



TOWNSHIP OF EDWARDSBURGH CARDINAL ACTION ITEM

Committee: Committee of the Whole- Administration & Operations

Date: May 8, 2023

Department: Environmental Services

Topic: Amending the Spencerville Lagoon Environmental Compliance Approval

Purpose: To seek approval to initiate an application with the Ministry of Environment Conservation Parks (MECP) to amend Spencerville Lagoon ECA # 3-1377-87-896.

Background: The Spencerville sanitary and lagoon system was commissioned in 1989. Environmental Compliance Approvals (ECA's) are legal documents that include a system description, system capacities, sampling and discharge conditions, effluent concentration limits and annual reporting requirements. The current ECA requires the lagoons to be discharged annually between March 15 and April 21 inclusive with a minimum duration of 8 days. Two sets of samples must be collected one week prior to discharge, two samples collected per week while discharging and a report submitted to the MECP by June 30. The current capacity of the Spencerville Lagoons is 116,000 m³ as prescribed in the ECA.

In 2008, the ECA was amended to include the addition of a sewage digester additive to assist in breaking down organic material and reducing biosolids build up in the lagoons.

The spring discharge window has created operational challenges as ice conditions and unpredictable weather prevents discharging until early or mid-April. We are required to begin the lagoons discharge by April 13 or request an emergency Minister order to extend the discharge window. As part of the application, the Township would be requesting an extension to the spring discharge period to reduce the operational challenges we face in meeting the discharge window.

The Spencerville Lagoon loading is averaging 73% of capacity annually since 2013. MECP guidelines recommend that when a system reaches 80%, Owners should be investigating expansion options before adding new development to the system. A developer has expressed interest in developing in the Spencerville area.

As part of the application process, we will request a second discharge in the fall. The second discharge would increase the lagoon loading capacity, allow for additional development, and eliminate the need to request an emergency fall discharge during excessively wet or cold years. The additional lagoon annual capacity from a second discharge is currently unknown and would be determined during the review process.

During the 2019 inspection an administrative non-compliance was identified with the current ECA. The ECA does not list the alum dosing pumps, storage tanks, flow meter and chart recorder located in the lagoons building. The ECA also incorrectly lists the location of the Spencerville Lagoons. These discrepancies will be addressed when the ECA is amended.

Preliminary discussions with the MECP are favorable for amending the ECA. Obtaining additional capacity aligns with the Province of Ontario's commitment to increase affordable housing throughout the province. The MECP will require a full receiving stream assessment. This assessment must be conducted by a qualified professional to determine if extending and creating a new discharge window will have any deleterious impacts to the environment. The MECP will review this study to determine if additional treatment systems, (i.e., UV disinfection, package plants), may be required. The MECP may also update the ECA to align with current practices. This may include:

- More stringent effluent requirements.
- Improved effluent flow monitoring.
- Additional annual reporting requirements.
- Groundwater monitoring around the lagoons.

The current ECA will remain in effect until such time as a new ECA is approved and issued.

Policy Implications: A legal requirement and process to amend the ECA.

Financial Considerations: Preliminary costs are estimated to be \$200 Administration fee and \$11000 for the MECP to complete a technical review. The cost to complete a receiving stream assessment and any additional studies required by the MECP is currently unknown. The Spencerville Wastewater Reserve Fund (98-3806), as of March 2023, has a balance of \$405,378.56. The cost of the ECA amendment could be covered through the reserve fund and a portion of the cost recouped as new connections to the system take place.

Recommendation: That Committee recommends that Council direct staff to initiate the application process with the MECP to modify ECA # 3-1377-87-896 and cover the cost of the application and studies from the Spencerville Wastewater Reserve Fund (98-3806) to an upset limit of \$30,000.00.



Chief Water/Sewer Operator



Director of Operations



CAO