Commissioner Aaron M. Harrison called the special meeting to order at 11:00 a.m. with Commissioner Stephen D. Hambley and Commissioner Colleen M. Swedyk present. The meeting was held in the commissioners' hearing room. Commissioner Harrison opened the Meeting by stating that the purpose of the special meeting was to discuss the Chippewa Wastewater Treatment Plant ("WWTP").

Sanitary Engineer Jeremy Sinko began the presentation by explaining that the discussion arose from the recent guaranteed maximum price ("GMP") provided by Great Lakes Construction, which prompted reconsideration of alternatives for the Chippewa Wastewater Treatment Plant Project. He noted they were reevaluating the alternative to potentially converting treatment plant into a pump station and pumping that wastewater north into Liverpool's collection system to be treated. Commissioner Harrison asked if the pump station option was the only alternative being considered. He stated that he believed there are probably more alternatives and he would like to have a global discussion.

Mr. Sinko confirmed that doing "nothing" was technically an option, explaining that Chippewa has an NPDES permit with Ohio EPA that expires on July 31, 2026. He warned that beginning in early next year, the county is going to have to engage with the EPA and they'll start working with the EPA to re-up the permit. He expressed departmental concerns about the EPA potentially issuing findings and orders and dictating to the county that they need to do something to this plant. Referencing the April 2023 HDR report, he stated that the amount of processes that don't meet current design criteria is just littered from beginning of the plant through the end. Mr. Harrison inquired of cost estimates on the "do nothing" scenario, to which Mr. Sinko responded that costs would be dictated by EPA requirements.

Mr. Sinko then moved to the second option: rehabilitating the existing plant. He stated that the consultant basically said that it would not be a good idea to do that due to processes not meeting current design standards. He stated that it's not like you can just put a new coat of paint on and replace some pumps. When you're talking about the headworks, where all the wastewater comes in, you're going to have to basically demo the existing and rebuild it. Mr. Harrison asked whether the report provided specific cost estimates for rehabilitation. Mr. Sinko acknowledged they didn't have specific numbers, speculating that it would probably push higher than a new plant due to construction complexities of maintaining operations while rebuilding.

Scott Ankrom from Hazen and Sawyer stated that he thinks in the report, he doesn't know if they address it from a cost standpoint, but it's going to be doing everything you're doing now on the existing plant just on the Greenfield site which is much easier for construction. You don't have to do bypass closing. He noted that only the EQ tank from the existing facility would be kept to be utilized for capturing of high flows during rain events.

Mr. Harrison noted the lack of specific numbers stating that the numbers they had on the construction are a concern to him because the initial numbers they had on the construction were so far off that that's why some of these tougher questions about what other options are. He emphasized wanting to increase the universe of options and see if maybe there's something they haven't fully considered that considering the new numbers makes that a more viable financial option. Commissioner Swedyk agreed noting that the cost had more than doubled. Mr. Ankrom acknowledged the broader construction industry challenges as they are seeing this around the country in all construction projects. The prices have escalated due to; it's kind of a double-edged sword. There's a lot of projects out there, so the contractors are sometimes having trouble getting subs to give them bids.

The discussion then moved to the third option: the pump station alternative. Mr. Sinko presented his calculations, stating he calculated roughly $166M for this option adding that he feels like he's probably a little light in that. He broke down the costs, including $610,000 for modeling and flow monitoring, $5M for design of new gravity and force mains, noting there would be roughly 17 miles of force main and sanitary sewers from the discharge point where Chippewa would discharge to the Liverpool plant. In answer to a question by Mr. Hambley, Mr. Sinko noted that the cost does not consider the capacity issues at Liverpool. Mr. Sinko explained that he believes in the early 2000s, Ken Hotes, Sanitary Engineer at the time, purchased the property adjacent to the Chippewa plant with the intention of constructing a new treatment plant there. Subsequently, Sanitary Engineer Jim Troike floated the idea about regionalizing and turning this wastewater treatment plant into a pump station and pumping it to Liverpool. Until the report was provided to assess both alternatives, it was just conceptual to that point as no one ever put dollar figures to it, and no one ever looked at it to understand what the ramifications to the existing infrastructure would be. He stated that this is the first document they had to determine the route they wanted to go. They had the study done because they were unsure at the time but something has to be done with the Chippewa plant. Mr. Harrison responded that in taking Mr. Sinko's numbers at face value, they have fairly consistently seen that the pump station option runs about double the cost of the of the new build, and to him, that wasn't a viable option when it was $70M. It's certainly not a viable option at a $166M. He expressed concern that the pump station comparison made the $88 million option look a lot better because it's not $166M and stated that what I needs is a compelling reason why we should spend $88M.

The fourth option, replacing the plant, was discussed with a total cost of $88.3M, including design services and inspections, based on the GMP from Great Lakes Construction. Mr. Sinko pointed out that one nice thing with the GMP, it protects us from change orders. If it were to be bid out, we have the risk of change orders. Commissioner Hambley stated that the risk at this point is factored into the subcontractors and the contractors' estimate, and he thinks eventually we're going to have to bid. The GMP model reflects what's going on. Every contractor and subcontractor is going to build the risk within their price. He added that he thinks the best way is the competitive bid and see what the market says. Mrs. Swedyk stated that she was glad to hear that. Mr. Ankrom noted that the GMP Great Lakes has about 40% self-perform part of the contract. They are doing a deep dive on that estimate, their estimates, their costs, their labor, all of that. But they are also doing a deeper dive in the total bid as well, or

the equipment manufacturers, the subs, all that. They're providing that detailed information for the county because they felt they needed to go there based upon the cost to give the board all the information and details to understand where this is coming from.

Mrs. Swedyk asked if they should be in discussions with Westfield. She acknowledged they historically haven't wanted commercial waste but suggested exploring whether Westfield might take over the customers Even if it is a check from us to them, again, outside of the box, for some upgrades that they may want. Mr. Sinko responded with technical concerns, noting Westfield's plant is rated at 630,000 gallons per day while Chippewa's average daily flow is 550,000 gallons. He stated that they would have to expand their wastewater facility to double their capacity. Mr. Hambley recalled previous discussions from 2020 when Westfield had rejected taking commercial or industrial waste, primarily related to the Kratzer property development. Mr. Sinko confirmed this, explaining that Westfield wanted to stay residential and had concerns about accepting commercial or industrial waste. Mr. Hambley questioned what makes them think that a combined project with Westfield could actually build higher capacity cheaper. Mrs. Swedyk answered that it's just a question to look at all options globally now that we're at these prices.

Jason Hebert from Great Lakes Construction then provided context about the cost escalation. He explained that the original CMAR bid was for a $45 million project, but the information that they had at that level to where we are today is worlds different. The needs of the county are different. The project itself is different. He detailed how through the CMAR process at 30%, 60%, and 90% drawings, the needs, the wants have continued to grow. Mrs. Swedyk asked if we have wants that could be paired back right now? She stated that Mr. Hebert mentioned "needs and wants" and that was the first time anyone's ever said that to her - that there is potentially wants in this price that could be more conservatively looked at. Mr. Hebert confirmed this possibility, stating they haven't had the opportunity to take that initial GMP, which is your $8M number, and really pare it back to kind of understand where those costs are being spent. Is it necessary to have those type of things? Mr. Harrison stated that what we need is to do this for less than $50M - that's what we need. Mr. Ankrom explained the scope changes noting that the processes that are being put in place to treat the wastewater are the processes that you need regardless. He provided examples of potential areas for cost savings, such as whether buildings need to be fully enclosed, while cautioning about past experiences like the Liverpool CAMBI system that later required expensive retrofitting. Mr. Sinko referenced the current design approach, stating that they were very mindful of what needs to be included in this project - when we evaluated something, it was based on operationally what we have run into problems with. He gave the example of the solids handling building that needed to be enclosed because in our in our cold temperatures, we would have the conveyor belts freezing.

The conversation then shifted to operational costs, with Mrs. Swedyk asking about future staffing needs. Mr. Ankrom responded that the new facility would be a lot more operator friendly compared to the current manually operated plant, and Mr. Sinko stated that he has no planned increase of staff. Discussion then turned to timeline and market conditions. When Mrs. Swedyk asked if waiting a year might improve pricing as contractors finish other projects, Mr. Ankrom stated that in his 40 years of doing this business, he has never seen prices go down. Mr. Hebert stated that between 6 and 8 months from now, these prices can go up 6%, maybe 10%, just because of the way the market is at this point. He advocated for the CMAR approach, encouraging the commissioners to take advantage of what has been created and have the team vet the current proposal for potential cost reductions.

In answer to a question by Mr. Hambley regarding next steps, Mr. Harrison proposed taking some time, if it's 30 days, 45 days, to do some more out of the box thinking. During that time, "we maybe kick the tires on some of these more radical alternatives…and also maybe at the same time revisit you know some value engineering opportunities." Mr. Ankrom confirmed they were already working on vetting the GMP and developing a new value engineering list. He cautioned that he wouldn't expect a huge reduction in a number. Mr. Harrison emphasized the importance of exploring all options because "we need to justify the expenses to our customers."

After discussion, the commissioners agreed that Mr. Sinko and County Administrator Matt Springer would approach Westfield to gauge their interest in potential collaboration. Mr. Sinko cautioned about the complexities, noting infrastructure upgrade requirements and the need to go through NOACA facility planning processes. Mr. Harrison stated that the commissioners will schedule another special meeting for the first half/middle of January to continue discussions.

Public Comment
None.

Adjournment
Mrs. Swedyk moved to adjourn the meeting; Mr. Hambley seconded the motion. There was no discussion. All commissioners voted AYE; the meeting adjourned at 11:52 a.m.

All deliberations concerning official business and formal actions by this Board of Commissioners were conducted in an open public meeting on this twenty-fifth day of November, 2025.

Respectfully submitted,

Rhonda J. Beck
Clerk of the Board

COMMISSIONERS

OF

MEDINA COUNTY

Colleen M. Swedyk

Stephen D. Hambley

Aaron M. Harrison