

## FREMONT COUNTY SEWER ORDINANCE PUBLIC HEARING

**Date:** September 01, 2010  
**Time:** 6:00 pm  
**Location:** Island Park EMS Building

**Attended by:** Commissioners Paul Romrell, Skip Hurt, and Lee Miller

**Also attended by:** Clerk Abbie Mace, Deputy Clerk Cathy Conger, Treasurer Patricia McCoy, Chief Deputy Treasurer J'lene Cherry, Hearing Officer Blake Hall, Sewer System Supervisor Dan Lostutter, and Planning and Building Administrator Stephen Loosli

Commissioner Romrell called the hearing to order at 6:04 and welcomed those in attendance.

Commissioner Hurt gave an opening statement explaining the changes to the proposed sewer ordinance. In June we had a public hearing and received a great deal of comments. The majority of comments were related to the rates being too high and they were not equitable. We looked at the whole ordinance and I met with Marla Vik and Dan Lostutter several times. We looked at the revenue and cost for the system. We decided that we would reduce the O&M rates. That didn't come without some concern about repairs and upkeep for the system. We dropped the rates from \$67.48 to \$56 per month. That increases as square footage goes up. The base rate of 1000 ft or less is \$56 per month. It increases by \$2 per 500 sq feet. We looked at other systems and drew off of that. Rates went to \$56 per EDU for commercial use. We don't want to start dropping fees just so that we have to start increasing them drastically in the coming years. Up to 3000 sq feet 1/3 more of the \$56 per rental unit and so forth from there. There are some issues regarding meters however the main complaint at the last meeting was the rates and the equability.

Commissioner Romrell introduced those in attendance.

### **Hearing Officer Blake Hall**

Mr. Hall welcomed everyone. He stated that this is the time and place for the hearing for sewer systems for Fremont County EMS Building per advertised. The purpose of the hearing is to provide for public comment. He explained that the public comments will be kept to five minutes each. He will give a signal as they get down to one minute. There was discussion on those that would like to give their time to a spokesman and it was decided that a spokesman would have ten minutes to speak. Mr. Hall read through the sign in sheet for those in attendance.

### **PUBLIC COMMENT:**

#### **James Randall (4264 Shoup St., Island Park, ID 83429)**

He thanked the commissioners for their efforts in addressing this concern. You have spent a lot of time to get this ordinance in line. He has had several people stop him and explain that they feel that this is the first time that the commissioners have really listened to them. He does state that it is somewhat confusing but feels that the commissioners will be making sure that they follow all of the rules that are set as well. In 1998-01 ordinance the sections 13.01.170 in there that talk about base rates and how they are set and changed. This states that there is to be science used to determine changes and that was how the ideas for the meters came out. The meters were to be

used to determine water use however not to measure waste. The intention was to show that larger homes use more water. He doesn't feel that this is still addressed and that there still hasn't been shown a need for this.

**Kay Ridley (PO Box 268, Macks Inn, ID)**

She still thinks that the base rate is still too high. She lives in one of those smaller cabins and is there for the majority of the year. She would like them to look at the budget and see if the budget is too high. She would like to know how they came to the \$56 per month. Did they take the sewer budget and divide it by the number of users and come up with that amount? She has a problem with the statement that the system is owned by the county. She thought that it was owned by the users.

**Ray Stratford (3896 Buffalo North Road, Island Park, ID)**

He questioned what the percentage is in the reduction of the budget. He would like to know what the budget is and how they came to this monthly amount.

**Ralph Burton (4494 Stone Run, Island Park, ID 83429)**

He expressed concerns that the revenues would be decreased by \$150,000. He is wondering if the cash funds that reside in the books could accrue interest at the regular rate to increase the revenues.

**Kyle Babbitt (3774 Indian Paintbrush Ln., Island Park, ID)**

She thanked the commissioners for revisiting the rate structures and taking into consideration the comments from before. I think that the process of the base rate seems to be a fair way to determine them. One item is that the basement is defined separately from a crawl space which is helpful. If unfinished basements and above garage spaces that are used for storage could be clarified it would be very helpful.

**Laurie Augustin (4146 Huckleberry, Island Park, ID 83429)**

I request that when you have a proposed document on the web site for public review that these documents be dated and changes noted so that people can tell that they have the most current document. She thanked the commissioners and Marla Vik for addressing the concerns and for all the time they have spent. She is pleased that the WGU's were dropped. She feels that this is a necessary ordinance. Several times in these hearings I have asked why the users of Island Park are paying for Macks Inn and Last chance RV dump stations. I have not yet received an answer to this question. These public facilities are paid for with public monies. They are able to charge less for their sites than private facilities are. I know that they ask for donations but not everyone pays that.

13-02-72 How is the county planning on administering the vacation rentals and how will you find all of them and which department will have this duty. What about unknown rentals? I believe that this is a county ordinance and a county responsibility and you should not rely on neighbors and other people to do it.

13-08-05 Service Development Charges - These charges have been controversial throughout the years. These have gotten the system into trouble. Would like this to be more specific and not at

an individual's discretion. If a mistake is made in a large development it will be the users who will pay for it.

13-09-02 This refers to a developer seeking a class I or II and short term rental buildings. Are there plans for building permit to ask if the unit will be used as a short term rental and then assess an SDC charge?

**Mike Alfieri (3780 Lava Ln, Island Park)**

A lot has been said about those residents that are only here a few months versus those that are here year round. There is a lot of cost that are year round and it is not conceivable to break it up by months. Thank you for looking at everything and trying to reduce the rates.

**Gayle Layton (4105 Big Spring, Macks Inn)**

He would like to know about the committee that has been established and would like to have a statement that the costs this has incurred to the county.

**David Karling (4517 Shadow Ridge, Island Park, ID 83429)**

There are many versions and it has changed considerable since it started. Mr. Karling feels that without the support of all the Island Park patrons this probably would not have been completed. There are still some improvement that he would like to see made. The sewer system was built with grant money and LID's and therefore is owned by private individuals. There is still no science that has been used to determine these costs. In a minimum the STR increments should be looked at. A big impact is the dump stations. They were able to document that 26 RV's were dumping at the fisherman's access in one weekend. Using the formula in the first document this would make a minimum of four household's water in four hours. This is being paid for by the private individuals of the community. The base rates should be on the base cost of the system. If square footage were increased and lower the rates on rentals there wouldn't be a short fall. On your chart it says the commercial rate is \$56 per EDU but it should say per month. We also suggest raising the connection fees. \$4200 per connection is the lower end of fee schedule. We also believe that an outside audit should be done on each owner. Those not paying enough would be charged accordingly and those that are paying too much would be adjusted. There are businesses that are paying less than they should (See exhibit 1 & 2.) when compared to others in the same category. I believe that there are a number of homes that should be audited. There are some that have RV hook ups that are not charged for that. It appears that we have some lost revenue that would help the bottom line. This ordinance does reduce the rates for some but by and large these have been moved to rentals and businesses. I thank you for your time and for listening to those concerns.

The hearing was closed at 6:46 p.m. by Mr. Hall.

Commissioner Romrell stated that they have 60 days to make a determination, and if changes are made that are significant this ordinance will go back to another hearing.

Commissioner Romrell thanked everyone for the comments and their attendance.

There being no further business to come before the board, the hearing was adjourned.

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Paul Romrell, Chairman  
Fremont County Commission

Attest: \_\_\_\_\_  
Abbie Mace, Clerk