

PUBLIC NOTICE

Aurora Water Customer:

Those of you who attended the February 10th public meeting on water in Aurora are well aware that we face two important water issues. One is the need to retrofit the Wells water plant with filters to handle the possibility of algal toxins during the summer season. The other is how to proceed in finding a new water provider for the Village.

The need for toxin filters became evident only last fall in the light of problems in Owasco and Skaneateles Lakes. We have been working with the Department of Health, the county, the governor's office, and our state and federal legislators to find funding. Wells College, the Inns of Aurora, and the Village have jointly commissioned a \$9,300 engineering study to determine the equipment needed to address the toxins. That study will be completed shortly. We have been jointly and individually looking for funding for the estimated \$500,000 to \$750,000 cost and are following several possibilities.

As I reported at the February 21st Village Board meeting, the good news is that the cost of the Village feasibility study, or preliminary engineering report, to determine our best choice for a new water provider has been reduced from an estimated \$80,000 to \$40,000; both Wells College and the Inns have agreed to share that cost equally with the Village. The Village Engineer has been working with the engineering firm that is preparing a Master Plan for the Cayuga County Water and Sewer Authority, a plan that will map the needs and resources of the county. We have timed our study to take advantage of the work done for CCWSA, which they are sharing with the Village, and which is a considerable part of our study. There have been questions about why we did not put this study out for bid. The bid process is not required for this kind of professional services, and, as you can see, using the same firm will result in a great cost savings for all of us.

The importance of this preliminary engineering report, which is underway, cannot be overemphasized. The report is a necessary requirement for seeking any kind of federal, state or county funding. It will assess all possible water sources – upgrading the current plant, other municipal sources, accessing groundwater, building our own plant – and the results will determine our course of action. It has been just over a year since Wells informed us that the college no longer wants to run the water plant. During that time we have been establishing the necessary contacts and relationships with experts, legislators, and funding agencies that are enabling us to navigate the long and complicated path to a solution.

I am particularly pleased that all three Aurora entities with stakes in having clean, safe, and dependable water in Aurora are working together to find a solution. I will keep you posted. Don't hesitate to contact me with questions or comments at 315-364-7772 or bonnie_apgar_bennett@yahoo.com.

Bonnie Bennett, Mayor

For further information on algal toxins go to the engineer's power point at auroranewyork.us and the February 13, 2018 Citizen article on the meeting in Aurora.