

Burns Harbor Sanitary Board
Minutes of Wednesday, November 19, 2025

The Burns Harbor Sanitary Board met in regular session Wednesday, November 19, 2025, at the Burns Harbor Town Hall. The meeting was called to order by Sanitary Board Chair Jennifer McHargue at 7:00 p.m. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Roll Call:
Jennifer McHargue..... Present
Gordon McCormick..... Present
Vacant Seat

A quorum was attained.
Also, present were Superintendent Brandon Downey, Jeanette Hicks of Global Engineering, Secretary Gina Bondi, Deputy Clerk Madeline Parker, and Attorney Clay Patton, who was present via zoom, as well as Gregory Marks with Cleveland Cliffs.

Approval of Minutes
Gordon McCormick made a motion to approve the Minutes of October 15, 2025. Jennifer McHargue seconded the motion. Gordon McCormick — aye. Jennifer McHargue — aye.
Motion passed.

Correspondence
Nothing to discuss.

Sanitary Report
Superintendent Brandon Downey stated that there were some interesting times on the lift stations and Lift Station #5 had a couple overloaded alarms, but they were just a couple of resets. Eagle Services did come and clean the lift stations, which took two days, and happens in the spring and fall. He then states that Lift Station #2 had some issues going on. On October 29th there was a power surge done by Nipsco on Highway 12, and he thinks that’s why Lift Station #2 lost all power and the generator was reset without being put on auto. That information was discovered by a resident the night before when she had noticed a sheen on the roadway and contacted me. Apparently, this happened at night, because during the day was fine. We ended up installing a new NE 152 in there, and the verbatim dialog was successfully programmed and installed. The generator was finally hard reset tested and set back to auto, so everything on Lift Station #2 is fully on line besides the data. The data needs a completely new unit because there is no power going to it. McCormick and Downey then proceed to discuss the power surge. Downey states that it must have happened at night because it was fine during the day and that it shut everything down. McCormick then states he does not understand because that is no different than a power failure. Downey then says he does not know, but the generator was kicked out, and it never kicked on, and that the overflow was not huge from the evidence he saw. He does not think it even got close to the river, but got everything cleaned up and hosed down best he could. Downey also states that Eagle services was there not too long ago, and there were not any solids- just liquid. McHargue asked if we need to file a report with IDEM? Jeanette Hicks states that she did. She then says this happened two nights in a row, and that they went out and looked at it. She says we saw a lot of sand in the road and were trying to figure out if it was sewage or if there was some stormwater runoff. They did not know until the following night when the power failed again, and it was that next morning that you could tell that the power was off. Hicks then states that she had called IDEM and was told that if we are not sure to just report it to be safe. Hicks then states that she was contacted and told that it was a power failure. Hicks prepared her report to that effect and said that it was construction related. NIPSCO had been out, it was a power failure, and that the generator did not work. No one from IDEM has responded yet, but she did speak with the local person, and he was aware. McCormick then asked if the generator is run other than when the power goes off. Downey states I do not think so, but we can. Downey says he has called the generator company and was told that the account was stopped in 2019, so we do not have a credible account with them to come out and service them. Downey is still waiting to hear back from them. McCormick then states that the generators should be ran once a month, and that it does not cost that much.

Wastewater Treatment Plant Report
Gregory Marks states that all the permits were submitted on time. He then asks McHargue if she had seen the email with all the submittal permit requests that we had for the new permits for 2026. McHargue says correct. Marks then states that we got the initial response from IDEM, and that everything looks good. The changes we wanted are going to be granted. That was a preliminary response, and I think it is 30 days for public comments. We will probably send a response to say we agree with it, and that should take effect March 1st.

Engineer Report

Jeanette Hicks states that what she had to say was primarily covered when discussing the IDEM report. She also states that she cc'd and sent that email, but does not think that Flora was on it. McHargue states that Gordon McCormick was also not on that email.

Old Business

2026 Sanitation Coupon Booklets

Deputy Clerk Madaline Parker states that she gave the Board a flyer with a QR code that Jeremy so kindly made for us. That flyer will be going into the envelopes with the coupon books as well as the 2026 trash & recycle calendars. Parker then explains that the QR code will take you right to the town's website. The website has been updated to have YouTube and Facebook front and center, which was done by the police clerk Michelle. All the coupon booklets are made and ready to go out just before Thanksgiving, but we needed to confirm the trash and recycle calendar.

ERU's for Taco Bell

Jeannette Hicks states that last month we had spoken about the right way to go about calculating the ERU's to be able to set the rate for the new Taco Bell. Since then, my office has discussed on following the code to do so. She states that she had stopped by the Taco Bell and counted the seating in the dining area from the window, which was 40 seats. The Indiana Administrative Code, which covers wastewater treatment facilities and collection systems, has a chart that gives a design flow related to different types of establishments. For a restaurant that is not open 24 hours, such as Taco Bell, the rate is 35 gallons per day per seat. Hicks then states that she took 35 gallons a day timer 40 seats and then multiplied that by 30 days, and came up with 42,000 gallons per month. The town's ERU is 7,000 gallons per month. Hicks explains that in Chapter 18 of the Town code that for class two users, the estimated gallons per month should be divided by 7,000 to come up with an ERU number. It also says to round down to the nearest quarter which came out to exactly 6 ERU's, and that is the calculation that we did to set the rate. Hicks then explains that after 12 months a business can bring their water bills to discuss using that to set their rate. McCormick then asked if that is what was done for Pizza Terra. Hicks believes so and states that her and Deputy Clerk Madaline Parker discussed this. Parker states that those were done back in 2023. Hicks then states that she was not personally involved but that Pizza Terra had asked for their rates to be changed. Parker states that she believes it is in the program but will need access to that so there is some sort of reference moving forward but she will forward that information. McHargue asked if that is something that we just start doing or does it need to be voted on? Hicks states that in the past for other users they just came up with the calculation and gave the town the information. McCormick then asked if this is something that we should address with all the business' in town, like once a year in November or December they give us their water bill and we adjust it in January? Attorney Clay Patton states that he thinks that the business' should come to us. McHargue agrees and says that it should not be our responsibility to go out to them to check their bills. Further discussion was had between McCormick and Hicks regarding ERUs. Patton and Hicks then discuss further on a house putting in additional bathrooms and not knowing about it, versus the business' upgrading. Patton states that the cost of getting someone in the administrative office for the town to reach out to all the businesses to say you can pay less, let us look at your water bill, that should be on them. McCormick then states what if they are not paying enough? Marks states that we should be able to look at what their consumption is and asks if we can look at that. Deputy Parker states that she has accesses to the accounts on the American water website and will be looking at them when doing the water shut offs and that she can double check to see if we can see the sewer rates. Parker also would like to note that since the sewer rate study that the ERU's will be remaining the same. McCormick states that information needs to be looked over. Marks states that a sewer study is done every quarter. Parkes states that one was just done and then asked Superintendent Brandon Downey and Jeanette Hicks if they know which company did that study. Further discussion was had and will be brought up again after more research and gathering additional information for the next meeting. Deputy Parker brought a print out of what an account looks like for the American water website and what the abbreviations mean and that further investigation needs to be had.

New Business

Nothing to discuss.

Sanitary Appeals

No new appeals. Deputy Parker states that Mr. Fouts did pay off his bill last month, and Ms. Zelenika did not. She did receive a shut off notice, as we sent those out this week along with 25 other wastewater notices to residents for shut off. Generally, those get paid before the shut offs happen.

Approval of Claims and Purchase Orders with two (2) or more signatures

McCormick made a motion to approve the Claims and Purchase Orders with two (2) or more signatures. McHargue seconded the motion. Gordon McCormick – aye. Jennifer McHargue – aye.

Motion Passed.

Spending Review

Nothing to discuss.

Delinquencies

Nothing to discuss.

Flow Report

Brandon Downey states that certain things look good but is wondering how we can go from 45,000 gallons to 7,500 gallons from one day to the next, he is not sure how that works. This is all the data that is given from the computer, and with the SCA-Data down we still do not have the flow total from Lift station #2.

Good of the Order of the Community & Any Other Business

Deputy Parker states that the Rainbow trailer park has a new owner, and that we were contacted by them and given the new information for the account. They asked about the balance on the account, and that was given to them as well. They then called back and stated that there are only 18 lots being used- not 21. The question is how do we know if they are vacant or not and do they need to show some type of documentation of that showing that the water is shut off. Parker just wanted them to be aware of this information in case they come with questions, and they do not want to pay for the 21 lots. McCormick states that if there is trailer on that lot then they should be paying for that, there should not be an exception.

Announcements

Next meeting is January 21, 2025 at 7pm.

Adjourn

McCormick made a motion to adjourn. McHargue seconded the motion. Gordon McCormick — aye. Jennifer McHargue — aye. Motion passed.

Meeting adjourned at 7:40 p.m.

Submitted by: Gina Bondi, Secretary

APPROVED

Jennifer McHargue, Chair

Gina Bondi, Secretary