

GLENCOE NEWS

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Glencoe may need new water plant or partnership with Highland Park, Winnetka



A file photo of the Glencoe water plant.

By Daniel I. Dorfman For Sun-Times Media | @dandorfman

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The future of Glencoe's water plant situation remains unclear, but village officials are beginning to shed some light on the complex situation.

At the Oct. 16 village board meeting, trustees authorized an expenditure of no more than \$23,275 to further amend on ongoing study from Strand Inc., a Joliet-based engineering firm, which has been assessing Glencoe's village's water plant situation since March 2013.

As part of this amendment, Strand will look into the feasibility of an interconnection of infrastructure with Highland Park and/or Winnetka to see if those communities could provide water to Glencoe both on a short-term and long-term basis if necessary.

In addition, this amendment will also examine whether a site south of the existing Lake Michigan facility, could be the location of a new plant. All of this will be done as Strand officials are expected to put together a master plan on Glencoe's water situation scheduled to be delivered in early 2015.

Officials believe the existing water plant, built in 1928, may be nearing the end of its useful life. A series of locations both on the lake and inland are being considered for construction of a new plant that would likely cost tens of millions of dollars.

“It’s our intention to be as comprehensive with options and then lay out all the limitations and or benefits so that can be a component of the public discussion,” said Village Manager Phil Kiraly.

Among the ideas being considered are putting in a new plant on the existing site. That would mean Glencoe would have to find alternate sources of water as a new plant is being built and this working out an arrangement with Highland Park or Winnetka may be an option. With the amended report now passed, discussions with those communities are expected to intensify soon.

Another wildcard in the discussion would be a role for the Northwest Water Commission, which is owned by the communities of Arlington Heights, Palatine, Buffalo Grove and Wheeling. In recent weeks, the NWC added Des Plaines as a customer, but that does not change any possible alliance with Glencoe as the NWC wants a second supply line as it already receives water from Evanston. The NWC and Glencoe have informally discussed a relationship with each side independently investigating whether a venture would work for either party.

“We are still conducting a study that we hope to have finished by the end of 2014,” said NWC Executive Director John Durocher. “We are talking about a redundant water supply with Glencoe.”

One idea under consideration has the village possibly selling raw water which would then be the responsibility of the NWC to process. But the village would not be selling the processed water as that would require construction of a 100 million gallon plant, according to Village Board President Lawrence Levin.

Along those lines, Kiraly said at the Oct. 16 meeting there has not been much discussion of the village selling water in general.

One specific place not to look for a new plant is near the Takiff Center on Green Bay Road as Kiraly stated the village did not believe it would be feasible because of connection issues.

Levin said that is the only site that has been discarded at this point in the process.

“Everything is on the table except for the Takiff site,” Levin said. “The (Strand) report will allow us to go to the public and let us decide where we should go from here.”