3, 2015, but the freeboard measurement had not changed since July 3, 2015.
2. At 11:00 a.m. on July 13, 2015 I met Terry at the aeration pond site. It was noted at this time that there was water in the creek bed of Amador Creek just adjacent to the aeration pond. There had not been substantial rain in the area for quite some time, so the ponded water was suspect. Terry and I hiked downstream to approximately 50 yards past the end of the aeration pond and there was still water in Amador Creek. We found another ponded area with a small old concrete dam structure. Water had pooled here and was trickling out the downstream end of the area. We then hiked upstream approximately 30 yards above the aeration pond and found the streambed dry. Terry had a sample bottle so he returned downstream and took a sample of the ponded water. This sample is being tested for BOD, phosphates, and electrical conductivity. When Terry dropped the sample off for Lab pickup he

(209)-223-0381 [Voice]
(209)-223-0716 [Fax]
206 Peek Street
Jackson, CA. 95642
<http://www.wrfed.com>

obtained sample bottles so that additional samples could be taken on July 14, 2015 and tested for Fecal coliform, Total coliform, and ammonia.

3. At approximately 2:00 p.m. I contacted the City of Sutter Creek and received permission from George Allen, Chief Plant Operator, to allow Amador City to pump continuously in an effort to lower the elevation of the aeration pond in an attempt to look for obvious leak locations.
4. I returned to my office and at approximately 3:05 p.m. I contacted Mr. Michael Israel of the Amador County Environmental Health Department to discuss the problem. Mr. Israel sent Mr. Joel Riley from his office to observe the area and determine the possibility of public access. I met Mr. Riley at the aeration pond site at approximately 3:30 p.m. and discussed our findings to date. Mr. Riley determined that access to the ponded water in Amador Creek was very limited and that no postings were required at this time. We also discussed that pumping of the aeration pond would continue throughout the night and observations for possible leak areas would be done the morning of July 14, 2015. At approximately 4:35 p.m. Mr. Israel called WRFED's office to confirm Mr. Riley findings. Mr. Israel also recommended testing for soaps and salts.
5. At approximately 4:30 p.m. I contacted George Allen with the City of Sutter Creek and obtained some dye strips to have on hand to possibly chase leaks on July 14, 2015.
6. At approximately 8:00 a.m. on July 14, 2015 I arrived at the aeration pond site. I checked the downstream ponded areas. The water levels in these areas had receded as evidenced by the absence of running water between the ponded areas and the settling of algae on the rocks at the edge of the areas. I proceeded downstream to try to find the limits of the spill. I could not reach the end from this access. I returned to the aeration pond to meet Terry. An area of missing concrete was noted at the West end of the pond. Terry used a hose to clean off the area. He exposed dirt and an empty space under the concrete. I then instructed Terry to continue pumping down the level of the pond to see if any additional areas could be exposed. I then proceeded to try and find any evidence of the spill entry into Amador Creek.
7. I began in the creek approximately 30 yards upstream from the aeration pond and worked downstream until I found water approximately 10 yards upstream from the aeration pond. At this point I heard trickling water. I then cut berries from bank just below the aeration pond and exposed an 18" corrugated metal pipe (CMP). The 18" CMP had sewage/water flowing out of it into Amador Creek at a rate of approximately 2 to 3 gallons per minute. At this point Terry

turned on the pumps. We wanted to check if lowering the level in the pond affected the flow in the 18" CMP. After checking as-built drawings of the aeration pond, the pond was originally built over the existing 18" CMP which drained storm water from the highway above down into Amador Creek.

8. I then started approximately three quarters of a mile downstream from the aeration pond and proceeded to walk upstream to try and find the downstream edge of the spill. I found the last ponded area and evidence of moisture in the creek bed approximately 1000 feet west of the 18" CMP entry point. I flagged this location with orange flagging so that it would be visible from the highway above. I then left the aeration pond site at 1:00 p.m. to obtain a chlorine test bottle to eliminate the possibility of a water leak from the pump house water service.
9. At approximately 3:55 p.m. I talked with Mr. Israel via telephone to update him on our findings. He agreed that it appeared to be a sewage spill, but also agreed that eliminating a water leak possibility would be prudent. I then stated that I was returning to the aeration pond site to check the flow from the 18" CMP and that when I returned to my office in the evening I would be contacting O.E.S. and your office.
10. At approximately 4:35 p.m. I returned to the aeration pond site and checked the flow from the 18" CMP. The water flow was now much less than a gallon per minute. The chlorine test bottle showed evidence of chlorine, but the relationship between the level of the aeration pond and the flow in the 18" CMP was good proof that the water in Amador Creek originated from cracks and holes in the upper level of the aeration pond, filtered down to the 18" CMP and used the 18" CMP as a conduit to Amador Creek.
11. At this time the level of the aeration pond had reached the bottom of the safe operating level and the pumps were turned off. The level of the aeration pond was measured to help determine if the level in the pond would increase overnight. With the water level down more evidence of cracks and holes were exposed.
12. I then returned to WRFED's office to call O.E.S. and your office. O.E.S. was contacted at approximately 6:55 p.m., Control No. 15-4015. Your office was contacted at approximately 7:05 p.m. A message was left on the answering machine. A Category 1 SSO report was generated. SSO event ID: 816651, Certification pending. The estimated volume of the spill was calculated from

Terry's log sheet for the month of July. From the log sheet approximately 52,670 gallons of influent had entered the aeration pond from July 4, 2015 through July 13, 2015. Subtracting approximately 7,700 gallons for evaporation ($30' \times 140' \times 0.76' (0.8 \text{ pan evap.}) \times 7.48 \text{ gals./cf} \times (10/31 \text{ days})$) leaves approximately 45,000 gallons.

13. At approximately 7:45 a.m. on July 15, 2015 I answered a voicemail from Terry. He stated that the flow at the 18" CMP had ceased and that the ponded water downstream was beginning to recede.
14. At approximately 8:00 a.m. on July 15, 2015 I met Terry at the aeration pond site. The flow from the 18" CMP could be best described as a drip at this time. At this time it was decided to run the pumps twice a day to keep the pond level down and have no flow to the 18" CMP. The pumps are now running at the end of the two daily flow peaks. At approximately 8:30 a.m. I instructed Terry to call Sweet Pea Septic Service and have them vacuum out the ponded water at the only area with access for the vacuum truck.
15. At approximately 9:40 a.m. I returned a call from Mr. Israel. I stated that the flow from the 18" CMP had slowed to a drip and that Sweet Pea would be vacuuming as much of the spill as they could reach.
16. At approximately 9:50 a.m. I returned your call. You stated that an initial report was due in two weeks and that you would need additional testing completed. Samples were taken from Amador Creek for the following tests: BOD, Total coliform, Fecal coliform, and Ammonia. Results are pending. During this call we coordinated a site inspection for July 16, 2015. A field sample for DO was taken during your site inspection of July 16, 2015.
17. At approximately 1:35 p.m. I received a telephone call from Terry. Sweet Pea had been to the site between 11:00 a.m. and 11:30 a.m. and had pumped 2400 gallons out of Amador Creek. Due to weeping of water from the sidewalls of the ponded area Sweet Pea was asked to return to the site on July 16, 2015.
18. On July 15, 2015 I coordinated with Auburn Constructors to send a representative to the aeration pond site to help setup a repair strategy for the holes and cracks in the pond concrete lining. Fremouw Environmental Services was also contacted to possibly assist with pumping of the aeration pond prior to repair. I did not receive a return call from their representative.

19. At approximately 8:00 a.m. on July 16, 2015 I met with Mr. Kevin Couper of Auburn Constructors at the aeration pond site to discuss repair of the gunite at the pond walls. Auburn Constructors will provide a proposal to repair the pond walls. On July 17, 2015 I received an e-mail from geotechnical engineer Mr. Greg Gularte. At the request of Kevin Couper, Greg will be assisting the City with coordinating the pond wall fix. On July 20, 2015 I forwarded as-built drawings of the pond to Greg to assist him with his task. The as-built drawings are attached to this letter.
20. At approximately 9:00 a.m. on July 16, 2015 I met yourself and your supervisor, Mr. Howard Hold, in downtown Amador City and escorted you both to the aeration pond site. Terry Coulter met us at the site. At the aeration pond site we observed the 18" CMP entry point at Amador Creek and the ponded area associated with it. We then hiked downstream to the ponded areas accessible from our upstream location. We then completed a quick tour of the pumphouse. Terry noted that a new electrical control panel has been ordered for the pumps along with a new level indicator for the pond. We then inspected the pond where you were shown the hole in the pond wall and additional cracking in the upper portions of the pond. I then escorted you both west on Old Highway 49 to show you the flagging at the creek that represented the limits of the spill approximately 1000 feet west of the 18" CMP entry point. The location is also referenced by the 35/45 MPH speed sign at the highway shoulder. At approximately 9:30 a.m. during your visit, Sweet Pea had returned to the site to repump the accessible ponded area. During this visit they pumped 700 gallons out of Amador Creek.
21. Additional items noted during your visit: 1) Mr. Hold directed Amador City to obtain a trash pump and pump and remove as much ponded water as possible from Amador Creek; 2) You presented a highlighted copy of the City's WDR's to Terry Coulter outlining current deficiencies in the reporting the City was presenting to the State. Included in these deficiencies are meter calibration records, tabulation of testing results, and notes of inspection observations. These deficiencies are to be corrected with the next monthly report; 3) You requested a letter from the City Mayor giving City Clerk Joyce Davidson authority to sign the monthly report transmittals. 4) You reminded me that the initial report was due within two weeks.
22. At approximately 12:30 p.m. on July 16, 2015 Terry Coulter borrowed a trash pump and hoses from the City of Sutter Creek. At approximately 1:30 p.m. Terry began pumping the lower ponded areas to the area adjacent to the 18" CMP. At approximately 3:00 p.m. Sweet Pea returned to the site to repump out the accessible ponded area. During this visit they pumped 1600 gallons

out of Amador Creek. Pumping from downstream continued until approximately 4:20 p.m. Pumping would continue on July 17, 2015.

23. At approximately 8:00 a.m. on July 17, 2015 myself and Terry Coulter returned to the aeration pond site to continue with the pumping of the downstream ponded water. At approximately 9:30 a.m. Sweet Pea returned to the site to repump out the accessible ponded area. During this visit they pumped 1400 gallons out of Amador Creek. Transferring of water upstream using the trash pump and approximately 450 feet of hoses was completed at approximately 4:00 p.m. Pictures of this effort are attached to this letter. At approximately 4:30 p.m. Sweet Pea returned to the site to repump out the accessible ponded area. During this visit they pumped 1500 gallons out of Amador Creek.
24. From July 15, 2015 through July 17, 2015 Sweet Pea removed 7200 gallons of the spill from Amador Creek.
25. At approximately 3:00 p.m. I had a telephone conversation with Jennifer Epperson. Jennifer is the person responsible for checking the aeration pond monitoring wells. Jennifer stated that she had last checked the monitoring wells on June 12, 2015 and all of the levels appeared normal and that she did not notice any exceptional groundwater. Her logs are available if a copy is required by your office.
26. As of this date, July 28, 2015, we have not received any test results back from Alpha Laboratories. Mr. Gularte is working on his pond wall fix and cost estimate for the repairs. The repair will be presented to your office prior to proceeding with any work. The aeration pond is operating at a very low level and we are continuing to pump to Sutter Creek two times per day.

If you have any questions or require any additional information in regard to this matter, please contact Grant Reynolds at (209) 223-0381.

I certify under penalty of law that I have personally examined and am familiar with the information submitted in this document and all attachments and that, based on my inquiry of those individuals immediately responsible for obtaining the information, I believe that the information is true, accurate, and complete. I am aware that there are

Mary Boyd
California Regional Water Quality Control Board
14248 State Highway 49 Aeration Pond Leak Spill
Amador City, California
July 28, 2015
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significant penalties for submitting false information, including the possibility of fine and imprisonment.

Sincerely,

WEATHERBY, REYNOLDS, FRITSON ENGINEERING & DESIGN



GRANT REYNOLDS
for EUGENE WEATHERBY
City Sanitary Sewer Engineer

cc: Tim Knox, City Mayor
Joyce Davidson, City Clerk
Mike Israel, Amador County Environmental Health

(CVRWQCB-pond leak spill-07-14-15-AC)