

**Frequently Asked Questions - December 4, 2020  
Lannon Water System Expansion**

**PRIVATE PROPERTY WORK AND AGREEMENT (PVW)**

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**PVW.1. Why is there no dollar amount listed in the property owner agreement I was asked to sign?**

The County and the Community Foundation are paying the contractor directly. Therefore, there is no dollar amount specified in that contract. Rather, there is a scope of work that details what the contractor is and is not authorized to do.

In the property owner agreement, Payment Options are covered in Section VII and reads as follows (emphasis added):

*“The cost associated with the work described in Section V is approximately \$7,000 to \$10,000. **The VILLAGE has secured grant funds** through the Waukesha County Community Development Block Grant program and the Waukesha Community Foundation's Village of Lannon Quarry Fund to pay these costs except for 50% of the well abandonment cost. **The CONTRACTOR will be paid directly by these entities for the work described herein.**”*

*“Any work items that the OWNER may ask or direct the CONTRACTOR to complete that are not expressly covered herein will be the responsibility of the OWNER for payment directly to the CONTRACTOR.”*

If you want the contractor to do the work indicated **at no cost to you**, you must sign and return the contract.

**PVW.2. If the water main project falls through, and Mid City has done work on my property, will I be liable for the costs of Mid City's work?**

No. The Community Development Block Grant has been secured. The County recognizes that there is a risk in them spending money to pay Mid City to do some work ahead of the water main arriving. However, the grant award is large enough to cover the work items that can be completed prior to new water main arriving. As outlined in the property owner agreement, Waukesha County will pay the Contractor directly. The only costs the property owner will be responsible for are scope items that the property owner asks Mid City to complete above and beyond the scope of the agreement. This is addressed in the property owner agreement, Section V, Payment Options as follows (emphasis added):

*“The cost associated with the work described in Section V is approximately \$7,000 to \$10,000. **The VILLAGE has secured grant funds** through the Waukesha County Community Development Block Grant program and the Waukesha Community Foundation's Village of Lannon Quarry Fund to pay these costs except for 50% of the well abandonment cost. **The CONTRACTOR will be paid directly by these entities for the work described herein.**”*

### **PVW.3. If I don't sign and return the agreement, will I be helping to stop the project?**

No. You will be communicating that you do not want the Village's contractor to do the private property work at no cost to you and that you will pay for the \$7,000 to \$10,000 of private property work on your own.

The mandatory connection ordinance and special assessments require the property owner to connect to the system. The agreement does not impact the ordinance or the assessment.

The agreement is an opportunity for you to authorize Mid City to do the work on your private property at no cost to you. If you do not sign and return the contract, the ordinance will still require you to connect, but it will be at your own cost with your own contractor. You will be responsible for connecting to the municipal water system within six months from the time that a water main is installed adjacent to your property.

### **PVW.4. If I sign the agreement, but don't communicate with the contractor or let them access my property, will I be helping to stop the project?**

No. Failure to provide access is a clear breach of contract. If the contract is breached, the property owner will be responsible for completing the work at your own cost. Section IV of the agreement covers Access to the Property and is shown below (emphasis added).

*"The OWNER acknowledges that the CONTRACTOR will require access to the PROPERTY to complete the private plumbing work. Access inside the building at the point where the proposed service pipe will enter into the building will be required. The CONTRACTOR will provide the OWNER with a 48-hour advance notice of the work. It is the responsibility of the OWNER to provide access to the CONTRACTOR on the date and time scheduled and to remain present during the scheduled work. Work will normally be done Monday to Friday between 7 A.M. and 5 P.M. If the OWNER fails to provide access to the inside of the building, this AGREEMENT shall be canceled, and the OWNER will be responsible for connecting to the municipal water system within six months from the time that a water main is installed adjacent to the PROPERTY. If the AGREEMENT is cancelled, the OWNER will be responsible for all associated plumbing costs (approximately \$7,000 to \$10,000) and will not be eligible for grant monies covering the private property costs. Further, this AGREEMENT shall be automatically canceled if ownership of the PROPERTY has changed since the execution of this AGREEMENT, in which case a new AGREEMENT must be executed by the new OWNER. Inclement weather may require the CONTRACTOR to reschedule a new and mutually agreed upon date and time."*

### **PVW.4. Why did I have to sign the property owner agreement by November 9, 2020?**

The County is funding this through their Blight Prevention and Elimination objectives. They have spending limits on what can be spent each year. To that end, the Contractor needs to complete some work this calendar year. The Village put that date in the agreement (which is January 8, 2021 for commercial properties) in order to get the work going and to comply with the contractor's schedule.

**PVW.5. What is the final deadline for returning the residential property owner agreement and what happens if I don't return it?**

The final deadline for returning the agreement has been extended to December 18, 2020. If you do not return the agreement, the Village will assume that you are doing the work at your own cost and with your own contractor. Should you decide to sign and accept the terms of the agreement after December 18, 2020, the Village cannot guarantee that funds will be available as the contractor may incur additional costs due to loss of efficiency or additional coordination, for which you may become liable.

**PVW.6. Am I being forced to sign the property owner agreement under duress?**

In the Village's opinion, No. The Village wanted to do everything within reason to minimize up-front costs for folks, so the Village applied for and was awarded these grants. The property owner agreement is for the private property work and the agreement says if you sign it, you're allowing the Village's contractor to do the work indicated at no cost to you and their invoices will be paid directly by the County and the Community Foundation.

If you don't sign the agreement, you are free to complete the work at your own cost. However, know that you will have 6 months to connect from the time the water main shows up. The County and the Community Foundation cannot write out checks to individuals which is why the agreement is set up to pay the contractor directly.

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**GRANT OBLIGATIONS AND ELIGIBILITY (GE)**

**GE.1. The letter I received says the true cost is \$60,000 but I will only owe \$15,000. Are the grant funds in place? I am not signing the property owner agreement until the grants are in place!**

The grant funds are already in place. Please sign and return your property owner agreement for the private work portion of the project. The Village is accountable to providing residents true and accurate information. When the letters were sent out indicating that the true cost has been reduced from \$60,000 to \$15,000, those funds have already been secured. There is no income eligibility requirement for the funds that reduce the cost from \$60,000 to \$15,000.

The USDA-RD grant has been obligated by the USDA as of April 2020 and is in an earmarked account that cannot be used for other purposes. This \$3.5 million dollar grant is actually in the form of "principal loan forgiveness." Of the \$8.5 million dollars of USDA-RD loan and grant, the Village only has to borrow \$5 million and the USDA will pay the contractor directly for the final \$3.5 million with no grant money passing through the Village's hands. Essentially, the USDA is giving the grant in the form of a 40% discount. The Village's interim financing for the \$5 million loan is in place with the Village's Bank and operates as a construction line of credit. When the interim financing is spent, the USDA refinances the loan and takes over payments to the contractor for the remaining \$3.5 million.

The Waukesha County Community Development Block Grant has been awarded and the Village entered into an intergovernmental agreement dated July 31, 2020 with Waukesha County for the County to use the awarded funds to pay the Contractor directly (\$848,000).

The Waukesha Community Foundation's Village of Lannon Quarry Fund has been obligated. The Village entered into an agreement with the Community Foundation dated July 13, 2020. The Quarries entered into PUD Agreements with the Village of Lannon that were approved by the Village Board at the June 25th joint Plan Commission and Village Board meeting. The quarries are required to deposit \$4.56 million dollars to the Waukesha Community Foundation once the contract for the installation of new water mains is awarded. The money is expected to be deposited late February or early March.

**GE.2. I make more than \$60,000 per year. Am I going to have to pay \$60,000 to connect to water?**

The only portion of this project that has an income eligibility component is the DNR Well Abandonment Grant. That's the \$920 component of this project. The USDA grants, Community Foundation Grants, and the County's CDBG Grant do not have income eligibility requirements.

So, if you received a letter that said you'll be special assessed \$15,000, that is what you'll be special assessed. If you received a letter saying you'll owe a \$7,800 impact fee, that's what you'll owe. In addition, you are responsible for coming up with 50% of the well abandonment cost (50% = \$920). The DNR well abandonment grant is an option for those who make less than \$65,000 per year to cover that portion.

**GE.3. What was the other USDA grant referenced in the letter that said it is income based?**

The Village already has funds obligated that reduce your water main cost to either a \$15,000 special assessment or a \$7,800 impact fee. The Village recognizes that even that can place a financial burden on folks so additional information was provided for an additional USDA-RD Safe Homes program that individuals can seek on their own to help with the special assessment and impact fee costs even further.

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**OVERALL COSTS (OC)**

**OC.1. How much is this project costing the Village?**

This project has a few aspects. The Village's portion of the project is \$8.9M for the new water mains and the well source. The Village has secured the following funding obligations that reduce the project cost as follows:

- \$8.9M Cost for USDA-RD Project (New Water Mains and Well Source)
- (\$3.5M) USDA Grant for Water Main Work*
- (\$0.5M) Community Foundation Well Acquisition*
- (\$0.3M) Community Foundation Connection Fee Offsets*
- (\$0.25M) Village Connection Fees for Well Acquisition*
- (\$1.8M) Community Foundation Special Assessment Reductions*
- \$2.55M Balance to be Special Assessed to 170 properties (\$15,000 each)

**OC.2. Why are some people charged \$7,500 and what if I can't pay it?**

The \$7,500 is for people that already have access to existing water mains and haven't connected to them yet. Village Boards of the past decided those costs would be charged to people when they connect to the system.

If for some reason people cannot afford to pay the \$7,500, the Village Board approved a 5-year payment plan at 3.5% interest. Charges would be collected monthly.

Note that the actual impact fee is \$7,468 if paid in 2020, and \$7,692 if paid in 2021.

## **OC.2. Why am I charged \$15,000 and when is it due?**

Folks who are getting new water main or new water infrastructure installed are being special assessed for the public improvements. That \$15,000 special assessment will be put on your tax bill over a 20-year period at an interest rate of 2.25%. The annual payments come out to about \$940 per year on your taxes.

By the way, Lannon's taxes are so low that adding this special assessment brings the gross taxes in line with Sussex, Germantown, Butler, and Menomonee Falls.

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## **WATER BILL (WB)**

### **WB.1. What will my water bill be each year?**

Your bill for drinking water will be about \$50 per month, or \$150 per quarter for the average home. That amounts to about \$600 per year.

The Village's current water usage charge is \$5.80 per 1,000 gallons, or \$0.006 per gallon.

### **WB.2. What will the total water and sewer bill be each year?**

Sewer and water together will end up being about \$100 per month, or \$300 per quarter, or \$1,200 per year for a typical home.

### **WB.3. I water my garden and wash my car a lot; how much is all that use going to cost me?**

The combined water and sewer usage charge will be about \$15 per 1,000 gallons (or \$0.015 per gallon). Let's say you use 100 gallons per week to water your garden. That means you could water your garden for 10 weeks for \$15, or \$1.50 per week.

### **WB.4. I own a business and I use a lot of water; can I keep my well?**

The Village's mandatory collection ordinance does allow for a business to keep a well as part of commercial production. In order to be granted this, the business must apply for a conditional use permit. The well must comply with current well codes including the 1959 DNR Special Village of Lannon Well Casing Requirements and be tested for bacteria twice per year. If the well fails, the property owner will be responsible for closing the well at your own cost.

Before pursuing this route, consider this: The combined usage cost of municipal sewer and water will be \$15 per 1,000 gallons. At \$0.015 per gallon, please consider the cost effectiveness of using municipal water versus the financial liability of demonstrating you have a code compliant well, paying the extra plumbing cost to separate the internal plumbing (municipal source) from the external plumbing (private well source), testing the water quality twice per year, keeping up with

the mechanical equipment maintenance and replacement cost, and ultimately bearing the cost of abandoning the well if it fails water quality tests.

If you would like to pursue this option, please contact Village Engineer Ben Wood at 414-271-0771 or [ben.wood@strand.com](mailto:ben.wood@strand.com).

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## **WATER QUALITY (WQ)**

### **WQ.1. Why am I being forced to connect? My well is fine!**

The Village has documented SEVERAL historic bacteria issues related to bacteria in the shallow aquifer.

- 1955: Water quality concerns prompt a Village-wide survey
- 1959: DNR feels the issues related to Lannon's geology are of such a concern that they institute a "Special Lannon Well Casing Area" requirement to mitigate bacteria issues in the ground water
- 1962-1965: WDNR conducts "Investigation of the Safety of Private Water Supplies Lannon, Wisconsin"
- 1965: WDNR concludes that the preferred action is to develop a public water supply to protect public health
- 1986: WDNR publishes "A Report on a Groundwater Investigation in Southeastern Lisbon Township and the Village of Lannon" and recommends municipal water and sewer for both communities
- 1996: 40 homes tested positive for coliform and E.coli bacteria. Additional tests indicated the presence of nitrates and volatile organic compounds (VOCs) in some private wells.
- 1997: Municipal sewer is installed throughout Lannon to mitigate bacteria sources in the groundwater
- 2012-2018: Village Engineer fields approximately 1 call per year from a distressed homeowner whose well quality failed repeatedly, stalling home closing.
- 2018: Lannon Elementary and several surrounding private wells test positive for E.coli bacteria.

The reality is that the geology of Lannon is always susceptible to bacteria contamination. The cracks in the bedrock allow contamination to flow in several directions.

Overall, this is an issue of blight prevention and that is why the USDA and the County are funding this project at such high levels. The affluent new-construction properties will always have access to safe, reliable drinking water. The older housing stock in the Village needs this too.

### **WQ.2. What chemicals are in the Village's municipal water?**

The Village pumps water out of the aquifer and the only chemical added is chlorine. By the time municipal water reaches your property, the chlorine level is approximately 0.1-0.6 parts per million. The Village knows this because it has 10 different sampling sites throughout the Village that are tested each month.

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For more information, please contact Village Engineer Ben Wood at 414-271-0771 or [ben.wood@strand.com](mailto:ben.wood@strand.com).

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Questions and Answers Related to the Village of Lannon Water System Expansion and Public Information Meeting held on August 14, 2019.  
Rev. 1; October 14, 2019.

***My well has tested fine; why do I need to connect?***

The shallow aquifer is the water source for private wells. The shallow aquifer is increasingly contaminated with bacteria. Therefore, you only know that your water is safe if you test it regularly or treat the water yourself. Keeping your private well as your water source may be an option you are comfortable with now, but will remain a liability should you have to pay \$15,000 to install a new well if yours fails. The Village has heard testimonies of residents who have had to pay \$15,000 to replace their well and have asked if there is anything the Village can do. The Village may not know when your individual well may fail, but we do know that there is an opportunity now to convert to municipal water at a reduced cost due to the available financial assistance. If we do not do this project now, then individual well owners will always be responsible to remedy a well failure without help from the Village.

***Can I keep my well for outdoor use?***

A policy decision to require existing wells to be closed has not yet been made. The timing for this policy decision will likely be in early 2020. The Village has come to the understanding that the County and the State will allow residents to keep existing wells for outdoor use as long as the water quality is regularly tested. The Village would be responsible to manage a well testing program. One benefit to closing the well now is that a potential entry route for contamination is closed. Another benefit is that the cost of the plumbing work required in the house to separate the outdoor plumbing and isolate the well could be eliminated now as part of the larger project. If the well is kept, but tests unsafe in the future, the homeowner would be responsible for the cost to close the well.

***What is the anticipated cost for each property owner to connect to municipal water?***

As of August 2019, the Village is estimating that the total cost for each property owner will average \$12,000 - \$15,000 after assistance.

***Why focus on water when the roads are falling apart?***

The roads will be repaired as part of the water main project. The plan is to mill off 2-inches of existing road material and place new asphalt for the full width of the roadways that are affected by the water main. All roads in the affected areas will be repaved in a similar fashion as Lannon Road was for the water main extension to Lannon Elementary.

***When will we know the actual costs?***

The Village is gathering more information on funding and project costs at this time but expects that actual costs will be known in the Spring of 2020.

***Is there an estimate of what the quarterly water bill will be?***

The current average water bill in the Village is about \$100 - \$125 per quarter.



***How are individuals on fixed income supposed to afford this?***

According to the 2010 census, nearly all of the residents impacted by this project are considered to have low to moderate income (the Village of Lannon median household income is below the State of Wisconsin average, which is the threshold that determines grant eligibility). The Village recognizes that the projected costs to homeowners are significant to everyone. The Village also recognizes that if an individual with a fixed income had a well failure, the total \$15,000 cost would also be burdensome. The Village is strongly considering special assessments to spread the impact out over time.

***What is the timeframe that payments can be spread out over?***

*Payments for Village related costs can be spread out over a timeframe of up to 15 years. Property owners can pay early without penalty.*

***Will the project move forward without grants from the USDA and Waukesha County?***

Probably not. The project cost without funding assistance would be over \$40,000 per home and the Village Board recognizes that is not affordable.

***Has the Village received any assistance from Waukesha County to date?***

Waukesha County awarded the Village \$194,516.00 in Community Development Block Grant Funds in September 2019 in order to help with the private plumbing costs. This amount was all that Waukesha County had left over for the 2019 funding cycle. The County encouraged the Village to apply for more grants in January of 2020.

***What is the cost if there is currently water main in front of my property, but I am not connected?***

For those who do currently have water main, the current one-time fee is higher because it already includes the cost of the water main that was put in adjacent to your property over 10 years ago. That cost is currently either \$6,922 or \$11,915 in 2019 depending on where exactly you live. If you have to pay this fee, you will not be subject to the special assessment to pay for new water mains.

***What does it cost for residents to connect to water in Menomonee Falls and Sussex?***

The total cost to property owners in neighboring communities to receive municipal water service where there currently is no municipal water is approximately \$30,000. This includes the cost of the water main, private service lateral, internal plumbing, and impact fees.

***If grants and quarry monies are contributing to this, why is the cost still over \$12,000?***

The current approximate cost to extend water main to the properties contemplated, including private costs, averages over \$40,000 per property. That means that grants and quarry monies are anticipated to subsidize the cost by approximately \$25,000. The Village has not found a funding source that would cover the entire cost.

***What should I do if I am planning to replace my well soon? I don't want to pay to replace my well and be charged for municipal water.***

Please contact the DNR discuss this situation. The contact for the DNR is Greg Roanhouse, [Gregory.Roanhouse@wisconsin.gov](mailto:Gregory.Roanhouse@wisconsin.gov), (262) 884-2356.

***How many wells have issues with unsafe water?***

Approximately 55% of all wells tested in the Village and reported to Waukesha County since the Fall of 2018 have tested positive for coliform or *E. Coli*. Waukesha County typically sees only 4 positive *E. Coli* tests per year. Since the fall of 2018, 65 wells reported to Waukesha County, 36 reported that they were positive for coliform bacteria, and 13 of those tested positive for *E. Coli*. Rumors have been circulating that wells that report positive bacteria test results will need to be abandoned. Due to the rumors, it is likely that there are more positive tests that the County and Village are not aware of because people do not want to report the information. The Lannon Elementary School continued to have positive *E. Coli* tests through spring 2019, validating their decision to connect to the municipal water system.

***Where are the wells that have issues with unsafe water located?***

Based on well test results reported to Waukesha County, areas affected include the Hadfield Plat (sometimes referred to "Lower Town" or "The Back Streets"), areas around Lannon Elementary School, and areas on Main Streets. Samples submitted for Lannon Village Hills have tested safe thus far.

***If the wells draw from the same aquifer, what makes the Village well safe?***

The Village's well is built to much greater standards including better wellhead protection, deeper casing, and draws water from much deeper (150-340 feet) in the aquifer which is less susceptible to contamination from surface water or septic sources. Throughout the recent problems with private well water quality, the Village's distribution system has remained safe and compliant with DNR standards. The Village also disinfects the water with chlorine in accordance with Wisconsin DNR requirements and tests the chlorine levels daily. The Village's water system is also tested monthly for bacteria to verify safe conditions. By Wisconsin State Statute, the water utility is operated by professionals licensed by the DNR. Annual PSC reporting and bi-annual Wisconsin DNR onsite inspections are required to hold the water system operators responsible for the performance of the water system.

***Why not look for the source of contamination?***

The Village of Lannon does not know the source of the *E. Coli* contamination and feels that investigating the source should be the responsibility of the DNR. The DNR indicated that they do not typically investigate the source of contamination since that program was cut in the 1990s. The Village of Lannon has enough information to believe that the public health of residents with private wells will continue to be at risk due to the high elevation of the bedrock that promotes the transport of contamination.

***Are ALL residences and businesses in the Village required to connect?***

Everyone who has water main available to their property will be required to connect as a requirement of the USDA funding. This will impact approximately 170-200 properties. Not every property owner in the Village will receive water main to their property as part of the proposed project. For example, the current cost estimates to extend water to Lannon Village Hills is more than the Village can afford to borrow, even with the level of assistance proposed. Municipal water will likely be extended to Lannon Village Hills in 10 years when the Cawley Farm is developed so that the Cawley Farm developer will bear the cost for extending water main to the border of Lannon Village Hills.

***Has the Wisconsin Public Service Commission already approved this project?***

The Village attended a Pre- Construction Authorization Meeting with the Wisconsin Public Service Commission (PSC) on September 30, 2019. The PSC is aware of the project and advised that the water mains are most likely not a reviewable project but adding a second source will be a reviewable project. At the time a second source is added, PSC will require a Construction Authorization process.

***Is this a formation of a new public water utility?***

No. The Village of Lannon Municipal Water Utility was created in 2008. The water utility is generally governed by the Village Board.

***Is the current well near capacity?***

No. The capacity of the current well is approximately 250 gallons per minute and the current demand is approximately 20 gallons per minute for the approximately 140 current customers. The anticipated demand after the completion of this project is approximately 50 gallons per minute. The projected demand after 5 years is approximately 200 gallons per minute.

***What impact does the new development in the Village have on this Project?***

The revenue from new developments in the Village are planned to pay for the second source and the water tower. That removes approximately \$4,000,000 to \$5,000,000 of necessary cost from the existing residents in the Village. These projects will move forward whether water service is extended to existing residents or not.

***Are there any future plans to construct a water tower or a second municipal well?***

Plans to construct a water tower and a second well are already in place in order to support new developments in the Village. These costs are planned to be paid for by new developments. The second source could also be an interconnection with a neighboring water system.

***Will fluoride be injected into the municipal water system?***

No. The Village does not inject fluoride at this time and there is no regulatory requirement to do so.

***Are there concerns with Radon in the deep water well? Has it been tested?***

The Village of Lannon does not draw water from the deep aquifer, which is known to have issues with radionuclides such as radium. Lannon's well has been tested and there are no concerns with radionuclides.

***Is this project just for the sake of allowing the quarries to dig deeper?***

No. This project is to provide safe water for Village residents. The quarries are willing to help residents with the cost to connect to municipal water so they can dig deeper, but that is not the primary reason for this project.

***Lannon Stone Products is making a "donation" in order to mine deeper, why are other quarries in the Village not donating?***

Lannon Stone Products is currently the only quarry operator in the Village that quarries to deep elevations for aggregate (gravel) extraction. The other quarry operators are currently only extracting the higher quality, architectural, veneer "Lannon Stone" that is typically within approximately 20 feet of the ground surface. Therefore, Lannon Stone Products is the only quarry operator that would benefit from a modification to its depth restriction in the quarry. Other quarry operators have been invited to make a donation.

***Will Lannon Stone Products be giving an upfront lump sum donation or is it based on a rate per ton of stone sold?***

The Village envisions the Lannon Stone Products donation being documented through a formal agreement that has yet to be drafted. The concept of that agreement is currently based on annual payments that are not tied to tonnage of rock removed from the quarry. Lannon Stone has been willing to structure the agreement to fit the needs of the financial model being developed by the Village's financial advisor.

***Are there any future plans to connect the water system to neighboring communities?***

There are no immediate plans to sell or buy water from adjacent communities. However, the build-out of the water system is being planned to keep the option to interconnect with a neighboring system technically viable. This could technically work with the Village of Sussex, the Village of Menomonee Falls, or the Town of Lisbon. There are many regulatory and financial implications that would need to be studied to determine if those options are in the best interest of the Village.

***Has there been contact with the Village of Menomonee Falls regarding connecting to their water system?***

Yes. Currently, the Village of Menomonee Falls is exploring the effects of the Great Lakes Water Compact and their purchase agreement with Milwaukee Water Works on their ability to interconnect with the Village of Lannon. The Village of Menomonee Falls intends to seek clarity on this issue from the DNR over the course of the next several months and will keep the Village apprised of the situation.

***What happens if we do nothing, as was decided over twenty years ago?***

In short, if we “do nothing,” the Village’s water system will continue to only serve primarily new development. This presents an issue of environmental justice because those who live in brand new, expensive homes will have safe, reliable water, while those living in older homes with incomes generally below the state median household income, will have to rely on their own resources to verify their water is safe. Private well owners will also be responsible for the safe water quality at the time the home is sold. A contaminated well will inhibit the closing of a house sale and makes the Village as a whole a less desirable place for homebuyers to consider. There are real examples from 2018 of former Lannon residents required to spend \$15,000 on a brand new well prior to closing on the sale of their house because the well test failed 3 consecutive times. New private wells are still at risk because they pull water from the same area of the aquifer as existing wells. Private wells will perpetually be a liability to homeowners. However, new home construction will always be required to connect to municipal water and will not have this issue.

The “Lannon Water Wars” were regarding the issue of whether or not the Village should have a municipal water system at all. As of 2008, the Village does have a municipal water system that serves mostly new development. At issue today is whether that water system will primarily serve new development or if existing residents should also have the opportunity to connect.

In the Fall of 2018, when the Lannon Elementary School well and several other private wells were repeatedly testing positive for *E. Coli* contamination, the Village Board directed its engineering and financial consultants to research “the best deal possible” for municipal water to be extended to existing residents. The purpose of the August 14, 2019 public information meeting was to share those results with the public. Without any funding assistance from State, County, and private partners, the cost to extend municipal water to existing residents would be over \$40,000 per home. The current partnerships bring that cost down to approximately \$12,000 - \$15,000. The Village qualifies for these partnerships because the funding agencies are using the 2010 census information that shows the that Village’s median household income level is just barely below the State of Wisconsin average, which qualifies the Village to receive grants. After the 2020 census, the Village will likely no longer qualify for grants and the opportunity to connect to municipal water at a reasonable cost may not be available for another 20 years, if ever.

More than 20 years ago, the Village did not have municipal sewer or water. Village residents had private wells (not built to modern standards) and septic systems, which allowed wastewater to leach into the ground. Several private wells were contaminated by bacteria at that time because the septic systems would discharge onto the bedrock and quickly flow toward private wells. The Village contemplated installing both sewer and water to remedy the situation, but the cost was overly burdensome. The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) allowed the Village to first install Village-wide sewer in order to see if that would fix the issue. That sewer system was installed in 1997 with the same United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) funding that is available to the Village today, and the Village residents realized a discount. Residents were required to abandon their septic systems and connect to the municipal sanitary sewer. The drinking water quality seemed to improve, and the issue was largely forgotten about until the Lannon Elementary School tested positive for *E. Coli* in the fall of 2018 and could not get its well to be clean despite several attempts by qualified professionals. The word of this issue spread and several Lannon residents tested their wells and found that they also tested positive for coliform bacteria or *E. Coli* (both of which are forms of fecal bacteria). Because so many wells tested positive, the issue is most likely related to the water quality of the aquifer and not individual wells. Therefore, the extension of a treated municipal water source to existing residents is once again being contemplated by the Village Board.

In 1997, as the sewers were being installed, a trench had to be blasted into bedrock underneath Main Street (STH 74 at the time, now CTH F). The Village authorized the contractor to install an empty water main at the time, anticipating that a municipal water system would shortly follow. Very contentious meetings did indeed ensue, and the water system expansion was stopped. That water main sat empty until 2008 when the Whispering Ridge Condominium developer constructed a municipal grade well, treatment system, reservoir, and pumping facility that served the condominiums and was connected to the 1997 water main, and dedicated to the Village. The Village passed an ordinance in 2008 that requires that residents and business are required to connect to that water main if their well fails and the water main is available to the property. In 2018, developer Marv Berg of Overstone Condominiums received approval for an 80-unit condo development at the eastern end of the municipal water system. Marv has installed water mains to extend municipal water service to the proposed units. A funding mechanism was put in place that will use the new tax revenue from that development, and other new developments, to pay for critical water infrastructure such as a water tower and a second supply source.

The water system is and will continue to be viable to serve new development with safe water. The opportunity that lies before the Village now is to extend safe municipal water to the existing residents at a cost that is reasonable compared to the liability of a contaminated private well.