

To: Chairman Arnett and members of the Public Works Commission
22, 2025
From: Peter Hartz – Water Systems Manager

October

Re: October 28, 2025, Public Works Commission agenda items

Water Systems:

Review and take possible action – Wastewater Department; approve biosolids land application agreement.

Background:

Since 2021, the Wastewater Department has operated under an annual contractual agreement with Dahm Enterprises for the removal and land application of biosolids. Following the unfortunate passing of the owner, Mr. Dahm, the company was acquired by Synagro, leaving the City without a biosolids hauler for 2025. Efforts were made to identify alternative local contractors for this specialized service; however, no local companies were available. Many former haulers have exited the market due to low profit margins associated with biosolids management.

The nearest available contractor could provide temporary storage in their DNR-approved covered facility, but this option would require double handling—hauling to their site and again to land application fields—making it logistically inefficient and significantly more expensive. Additionally, the City does not have the necessary hauling equipment to perform this work internally.

After outreach and negotiation, the department reached a tentative one-year agreement with Synagro, Inc. for the hauling and land application of approximately 3,000 cubic yards of dewatered biosolids (“cake sludge”) annually. The material will be applied on City of Watertown DNR-approved agricultural fields. The City Attorney has reviewed the proposed contract, and Synagro has agreed to all recommended modifications. This agreement ensures continued regulatory compliance, maintains cost efficiency, and avoids interruption of wastewater operations.

Financial Impact: Funding for biosolids hauling and land application is included in the Sludge Hauling Budget under Account #02-85-00-21.

Recommendation: Approve entering into an agreement with Synagro, Inc. for the annual hauling and land application of biosolids on an as-needed basis, with the option to extend the agreement annually pending satisfactory performance and mutual agreement.

Sincerely,
Peter Hartz

Water Systems Manager