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GREAT NECK WATER POLLUTION CONTROL DISTRICT TOUTS MICRO TURBINES AS COST SAVING MEASURE

Officials say new technology is both cost effective and environmentally friendly

Great Neck, NY – The Great Neck Water Pollution Control District released figures today showing that the advanced micro turbines it plans to install in its updated facility will save taxpayers $3 millions over the next 30 years. The turbines will be an important investment that will make the plant more efficient, thereby reducing electricity costs over the long run, GNWPCD officials said.

"We have always done everything in our power to save every penny for taxpayers," said Chris Murphy, Superintendent for GNWPCD. "These micro turbines, and other equipment, will eventually pay for themselves with their reliability and efficiency and start saving taxpayers money from day 1. In effect, it would cost the District residents more money not to get them."

The micro turbines are essentially generators that would power the facility independently instead relying totally on a utility company. The equipment captures methane gas produced during the sewage treatment process, which would otherwise be wasted, and converts it into electricity. The byproduct heat from the micro turbines will also be used to warm the digesters tanks used during treatment, saving additional electricity costs.

The micro turbines would cost $960,000, financed within the 30 year bond proposal. The electrical savings net of maintenance cost for the first year alone would be $89,000, whereas the debt service would be $45,500, a net saving to taxpayers of $43,500. Accounting for inflationary costs, the electrical savings actually rise each year, reaching $277,000 in the 30th year, while the $45,500 annual debt service would remain the same. The turbines, therefore, will save the residents from day 1, pay for themselves in the middle of the 12th year, according to engineer estimates, and at the end of the 30 year bond, will have saved the residents a total of $3 million.

These cost estimates include preventative maintenance and repairs, which would take place routinely every 5 years. The machines have low upkeep costs because they only have four or five moving parts, meaning that maintenance will not be a burden. Currently, the GNWPCD is also seeking $338,312 in grants to defray costs of the project. The grants would be issued within the first several years of the project, leading to the turbines paying for themselves in the middle of year 9, as well as saving more each year.

The GNWPCD released the numbers in response to some local officials who claimed the micro turbines were costly and unnecessary, such as a comment from Village of Great Neck Deputy Mayor Mitch Beckerman, who said "We need this project to be a Chevy, not a Cadillac."

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“If the Micro Turbine project is a Cadillac, then it’s one that gets 100 miles to the gallon on gas,” a District representative said. “From the first year to the last, this deal never costs taxpayers a dime and the savings only get better as time goes on. This isn’t lavish spending, this is common sense.”

The turbines are only part of the cutting-edge technology planned for the new combined facility, which is designed to save million in building, operating and maintenance costs in the future. The new facility will also use variable speed pumps and a UV system to maximize energy conservation. The new facility will also use solar panels to generate additional electricity, and it will continue to utilize the production of bio fuels to power vehicles and furnaces.