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Sewage project nears completion

*Authority confirms
105 use permits issued*

BY LINDA HARKCOM

The Mt. Pleasant Township Municipal Authority's sewage project took a major step toward completion this week.

At its monthly meeting, the authority's board of directors approved a certificate of substantial completion for the project contract which covers the section of the township known as Norvelt East, which includes East Laurel Circle, Holly Place and those areas south of Sewickley Creek and Welty Run. Letters to connect for this area will be mailed out soon.

"On Sept. 13, it (Norvelt East) was inspected by the USDA (U.S. Dept. of Agriculture) and all outstanding sewage issues were completed," said Doug Regola, the project's engineer. "There are still some driveways and man whole adjustments and some paving on Rt. 981 that still need to be done but quite a few areas have been restored."

Carol Davis, the authority's general manager, said that, at

the time of the meeting, 105 permits had been issued.

Residents in Century Farms and some in area of Contract 7 which includes Norvelt West have begun utilizing the system.

Ralph Wasil of Century Farms asked the board if the monthly service fee was going to be based on water consumption as it had been in the past for those residents.

Regola said that the current fee is a flat rate that is necessary to pay off the current \$6.44 billion dollar debt created by the project.

"The plan we have discussed is, after a few years, going to a rate based on usage," said Les Mlakar, the authority's solicitor.

Mlakar also said that Century Farms residents were not charged the \$1,500 tap-in fee since the connection for all of those homes was changed by disconnecting from the old plant and connecting to the new system.

Regola said the old plant which is owned by the township will be torn down and the area will be leveled out.

Greg Krynicki of Norvelt asked if he and his brother must pay for sewage at a home they own where no one cur-

rently lives.

Mlakar said the only way to not be responsible for the monthly charge is to pull the water meter to the home. He said as long as there is a water meter, the authority is required by the USDA to charge for sewage.

Davis said the authority is in the process of putting a system in place where they will be able to accept credit card payments for tap-in fees and the monthly bill payments.

In other business, the authority approved a bond resolution and a note loan resolution which authorizes it to enter into an agreement for roughly \$6.4 million with the USDA Rural Utility Service for 3.5 percent interest.

The loan covers the amount the authority owes for the estimated 13.5 million dollar project.

The board also issued compensating change orders for two other project contracts which resulted in a total decrease of \$28,775.33 in project costs for pipe quantities and a total increase of \$212,746.05 for asphalt due to unplanned utility conflicts.

Linda Harkcom is a freelance writer.