

Village of Petersburg  
November 22, 2021

The Village Board of Trustees met at the American Legion on November 22, 2021, at 6:30 p.m. for a special meeting. Purpose of the meeting was to inform residents from the Village of Petersburg on the progress of the ongoing investigation of the Campylobacter illnesses that have occurred. Notices of the meeting were posted at the Village Office, Post Office, Leifeld's, Knotty Pine, 3C's Knotty Pine and 123 Main Street Offices on November 17, 2021. Board members were given prior notice of the meeting. Chairman Stokes called the meeting to order, stating the Open Meetings Act was posted.

Board present: Corey Stokes, Tina Henn, Mitch Koch and Ashley Thieman telephonically. Staff: Nick Prothman and Sundae Provencher. Guests: Sue Dempsey head of the Drinking Water and Groundwater Division of Nebraska's Department of Environment and Energy, David Jundt from Nebraska Department of Environment and Energy, Drinking Water Division, John Zwingman from ACES and several Village residents were present.

Sue Dempsey the head of the Drinking Water and Groundwater Division of NE Department of Environment and Energy introduced herself and presented a handout summary of what we know so far about the recent water tests and Campylobacter bacteria. In September multiple residents were ill with a stomach type of flu. Several cases were confirmed by a lab to be linked to Campylobacter Infection. Cases were reported to the Health Department which were reported to State, then the State reported to the Center for Disease Control. Surveys and interviews were conducted by the State Health Department to try and find a source of the bacteria. Businesses were investigated and ruled out, cross connections and possible back flow issues were examined and ruled out, a drone flew over the water tower to check for holes or bird feces and the pictures were good, didn't find anything.

September and October water samples were taken, and they all came back negative for coliform. In November, 6 samples were tested; both wells and 4 other sites, one test came back positive with coliform. Campylobacter is not often tested for, so a test had to be sent to Atlanta to get tested for Campylobacter. They found no live Campylobacter, it's possible the Chlorine killed it. However, they did find Campylobacter DNA in one test. More testing was done, and they were able to see that it did not come from humans, or ruminants. On the 29<sup>th</sup> they will test if it sourced from birds. Sue recommends getting the Water Tower inspected after receiving those test results.

A possible site of contamination could be the ice machine from the Fire Hall. It is not the source of bacteria but could be. It was recommended to be emptied and cleaned.

Communication was difficult during this time due to the number of agencies working on this. Some miscommunications might have resulted from that. The Board was trying to communicate with the residents, giving out information as they were receiving it. They were not trying to hide anything. Dempsey mentioned a website; Drinking Water Watch Nebraska where anyone can check the results of water testing from the last 3 years for any drinking water system.

Discussion was held on Chlorinating the water. A resident asked how long the human body can withstand drinking Chlorinated water. Dempsey stated Chlorine in the water is not unusual. Surface water systems are always Chlorinated. Jundt stated Chlorinating the water is usually done for routine maintenance. It does take time to get the Chlorine to reach every part of the system depending on usage. Chlorine also dissipates very rapidly, leaving a glass of water out for a short amount of time would get rid of any Chlorine present.

It has been very challenging trying to find the source. Dempsey mentioned in her 35 years of working for the State she has only encountered campylobacter bacteria once previously. Campylobacter Bacteria doesn't grow in distribution systems and is rarely found in Groundwater systems. They will continue to work on finding the source of contamination. Residents were asked to report any new cases of illnesses. Comments or Questions are encouraged, contact information for Sue Dempsey and Bryan Buss from the Health Department is available.

Stokes made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Koch.  
Meeting adjourned at 7:50 p.m.

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Corey Stokes, Chairman

ATTEST \_\_\_\_\_  
Sundae Provencher, Clerk/Treasurer