Aurora Board Meeting 2/2/26 – Mid-East Commission Updates

Informational updates (no action needed)

- **NC Division of Water Infrastructure (DWI) Force Main Replacement and 3rd St. Lift Station Rehab**
    - This project was awarded by DWI with 75% grant / 25% zero interest loan. $1,996,729 total project budget.
    - Board approved RK&K contract to complete engineering/environmental report on Dec. 1st.
    - Engineering/environmental report has been submitted to NC DWI. It is currently pending approval.
    - Once DWI approves this and issues a funding contract, we will advertise a RFQ for full engineering/surveying/permitting/construction management services.
    - A contract for Mid-East Commission to provide grant administration services will be provided at the same meeting as the engineering firm's contract. (Administration is also covered by project funding.)
- **Resilient Coastal Communities Program (RCCP) Phase 4 Wastewater Treatment Plant project (wetland restoration, berm improvement, sludge removal)**
    - This project was awarded by RCCP with 100% grant. $1,071,250 total project budget.
    - One wetland cell can be done at a time, as one cell has to be active for the plant to function.
    - The contractor has been making progress since the last update. Erosion control set up was completed. The first wetland cell has been majority dug out and sludge has been removed from the site to a permitted waste facility. There is about 8 inches of material left which has been wet from recent precipitation and needs to dry out before being removed.
    - The engineering firm (RK&K) was on site on Jan. 28th to inspect the clay liner. It appeared to be in overall good condition. They are coming up with final plans but they believe the recommendation will be to level out the cell and rehab the clay liner in some places where it is in rough condition along a couple of deep zones and bank areas. This will be much less expensive than a full replacement, leaving more funds available to remove sludge from holding ponds.
    - The engineer and contractor are working out details on a valve/pipe replacement so that the water level in the cell can be controlled after planting. This will be needed until the plants are well established.

- Once these items are completed, the cell will be ready for planting. However, planting cannot be done until April 15th or later. In the meantime, the contractor should be working on removing sludge from the holding ponds.
- If the planting is able to be completed the week of April 15th, we are hopeful that the second cell will be able to be completed by the current contract expiration date of May 31st. The contractor should have less trouble with the second wetland cell since the questions about plant function have been addressed during rehab of the first cell. However, we will be cutting it close. There is the possibility that an extension will be requested from the grant agency.
- *Attachment – email updates from contractor and engineering firm*.

- **NC Land and Water Fund Baileys Creek Nature Based Tributary Improvements**
  - This project was awarded by NC LWF with 100% grant. Total project budget $704,809.
  - No updates on this project other than the surveyor has been delayed. He is now expected in early February. RK&K is still proceeding with design. They were out for some initial fieldwork in December. Documents will be provided to the board for feedback as design progresses.
- **Fall round DWI applications**
  - CDBG-I: Water lines/fixtures and sewer manholes in residential area of NE section of town
  - Water: 2 wells rehab, water lines/fixtures in downtown commercial area
  - Sewer: Sewer lines/fixtures in NE section of town (residential and downtown commercial area)
  - Hoping for 100% grant offer since viable utilities reserve is funded. Decision expected after Feb. 18, 2026 State Water Infrastructure Authority (SWIA) meeting.
  - Town is eligible for $15 million in VUR funds lifetime and $3 million in CDBG-I funds (LMI neighborhoods only) every 3 years.

RCCP Phase 4 Wastewater Treatment Plant project (wetland restoration, berm improvement, sludge removal) – contractor’s and engineer’s email reports

Outlook

RE: Aurora WWTP

From Gordon Marsh <gmarsh@rkk.com>
Date Thu 1/29/2026 1:30 PM
To Jamie Heath <jheath@mideastcom.org>
Cc Doug Keller <dkeller@rkk.com>

I will get a photolog for you but in the meantime. The clay liner in the center of the cell was in great condition at approx. 2' think. The banks had a clay liner of 8-10 inces and the deepzons were filled with muck and could not assess well. It seems that if the deepzone were graded properly and the muck was removed that the clay liner could be assessed in these area. Based on what I could see the clay linner is in tack in the deep zones but the transitions are in rough condition along the slopes of the deep zone. Right now I would think the recommendation is to level out the cell and re-establish the clay liner along the banks and within the deep zones.

Doug please weigh in.

This has not been relayed to Robert.

Thanks,
Gordon

GORDON MARSH, STP, PWS
Project Manager

RK&K
8601 Six Forks Rd., Forum 1 Suite 700
Raleigh, NC 27615
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Responsive People | Creative Solutions

From: Jamie Heath <jheath@mideastcom.org>
Sent: Thursday, January 29, 2026 1:15 PM
To: Gordon Marsh <gmarsh@rkk.com>
Subject: Aurora WWTP

EXTERNAL EMAIL: Do not click links or open attachments unless you trust the 'Sender' and know the content is safe.

I'm prepping an update for Aurora's board meeting Monday to get to Judi by tomorrow. If you have time to give me a very brief update on your site visit with Robert Saunders yesterday, I'll include that info for them. Thanks Gordon.

Outlook

Re: Aurora WWTP Erosion Control

From Robert Saunders <robert.saunders@gmiplymouth.com>
Date Wed 1/21/2026 7:33 PM
To Doug Keller <dkeller@rkk.com>
Cc Jamie Heath <jheath@mideastcom.org>; Gordon Marsh <gmarsh@rkk.com>; Dale Davis <daleboy34@gmail.com>; townofaurora@auroranc.org <townofaurora@auroranc.org>; Aurora PWD <aurorapwd@auroranc.org>; John Akers <jakers@rkk.com>; Aurora Billing <aurorabilling@auroranc.org>

3 attachments (14 MB)
IMG_2354.jpeg; IMG_2352.jpeg; IMG_2347.jpeg;

Good evening,

Yes my office is sending over the trucking tickets.

We have plants order and ready to plant as soon as planting season starts.

I have attach some photos where the cell is stripped to the clay liner.

Best regards
Robert Saunders

On Wed, Jan 21, 2026 at 8:15 AM Doug Keller <dkeller@rkk.com> wrote:

> Robert,
>
> Thank you for the call yesterday. A few items from our discussion:
>
> 1. Please see Revision 1 to Sheet C-100. This revision clarifies the orientation of the deep pools.
> 2. Please provide Mid-East and RK&K with the truck tickets to accompany Pay Application #2. I received a message from Gabriel in your office and that may have been the purpose. I will reach out tomorrow.
> 3. Have you reached out to the planting subcontactor to get him on the schedule?
> 4. Apologies if I missed an email, but were you able to address the comments on the pricing for valves? These valves will be required to control the water level in the cells to establish the plants.
>
> ---
>
> **DOUG KELLER, PE, LEED AP**
> **Project Delivery Leader**
>
> RK&K

VOLVO

Outlook

RE: Aurora WWTP Erosion Control

From Gordon Marsh <gmarsh@rkk.com>
Date Tue 1/13/2026 9:43 PM
To Jamie Heath <jheath@mideastcom.org>; Doug Keller <dkeller@rkk.com>; Robert Saunders <robert.saunders@gmiplymouth.com>
Cc Dale Davis <daleboy34@gmail.com>; townofaurora@auroranc.org <townofaurora@auroranc.org>; Aurora PWD <aurorapwd@auroranc.org>; John Akers <jakers@rkk.com>; Aurora Billing <aurorabilling@auroranc.org>

Robert, thanks for chating with me. To recap our conversation.

1. Planting media will be fully replaced since high percentage was mixed with mud.
2. This week you are surveying, skimming, and inspecting the clay liner to suggest a depth of replacement
3. Water is shut off by capping the intlet pipe and wier but vales need to be replaced to control water for planting. RK&K needs to review sent estimate and coordinate on what is needed from you regarding that estimate.
4. Once cell one is complete you will have a better understanding of cost and propose timeframe and removal quantity for dredging
5. An extention may be needed to complete work although you are aiming to deliver on time.

Again thanks for talking and let us know if anything needs to be changed from my recolection.

Best,
Gordon

GORDON MARSH, STP, PWS
Project Manager

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From: Jamie Heath <jheath@mideastcom.org>
Sent: Tuesday, January 13, 2026 6:02 PM
To: Doug Keller <dkeller@rkk.com>; Robert Saunders <robert.saunders@gmiplymouth.com>
Cc: Gordon Marsh <gmarsh@rkk.com>; Dale Davis <daleboy34@gmail.com>; townofaurora@auroranc.org; Aurora PWD <aurorapwd@auroranc.org>; John Akers <jakers@rkk.com>; Aurora Billing <aurorabilling@auroranc.org>
Subject: Re: Aurora WWTP Erosion Control

EXTERNAL EMAIL: Do not click links or open attachments unless you trust the 'Sender' and know the content is safe.

Thanks for this update Robert. Gordon should be calling you to get on the same page with a few details.

Jamie Heath
Planner
Mid-East Commission
(252)296-1656

From: Doug Keller <dkeller@rkk.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 13, 2026 8:12 AM
To: Robert Saunders <robert.saunders@gmiplymouth.com>; Jamie Heath <jheath@mideastcom.org>
Cc: Gordon Marsh <gmarsh@rkk.com>; Dale Davis <daleboy34@gmail.com>; townofaurora@auroranc.org <townofaurora@auroranc.org>; Aurora PWD <aurorapwd@auroranc.org>; John Akers <jakers@rkk.com>; Aurora Billing <aurorabilling@auroranc.org>
Subject: Re: Aurora WWTP Erosion Control

Robert,

We appreciate these updates. Thank you for putting me in touch with the surveyor.

Doug

DOUG KELLER, PE, LEED AP
Project Delivery Leader

8601 Six Forks Road
Forum 1, Suite 700

Outlook

Re: Aurora WWTP Erosion Control

From Robert Saunders <robert.saunders@gmiplymouth.com>
Date Tue 1/13/2026 6:31 AM
To Jamie Heath <jheath@mideastcom.org>
Cc Doug Keller <dkeller@rkk.com>; Gordon Marsh <gmarsh@rkk.com>; Dale Davis <daleboy34@gmail.com>; townofaurora@auroranc.org <townofaurora@auroranc.org>; Aurora PWD <aurorapwd@auroranc.org>; John Akers <jakers@rkk.com>; Aurora Billing <aurorabilling@auroranc.org>

2 attachments (891 KB)
IMG_2257.jpeg; IMG_2258.jpeg;

Good morning, We are still removing the sludge and sand from the wet land cell. Last week we found the benchmark and had the surveyor come out and check it to make sure it was accurate. Doug Keller spoke with the surveyor to double check it was in compliance. I will update more pictures this evening.

On Wed, Dec 31, 2025 at 12:52 PM Jamie Heath <jheath@mideastcom.org> wrote:

> Sorry to hear that Robert. Thank you for updating us.
>
> Jamie Heath
> Planner
> Mid-East Commission
> (252)296-1656
>
> ---
>
> **From:** Robert Saunders <robert.saunders@gmiplymouth.com>
> **Sent:** Tuesday, December 30, 2025 4:50 PM
>
> **To:** Jamie Heath <jheath@mideastcom.org>
> **Cc:** Doug Keller <dkeller@rkk.com>; Gordon Marsh <gmarsh@rkk.com>; Dale Davis <daleboy34@gmail.com>; townofaurora@auroranc.org <townofaurora@auroranc.org>; Aurora PWD <aurorapwd@auroranc.org>; John Akers <jakers@rkk.com>; Aurora Billing <aurorabilling@auroranc.org>
> **Subject:** Re: Aurora WWTP Erosion Control
>
> We didn't haul today. Three people had the flu. One of the three was the head guy so I made the decision to keep every one home.
>
> On Mon, Dec 29, 2025 at 7:20 PM Robert Saunders <robert.saunders@gmiplymouth.com> wrote:
>
>> Today we hauled 19 loads. We will resume tomorrow.
>>
>> On Mon, Dec 29, 2025 at 6:07 PM Jamie Heath <jheath@mideastcom.org> wrote:
>>
>>> Thank you for these updates Robert. We appreciate the progress being made. Happy New Year!
>>>
>>> Jamie Heath