

**CITY OF BELDING TIMELINE OF EVENTS:
NEW WASTEWATER TREATMENT PLANT AND
WATER AND SEWER RATE INCREASE**

The need for constructing and implementing a new wastewater treatment plant and the need to increase water and sewer rates has been a frequent topic of discussion at City Council meetings for approximately the past three years.

City Council meetings are held on the first and third Tuesday of every month at 7 p.m. where citizens are *welcomed* and *encouraged* to give Public Comment, voicing their opinions, questions and/or concerns to members of the City Council. Every City Council Agenda offers two opportunities to give Public Comment - the first Public Comment being reserved for agenda items only, the second for any topic.

Meetings *specifically* discussing the new wastewater treatment plant and/or water and sewer rate increases, including public hearings, were topics of discussion at the following City Council meetings, offering city residents *numerous* chances to both become educated on and to comment on these issues.

<u>DATE</u>	<u>EVENT</u>	<u>TOPIC</u>
March 3, 2020	Agenda Item	Contract with Fleis & Vandenbrink for Wastewater Treatment Plant Operations
August 2, 2021	Agenda Item	Remove sludge from Wastewater Treatment Plant
September 21, 2021	Agenda Item	Hydrogeological Study Work Plan at Wastewater Treatment Plant
November 2, 2021	Agenda Item	Wastewater Treatment Plant Engineering Evaluation With Fleis & Vandenbrink
February 1, 2022	Agenda Item	Water Rate Increase 2022-27 Discussion
February 15, 2022	Presentation	Fleis & Vandenbrink Status Plan on Wastewater Treatment Plant
March 1, 2022	Agenda Item	Water & Sewer Rate Study
March 15, 2022	Agenda Item	Wastewater Treatment Plant State Revolving Fund
April 5, 2022	Agenda Item	Utility Financial Solutions - Cost of Service Study Agreement
May 17, 2022	Public Hearing	Clean Water State Revolving Fund RE: Wastewater Treatment Plant
May 17, 2022	Agenda Item	Clean Water State Revolving Fund RE: Wastewater Treatment Plant
June 21, 2022	Agenda Item	Water Operator Assistance Proposal Fleis & Vandenbrink
August 16, 2022	Presentation	Fleis & Vandenbrink Lagoon Cleaning Bids
August 16, 2022	Agenda Item	Lagoon Cleaning
August 16, 2023	Agenda Item	NOTICE OF INTENT - Wastewater Treatment Plant

September 6, 2022	Presentation	Bonding Fleis & Vandenbrink Selecting a Project Delivery Method for Wastewater Treatment Plant Project
September 20, 2023	Agenda Item	Select Project Delivery Method - Wastewater Treatment Plant
November 1, 2023	Agenda Item	Selection of Wastewater Treatment Plant Engineer
November 15, 2023	Presentation	Utility Financial Solutions - Water Sewer Rates
November 15, 2022	Agenda Item	Consider Engineer Services Contract with Fleis & Vandenbrink for Design and Bidding for new Wastewater Treatment Plant
December 6, 2022	Agenda Item	Resolution Authorizing Issuance of a Bond Anticipation Note for Wastewater Treatment Plant
January 3, 2023	Agenda Item	Approve Design/Build Agreement with Fleis & Vandenbrink for Wastewater Treatment Plant
January 14, 2023 (Saturday)	Agenda Item	Wastewater Treatment Plant Start-up
January 17, 2023	Agenda Item	Consider Applying for an Additional Wastewater Treatment Plant Grant through EGLE PA-53 - Substantial Health Risk Projects
January 17, 2023	Agenda Item	Consider Authorization of a Grant with EGLE for a Drinking Water Asset Management Plan
February 7, 2023	Agenda Item	Consider Drinking Water Asset Management Plan Engineering Services Proposal with Fleis & Vandenbrink
February 7, 2023	Agenda Item	Consider Drinking Water State Revolving Fund Project Plan Water System Improvements with Fleis & Vandenbrink
February 21, 2023	Agenda Item	Wastewater Treatment Plant Design Update with Fleis & Vandenbrink
April 4, 2023	Budget Workshop	
April 18, 2023	Agenda Item	Approve contract with Bendzinski & Co. Re: Wastewater Treatment Plant State Revolving Fund Project 5830-01
April 18, 2023	Agenda Item	Continue Budget Workshop
May 2, 2023	Agenda Item	Resolution to Approve Water and Sewer Rate Increase
May 16, 2023	Agenda Item	Utility Financial Solutions Discussion on Water and Sewer Rates
May 16, 2023	Public Hearing	2023/24 Fiscal Year Budget
May 16, 2023	Agenda Item	Resolution to Approve Water & Sewer Rate Increase
May 16, 2023	Agenda Item	Resolution Adopting a Final Project Planning Document for Water System Improvements

- All City Council meeting dates and times are posted on the city website, www.belding.mi.us and at City Hall.
- All City Council Agendas are posted on the city website.

- All Public Hearing Notices are published in the Greenville Daily News, posted on the city website, at City Hall and on the city Facebook page.
- A full 8 ½ x 11 page regarding the water and sewer rate increase was included in the April-June 2023 edition of the Belding Bugle. The Belding Bugle is sent to every city resident of the city, is posted on the city website and the city Facebook page or copies are available at City Hall.
- A Notice regarding the proposed water and sewer rate increase was posted on the city website's home page on May 10, 2023, informing residents of the City Council's upcoming vote that would be taking place on May 16, 2023. This article continues to be posted for your reference.

Historical Facts

Official city records conclude that the existing wastewater treatment plant and lagoons are/were regularly inspected and maintained by us/our predecessors. The current system is/was not neglected, it (fortunately) has far surpassed its life expectancy.

Mandate

The construction of a new wastewater treatment plant was not put to a vote of the people as the City of Belding was MANDATED by the State of Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes and Energy (EGLE) to make substantial improvements to the infrastructure of our water system. Thorough studies conducted by experts in this field concluded that constructing a new wastewater treatment plant would be the best long-term solution and most progressive and cost-effective option to comply with this mandate. The City of Belding has sought and continues to seek multiple grant opportunities and funding sources to offset the cost of the new Wastewater Treatment Plant—in fact, the city has already qualified for “Principal Forgiveness” forgiving approximately half of the cost of the new facility!

Funding

To have the ability to fund the remainder of the project, the City Council had to make the tough and unpopular decision to raise water and sewer rates. Rate studies were conducted and evaluated bringing us to the current amount. In fact, even with the rate increase, Belding's water and sewer rates remain much lower than those of many cities comparable to our size.

Again, the city will continue to seek grants and other funding avenues in an attempt to lessen the burden to our residents.

Apology

As a result of a computer programming error, the current water and sewer bills included an erroneous \$75 late fee in addition to the increase. We sincerely apologize for this mistake.